

ICT Competencies Needed by Teachers for Effective Teaching of English Language in Secondary Schools

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Abstract

The study examined ICT competencies needed by teachers for effective teaching of English language in Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted. Researchers' constructed 23 items questionnaire was used to collect data from 54 English language teachers. The reliability coefficient of the instrument stood at 0.80. The data collected were analyzed using mean. Findings revealed among others that English language teachers in secondary schools in Awka South possess the basic computer operational skills which are usually for official use not basically for classroom. They do not have enough competence in the use of power-point which is the appropriate skill needed for classroom teaching and learning. The findings also revealed that English language teachers possess Interactive white board competence but their competence is inadequate for effective teaching and learning of English language and could not competently teach speaking skills of English language because they cannot draw English sounds with Interactive white board. It was recommended that State Ministry of Education should make it compulsory for teachers to teach with computers in all secondary schools.

Keywords: ICT competencies; English Language; Effective teaching; Power-point; Interactive white board.

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INTRODUCTION

The fast growing and ubiquitousness of ICT has changed every aspect of life of the people that no one can do without it in today's world. People communicate, read, disseminate and transact business using ICT. In fact, it has become the mainstay of the bedrock of the society. Every field of human activities uses ICT to carry out their daily routines. The field of education is not left out. ICT has indeed changed the way things were formally done in education, be it teaching, learning and research (Yusuf, 2005). In today's education, Knowledge transmission and acquisition can no longer be done only under the four walls of the classroom, but can as well be done outside the classroom through the use of ICT resources. Researches that were formally done manually can as well be done through ICT resources.

ICT is an acronym for Information and Communication Technology. According to Hennessy, Ruthven and Brindley (2005), the term ICT incorporates the variety of hardware (desktop and portable computers, projection technology, calculators,

data logging and digital recording equipment), software applications (generic software, multimedia resources) and means of telecommunication and information systems (Intranet, Internet). ICT can mean different things to different educators. In the views of Asabera and Enguah (2012), ICTs are the tools, facilities, processes and equipment that offer the required environment with the physical infrastructure and services for the generation, transmission, processing, storing and disseminating of information in all forms including texts, voice, data, graphic and videos. To Yunus, Nordin, Salehi, Sun and Embi (2013), ICT is the technological tools and resources which are engaged to communicate, create, circulate and manage information. In this context, ICT can be seen as instructional tools and devices used by educators and students to transfer and acquire knowledge respectively both within and outside the traditional classroom setting.

The role of ICT in education in today's world is beyond measure. The Federal Government of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) identifies the major role of ICT and has included it into

the Nigerian educational system. This is to improve and increase the quality of education and instructional delivery to students. Therefore, the use of ICT for effective teaching of all the school subjects, more especially English language is of utmost importance due to its pride of place and the role it plays in the society and the world at large.

English language is a world language. It is spoken by almost all the countries of the world. Some countries of the world use it as first language; others use it as either the second, official and or foreign language. Globally, English language was given an important pride of place that without competence and performance in the language, one cannot have access to communication and information. This is because English language is the central language of technology and computer and as such, all instructions, messages and internet texts are usually in some variants of the language (Albirini, 2006; Navdal, 2007). Therefore, it is very necessary that English language should be effectively taught in secondary schools using ICT due to its effectiveness in teaching and learning. Moreover, according to Al-Mahrooqi and Troudi (2014), the use of ICT in language teaching and learning offers a student-centered learning environment, decreases or lessens teacher-centered understanding and students' learning anxiety, but makes them to be risk takers to practice target language as they are digital natives.

The benefit of using ICT in teaching and learning of any language course in school is for the learners to learn the nitty gritty of that language both in spoken and written form for effective communication in the wider society at any given situation. In support of this, Akabogu (2006) opined that ICT can help to improve communicative competence of the students when used in instructional delivery. In the view of Cakici (2016) and Ikwuka (2016), implementing ICT in language instruction helps to motivate students' interests through teacher's variety of lesson presentation styles, provides opportunities for the students to learn outside the classroom at their own pace and cater more for individual differences. ICT can enhance teaching and learning process by increasing student's motivation if used effectively by competent teachers. In line with this, Dave and Tearle (2010) asserted that ICTs when used in teaching and learning have the likelihood to speed up, enrich and deepen skills, to inspire and engage students as well as to help relate school experiences to work practices. Therefore, to motivate students to learn and teachers to teach effectively, Altun (2018) and Oommen (2012) opined that ICT resources such as computers, PCs, laptops, overhead projector, internet, interactive white board (Smartboards), cell phones, videos, games, music players should be used in the English language classroom for effective instructional delivery.

English language is the language usually used for communication and interaction through the internet (Internet World Stats, 2010), and almost two-third of the websites on the internet are in English language (Global Internet Statistics, 2010). This shows that a good knowledge and mastery of English language is very essential for effective communication and accessing of information. Therefore, it is very necessary for English language teachers to be competent in the use of various ICT skills for effective teaching of English language in secondary schools.

In Anambra State, almost all the secondary schools were provided with ICT resources such as computers and internet access for teaching and learning effectiveness. Providing computers to schools is one thing but using it effectively in teaching is another thing. For technology to be used for effective teaching, teachers must possess adequate ICT competencies and be knowledgeable in their classroom usage. In support of this, Malinina (2014) asserted that in order to make best use of ICT in teaching and learning, teachers must be equipped with adequate ICT competencies. Most at times, failure in the integration of certain innovative pedagogies in education is because teachers who are to implement them lack the competence for effective performance. In the views of Akpabio and Ogiriki (2017), one of the major challenges confronting the education system is lack of capable teachers who are literate or proficient in the use of ICT. Effective teaching of English language with ICT therefore is dependent on the teachers' ICT competence.

Competence according to Sampson and Fytros (2008) is the individual characteristics (skills, knowledge, attitudes) that one has or needs to obtain, in order to carry out an activity within a specific context. In the views of Klein, Spector, Grabowski and De la Treja (2004), competence is a set of related knowledge, skills and attitudes that helps an individual to effectively accomplish the activities of a given occupation or job function to the standards expected in employment. In this study, competence is the ICT knowledge and skills possessed by English language teachers for effective teaching of English language in secondary schools.

However, since schools are provided with computers for teaching and learning, teachers need to be competent in the use of the skills that concern computer operation which can be used for effective teaching of English language. Such skills are power-point, dubbing, recording of sounds and playing of recorded sounds. These skills are mostly used for teaching in the English language classroom. They can appeal to learners' different learning styles such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic and creative by using multimedia methods such as sounds, images, colour, action and design if effectively used in English language lesson. These skills can be used in teaching

the four language skills of English language, help to enhance students' speaking and reading abilities as it will give them the correct pronunciation, accent and stress of the native speakers of the language. The skills will as well help teachers to change their lesson presentation styles and allow them to organize their thoughts and present their lesson in an orderly and attractive manner (Adamu and Umar, 2018; Oommen, 2012).

Interactive white board skill is another skill that can be used for effective teaching of English language. It is a very useful and resourceful tool for teaching that can be used to maintain learners' attention by clarifying complex ideas, simplifying teaching process and improving learners' interaction (Jing & Tsai, 2012). It is an efficacious tool for teaching as it makes teachers use different teaching methods while teaching. Interactive white board promotes interaction and communication in class, helps in the presentation of new cultural and linguistic items, enhances speaking abilities and can as well provide visual learning materials for English learning students (Sen and Agir, 2014).

Sequel to the above, these skills are the real pedagogy tools for effective classroom teaching. Cakici (2016) is of the view that the knowledge of these ICT skills is very essential because they can appeal to learners' visual and auditory senses if used effectively. They can as well provide an effective learning experience to students through motivation and retention. On this note, the problem of the study is posed as a question thus: what are ICT competencies needed by teachers for effective teaching of English language in secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria?

Research Questions

1. What are the computer operational competencies needed by teachers for effective teaching of English language in secondary schools?
2. What are the interactive whiteboard competencies needed by teachers for effective teaching of English language in secondary schools?

METHOD

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria. All the 54 English language teachers from the 18 public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area constituted the population of the study. There was no need for sample since the population was manageable, therefore, the whole population was used for the study. The instrument titled "ICT Competencies needed by Teachers for Effective Teaching of English Language (ICTETEL) was developed by the researchers and structured on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA- 4points), Agree (A- 3points), Disagree (D- 2points) and Strongly Disagree (SD- 1point). The instrument contained 23 items and was duly validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Foundations and one from the Department of English Language and Literature, all from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Cronbach alpha was used to obtain the reliability coefficient of 0.80 for the instrument. The researchers personally administered the instrument to the respondents. Mean was used to answer the research questions. Mean scores from 2.50 and above was taken as agreed while the mean score below 2.50 was taken as disagreed.

RESULTS

Table-1: English language Teachers' Responses on Computer Operational Competencies needed for Effective Teaching of English Language

S/N	The following are English Language teachers' computer operational competencies needed for effective teaching	X	Decision
1.	Ability to create bullet points which are clear summaries of key points using power point	2.53	Agree
2.	Ability to use animation to show progression using power point	1.35	Disagree
3.	Knowledge of using different fonts for typing using Microsoft word	2.55	Agree
4.	Ability to insert different shapes using power point	2.01	Disagree
5.	Ability to create title page with the use of power point	2.05	Disagree
6.	Ability to scan images using scanner	2.50	Agree
7.	Ability to create charts using corel draw	2.52	Agree
8.	Ability to create graphics using power-point	2.00	Disagree
9.	Ability to manipulate video discs in teaching	2.60	Agree
10.	Ability to manipulate sounds using power-point	1.99	Disagree

Data in Table I show that the respondents agreed that items 1, 3, 6, 7 and 9 with the mean scores

of 2.53, 2.55, 2.50, 2.52 and 2.60 respectively are computer operational competencies needed by English

Language teachers for effective teaching of English Language. While they disagree that items 2, 4, 5, 8 and 10 with the mean scores of 1.35, 2.01, 2.05, 2.00 and 1.99 respectively are not computer operational competencies needed by English Language teachers for effective teaching of English Language. From the result, it shows that English language teachers have competence in the basic computer operational skills, but

lack competence in the use of power-point such as the: ability to use animation to show progression using power point, ability to insert different shapes using power-point, ability to create title page with the use of power point, ability to create graphics using power-point and ability to manipulate sounds using power-point.

Table-2: Mean scores of English Language Teachers' Responses on Interactive White Board Competencies needed for Effective Teaching of English Language

S/N	The following are English Language teachers' interactive white board competencies needed for effective teaching	X	Decision
11.	Ability to capture notes written on interactive white board	2.50	Agree
12.	Ability to save notes written on interactive white board	2.50	Agree
13.	Ability to easily draw the English sounds on interactive white board	2.24	Disagree
14.	Ability to erase written words using interactive white board	2.01	Disagree
15.	Ability to manipulate text and image with interactive white board	2.05	Disagree
16.	Ability to review lessons on interactive white board	2.53	Agree
17.	Ability to create digital lesson activities with templates, images and multimedia	1.87	Disagree
18.	Ability to connect to internet with interactive whiteboard	2.50	Agree
19.	Ability to create relative engagement between the teacher and the students using the interactive white board	2.54	Agree
20.	Ability to vary teaching methods using interactive white board	2.56	Agree
21.	Ability to achieve flexibility in teaching and learning using interactive using interactive white board	2.59	Agree
22.	Ability to use presentation tools that are included with the interactive white boarding system software to enhance learning materials	2.50	Agree
23.	Ability to showcase students' presentation using interactive White board	2.49	Disagree

Data in Table 2 show that the respondents disagreed that items 13, 14, 15, 17 and 23 with mean scores below 2.50 are not interactive white board competencies needed by English Language teachers for effective teaching of English Language, while all other items with mean scores of 2.50 and above were agreed as interactive white board competencies needed by English Language teachers for effective teaching. From the results, it shows that English language teachers do not possess the following interactive white board competencies: ability to easily draw the English sounds on interactive white board, ability to erase written words using interactive white board, ability to manipulate text and image with interactive white board, ability to create digital lesson activities with templates, images and multimedia and ability to showcase students' presentations using interactive white board.

DISCUSSION

The result of the study revealed that English language teachers are competent in the use of basic computer operational skills which are usually for official use not basically for classroom use and also in the manipulation of the recorded sounds. They do not

have enough competence in the use of power-point which is mostly one of the skills needed for teaching English language. This finding is in line with the observation of Akpabio and Ogiriki (2017) who posited that one of the major challenges confronting the education system is lack of competent teachers who are literate or proficient in the use of Information and Communication Technology.

The result of the study further revealed that English language teachers possess Interactive white board competence but not adequate for effective teaching and learning of English language. For instance, they cannot competently teach the speaking skill of English language because they cannot draw English sounds with Interactive white board. The findings of this study is in agreement with the views of Akpabio and Ogiriki (2017) which said that for teaching with technology to be effective, teachers must possess adequate computer skills and be conversant in their classroom usage. This finding is also in agreement with Malinina (2014) who opined that in order to make best use of ICT in teaching and learning, teachers must be equipped with adequate ICT competencies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that English language teachers do not possess adequate ICT competencies (Computer operation and Interactive white board) needed for the teaching of English language in secondary schools. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers should be properly equipped with Computer operation (Power-point) and interactive white board skills for effective teaching of English language in secondary schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion, the researchers recommend that:

1. The State Government should through the Ministry of Education regularly organize workshops, seminars and in-service-training for English language teachers on ICT skills acquisition after which they can be provided with computers.
2. The State Government should include computer literacy as one of the pre-requisites for teaching employment in secondary schools.
3. The State Ministry of Education should make it compulsory for teachers to teach with computers in all the secondary schools in Anambra, Nigeria.

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Conflicts of Interests

The authors declare that there are no commercial or financial relationships that could constitute as potential conflicts of interest in the conduct of the research.

Availability of Data and Material

Data supporting the results findings available within the article.

Author Contribution

The study arose from an original idea from [Ikwuka, Obiageli Ifeoma], [Uzoegbo, Usonwanne Hilda] and [Nwuba, Onyinye Precious]. All authors contributed to the study's design. [Ikwuka, Obiageli Ifeoma] and [Okoye, Chinyere Celina] wrote the first draft. [Adigwe, Joseph Henry Eleumunor], [Uzoegbo, Usonwanne Hilda] and [Nwuba, Onyinye Precious] carried out material preparation, data collection and analysis. [Okoye, Chinyere Celina], [Adigwe, Joseph Henry Eleumunor], [Uzoegbo, Usonwanne Hilda] and [Nwuba, Onyinye Precious] are responsible for the preparation of the manuscript. [Ikwuka, Obiageli Ifeoma] revised and guided all the stages of the experiment and writing of the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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