

THE CHALLENGES OF ADOPTING ICT IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

The use of information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the teaching of English Language in the secondary school in Delta State was examined in this study. Forty teachers and one hundred and twenty students were sampled from eight schools in eight Local Government Areas in Delta Central in Delta State. The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire designed by the researcher by both teachers and students. The instrument was validated by three experts in the measurement and evaluation. The two sets of questionnaire were administered by the researcher herself and were collected the same day. Three research questions guided the study. The data collected were analysed using percentages. The findings of this study showed that many teachers do not employ the use of ICT in teaching because many of them are not computer literate and therefore, have low knowledge of ICT in the teaching of English Language. The study also revealed that the use of ICT in the teaching of English Language in secondary school will promote and help in the mastery of the subject. It will also motivate students to learn. Based on the findings of the study some recommendations were given.

Introduction

The world is changing rapidly and becoming a global digital society. Therefore, the abilities required in schools today need to be reassessed as to do the ways students are expected to learn. Today, the world is changing in terms of the way we conceive, see, work, think, learn, socialize and conduct business due to new technologies and new techniques engendered by the widespread use of information and Communication Technology (Ogunleye, 2006).

The education system of any country cannot develop above its ICT programmes in this information ICT goes beyond the use of micro-computers to aid teaching and learning in schools. (Kolade & Seweje, 2006) it is the wholesome integration of modern telecommunications and particularly the internet into the Nigerian's educational system. The Nigerian educational system should be ICT driven if there will be any meaningful development (Bandeje, 2006). Ukwu-Ngwu (2004) defined Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as the means of acquisition, processing storage and dissemination of data by a combination of computers and telecommunication accessories. Most experts are of the view that when properly used, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) holds great promise to improve teaching and learning in addition to shaping workforce opportunities (Salimonu, 2006).

Although some teacher education programmes in some tertiary institutions have particularly embraced some aspect of ICT into their programmes, many are still not ready for its adoption and utilization due to one reason or the other. If it is true that no nation can rise above the level of the teacher, then the adoption of ICT is very necessary for the development of the nation. English language is one of the important subject studied in the secondary school. The subject is so important that every student has to pass it even at credit level in some cases before they can gain

admission into any higher institution, English Language teachers therefore, should play important roles to make sure that students pass this important subject.

Teachers are the main determinants of quality in the school. What they know and can do make a great difference and what they do not know and cannot do, can be an irreparable loss not only to the child but indeed to posterity (Ukeye, 1989). The best way to produce good teachers is through avenue of professional training (Okafor, 1991).

It is pertinent, therefore, to note that the competencies of English Language teachers in ICT skills are one of the components in ensuring that ICT becomes and continues to be an integrated part of learning experiences of English Language students in the schools. ICT will help learners in the acquisition of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Acquisition of these skills is important because when learners acquire them they can easily master the concepts in the curriculum of all the levels faster.

The study was therefore geared towards evaluating the use of ICT in the teaching of English Language in Delta State Secondary Schools. Specifically, the study sought to find out if:

- i. ICT is used in the teaching of English Language in secondary schools in Delta State.
- ii. The present secondary school teachers are competent enough to face future ICT challenges.
- iii. There are factors militating against the use of ICT in the teaching of English Language.

Research Questions

1. Is ICT used in the teaching of English Language in Secondary Schools in Delta State?
2. Are the Secondary School Teachers in Delta State competent enough to face future ICT challenges?
3. What are some factors militating against the use of ICT in the teaching of English Language in Delta State?

Method

Research Design

A survey design was adopted to carry out this study.

Population

The population for this study comprised of the Delta Central; one of the three districts in Delta State. Delta Central is made up of eight Local Government Areas. The teachers and students of this district made up the population.

Sampling and Sampling Techniques

A simple random sampling technique was used to select five teachers from the eight schools. One from each Local Government Area bringing the number of teachers used to forty. The researcher also used one hundred and twenty students. Fifteen students were sampled from eight schools in each Local Government Area.

Instrument for Data Collection

A questionnaire constructed by the researcher with 'Yes' and 'No' options was used to collect data. Two sets of questionnaire were based both on the teachers and learners competencies in the usage of ICT in the teaching and learning of English Language. Both questionnaires contained ten items. The questionnaires were face validated by three lecturers in the Measurement and Evaluation.

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Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire were administered by the research herself first to the teachers and that of the students were administered later. They were all collected on the spot after completion. Data collected were analysed using percentages.

Results

Table I: Percentage of Teachers' Response

S/N	The Use of ICT by Teachers in the Teaching	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Are you a computer literate?	28	70	12	30
2.	Do you make use of ICT to aid your teaching?	11	27.5	29	72.5
3.	Does ICT give room for easy delivery of the subject English Language?	30	75	10	25
4.	Does the use of ICT help the effective teaching of English Language?	31	77.5	9	22.5
	Competency of secondary school teachers to face future ICT challenges				
5.	Can you browse out needed information when you are faced with difficulty when teaching?	19	47.5	21	52.5
6.	Can the computer training you received make you prepare for any information challenges?	18	45	22	55
	Some factors militating against the use of ICT in the teaching of English Language				
7.	Does your school have computers that can serve about a quarter of the number of students in the school?	2	5.0	38	95
8.	Are teachers willing to integrate ICT in their teaching?	3	7.5	37	92.5
9.	Do you have a standby generator set for the computers if there is no electricity?	2	5.0	38	95
10.	Does your school have a maintenance department to service and repair your computers?	1	2.5	39	97.5

The analysis of result from table 1 indicated that 70% of the respondents are computer literates. 75% agreed that ICT gives room for easy delivery of the subject, English Language while 77.5% are of the opinion that the use ICT helped in the effective teaching of English Language yet 27.5% of them use ICT to aid their teaching. This shows that many teachers in the secondary school do not use ICT in the teaching of the subject. The use of ICT in the teaching of English Language will make the students to be active in learning. This will encourage them to be explorers and creators of language rather than passive recipients of learning. That is why Young (2004) asserted that teachers who do not use any form of ICT in teaching might turn their lessons from success to failure.

47.5% of the respondents can browse out information when they are faced with difficulty while teaching. Meanwhile 52.5 of them cannot. 45% of the respondents accepted that the computer training they got can prepare them for any information challenges while 55% cannot face challenges. The 47.5% and 45% of the teachers browsing out information and being prepared to face future information challenges based on training they received is in line with one of the goals of Teacher

Education as defined in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004). It stressed that teachers should be provided with an intellectual and professional background adequate for their work and make them adaptable to any changing situation met only in the life of their country. This also shows the competency of the teachers. Olaitan (2003) explained competency as the knowledge, skills, attitude and judgment which are required in order to perform successfully as specified proficiency in any given work. Competency in this context is the knowledge, skills, attitudes which the teacher of English Language requires for the effective application of computer into the learning of English Language by the students.

Based on some of the factor militating against the use of ICT in the teaching of English Language, 95% of the respondents ticked 'No' to show that they do not have enough computers in the school and so it will be difficult to teach with computers. Tuoyo (2007) stressed that the inability to access computers by learners because of lack of computers in the school means creating more social illiterates and economic denial of the right of children especially the exceptionally children to fully participate in the school system and in the society at large.

37% of the respondents agreed that teachers are not willing to integrate ICT in their teaching. Although many of them are computer literates, they prefer to use the knowledge of the computer in their private business instead of teaching.

Lack of electricity is another factor militating against the use of ICT in schools from the table above only 5% of the respondents agreed that they have a standby generator set in case there is no electricity. 95% of the respondents said that there is no generator set. Since ICT facilities require electricity for them to be functional, if then means many of the computers in the schools will be unused.

97.5% of the respondents indicated that they lack personnel, for maintaining ICT facilities in their schools. The consequence is that when there is a breakdown in any of the ICT facilities, the repair takes a long time. Lamenting, Mkpa (2009) said that the required manpower to maintain the system are very few.

Table 2: Percentage of Students' Response to the Questionnaire

S/N	The Use of ICT by Students Learning English Language	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Is computer science one of the subjects thought in your school?	120	100	-	-
2.	Do you enjoy lessons taught with ICT?	120	100	-	-
3.	Does your school use ICT in the teaching of English Language?	7	5.8	113	91.2
4.	Do you have computer up to 4 times a week?	-	-	120	100
	Competency of students to face ICT future challenges	31	77.5	9	22.5
5.	Are you competent enough with the use of computer?	40	33.3	80	66.7
6.	Can you make use of the internet in some of your assignment?	40	33.3	80	66.7
	Some Factors Militating against the use of ICT in the Teaching of English Language.				
7.	Do you have up to 50 computers in your school?	3	2.5	117	97.5

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8.	Does your teacher employ the use of ICT in teaching?	10	8.3	110	91.7
9.	Where there is no electricity does your school have a standby generator?	11	9.2	109	90.8
10.	Does your school have personnel to maintain and repair the computers in your school?	6	5.0	114	95

Result from table 2 above shows that all the respondents (100%) agreed that computer is taught in their schools and that they enjoy lessons taught with ICT. Learning is a function of motivation, therefore, children's motivations and interest can best be aroused with what they can see, touch and experience. When the interest of a child is developed, it remains with him throughout life.

91.2% of the respondents agreed that they do not make use of the ICT to aid their learning. In learning English Language in the secondary schools, ICT will help the learners in the acquisition of the basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Computer had made the teaching and learning essay writing easier. Udensi (2006) remarked that the teaching and learning of writing can now better enhanced by using computer programmes that correct errors and provide feedback. Only 40.3% of the respondents are competent enough to use the computer while 66.7% of them are not. When learners acquire computer skills they will feel a lot more confident with information technology. As a result they will be able to use the internet to communicate more effectively, practice language skills move thoroughly and solve language problems more easily.

The study also revealed that 97.5% of the respondents showed that computers were rarely used in the classrooms. If computer was taught at all as a subject, it was done theoretically, that is without computers in sight. This could be as a result of few computers in the school.

Only 8.3% of the respondents accepted that their teachers use ICT in teaching. This implies that many of the teachers are computer illiterates. Like all other professions, teachers need constant training and retraining to be effective and to update in their knowledge and usage of technology devices. In other words, spending much on acquiring computers in schools without proper orientation and training for teachers (those to handle these gadgets) is wasteful. Carlson and Gadio (2002) affirmed that teacher training in the use and application of technology is the key determined factor for improved student performance (in terms of both knowledge acquisition and skills development enabled by technology). There is a strong need to train and retrain teachers for ICT programme.

95% of the respondents responded that they do not have a standby generator in case there is no electricity. Computer equipment function with amenities like electricity under controlled condition. (Uzodinmma 2006) Electricity supply in Nigeria has been epileptic. This may cause a lot of changes to the computer systems and can hinder the work flow and speed.

95% responded that they lack personnel for maintaining ICT facilities. This is a problem affecting the use of ICT in Nigeria. Many gadgets break down which would require expertise. Lamenting on the lack of personnel for maintenance of ICT facilities, Hadded and Jurich (2002) stressed that projects fail when planner invest heavily on computers with few or no experts or manpower to maintain them. This calls on the Nigerian government to rise up to the task of training people for the maintenance of the ICT facilities.

Recommendations

For a functional ICT in the teaching on English Language in the secondary schools in Delta State, the following recommendations were made:

- i. The state government should provide adequate number of computers to schools. Other organizations, P.T.A. etc. should also assist the government in providing computers.
- ii. The government should improve the state of electricity in the country since the computers cannot work without electricity, the P.T.A. should assist schools by buying generating plants in case of power failure.
- iii. The state government should organize seminars and workshops and other training programmes for English Language teachers to be computer literates. This will create awareness to the teachers on the instructional values of apply ICT in teaching and learning.
- iv. ICT should be integrated in all subject areas other than English Language.
- v. English Language teachers should not only depend on the government to do everything, they should avail themselves the opportunity to register with computer centres in order to upgrade themselves with ICT skills.

Conclusion

The traditional educational practices no longer provide prospective teachers with all the necessary skills for teaching students who to be able to survive must face challenges in information age.

Using ICT in the teaching of English Language is very important as it provides one-to-one interaction with a situation as well as an instantaneous response to the answers elicited. It also allows students to proceed at their own pace. Since English Language is an important subject in the school both the teachers and students should be exposed to ICT.

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