

Original Research Article

## Factors Affecting Teaching, Learning and Performance in English Language by Senior Secondary School Students in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District

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**Abstract:** English language is the official language in Nigeria. Successive governments have constantly invested both human and material resources to improving literacy especially in the North Eastern Region of the country where Adamawa state belongs. This research sought to identify and evaluate the factors necessary for a decline in the performance of senior secondary school students in English Language. The research believes that the performance level depends greatly on what happens in the process of teaching and learning the English language. The study using focal discussion groups identified mubi Educational Zone as one of the key Educational Zones in Adamawa State. Drawing on the tenets of skimmer theory, schools, teachers and students were selected as respondents to identify the factors responsible. Mean and statistical tables were used to derive the average score and effect of the identified factors on teaching and learning of the English Language. The study identified school environment, class size, students' interest, teaching methods and teachers' qualification as factors responsible for poor performance.

**Keywords:** Teaching, Learning, English Language, Mubi.

## INTRODUCTION

English language is one of the core subjects in the curriculum of all the secondary schools in Nigeria. It is however disheartening to know that the teaching and learning of English Language has not been effective in most schools. Despite the huge financial resources being invested annually on secondary education, the teaching and learning of English Language has not produced the desired learning outcomes. Some researchers have attributed this poor management strategies adopted by school managers in managing schools while others have attributed to poor attitude of learners towards classroom instruction. However, when a critical observation is carried out on the present conditions of most public senior secondary schools in Adamawa State one of the states known to be below thirty percent literacy level, it can be observed that the teaching and learning of English Language in Secondary Schools has been ineffective due to certain observable factors Among the factors that could affect the effective teaching and learning of English language are teaching method, instructional resources, qualification, experience of English language teachers, learners' interest and learning environment. This research therefore evaluates the factors affecting teaching and learning of English language in Adamawa State with particular emphasis on Mubi Educational Zone, as a microcosm of Adamawa North Senatorial District. The research is guided by the following questions:

1. To what extent does learning environment affect the teaching and learning of English language in public and private secondary schools?
2. To what extent does teaching method affect the teaching methods on the teaching and learning of English language in public and private secondary schools?

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3. To what extent does class size affect the teaching and learning of English language in public and private secondary schools?
4. To what extent does instructional resources affect the teaching and learning of English language in public and private secondary schools?
5. To what extent do students' interest affect the teaching and learning of English language when segregated by gender?

It is also hoped that findings from this study will provide the needed information that can help enhance students' proficiency in the learning of English language through the provision of a conducive learning environment and the use of appropriate and innovative teaching methods.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of English Language

English Language is the primary language of the majority of people in the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, other former colonies of Britain, and territories of the United States. It is also an official or semi-official language of many countries with a colonial past, such as India, Nigeria, Pakistan, and South Africa. Even in countries where English is not a primary or official language, it is taught as a foreign language and used as the language of technology and diplomacy. English is spoken in most parts of the world than any other language and by more people than any other language except Chinese (Ekpe, 2012). According to Aremu (2012), English Language is a medium of communication, like every other language of the world. He added that English is the native language of some parts of the western world like the great Britain (United Kingdom), some part of the America (U.S.A) etc. He further describes English Language as one of the most spoken language of the world. Today, English is the lingua franca of Nigeria (official language) as Nigeria was colonized by the British people. Also Abdullahi (2012), opined that it is the language introduced to some countries of the world by the British the colonizer, he added that English Language is a universal Language though not adopted by the entire nations of the world but more than 97% uses it as means of communication. However, Salihu (2012) is also of the opinion that English language serves a general means of communicating in some areas, mostly where it is generally accepted as their lingua franca. Aliyu (2012) also observed that English Language is said to be the language which originates from the British as their native language and it is also recognized by the Americans with the exception of South Americans. At this juncture, English Language can be defined as a means of communication adopted to be lingua franca of the British colonized nations and some part of the America with the exception of South America. Since independence in Nigeria English is not only used as lingua franca but also the Language of instruction in Schools to facilitate learning other subjects except the Native Language (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) and French language in some schools. According to Boundless (2016), the five main components of language are lo0, morphemes, lexemes, syntax, and context. Along with grammar, semantics, and pragmatics, these components work together to create meaningful communication among individuals.

### Learning English as a Second Language

Many popular beliefs about second language acquisition are perpetuated in our society. The following statements are related to six key concepts of second-language acquisition.

- i. Being disruptive in the classroom affects adversely the learning and knowing of language.
- ii. The more time students spend soaking up English in the mainstream classroom, the faster they will learn the language.
- iii. Children who have the ability to memorize grammar rules and complete pages of grammar drills will learn to speak and write English more quickly.
- iv. Children learn a second language faster and more easily than teenagers and adults do.
- v. The emotional state of the learner doesn't interfere with the acquisition of a new language. As long as English language learners (ELLs) receive instruction from classroom teachers, they will learn English.
- vi. Students should be strongly encouraged to speak English from the first day (Salihu, 2012).

### Review of Relevant Empirical Studies

Flavell and Eccles (2007) conducted a study on English language Learning and Achievement amongst gender in Californian high school. He used experimental research design. The target population of the study is 3000 and that of the sample for the study is 1,821 adolescents who participated in the first as well as the last two waves (10th and 12th grades). The scores obtained from two administrations of the questionnaire at five weeks interval were correlated by using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The study recommended that in order to encourage more women into English and science fields intervention need to be designed to focus not only on the academic achievement of women but on how to make English and science related subject more interesting for women.

Balawin (2009) carried out an investigation on the effect of teaching and learning of English language on students' achievement in senior secondary schools in Delta state, making use of only female students. The research adopted a survey

method. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researcher and school counselors'. The target population was 300 with a sample of 240 students in six schools. A test-retest reliability pilot was also carried out on 20 Senior Secondary School One students who were not part of the sample. The scores obtained from two administrations of the questionnaire at two weeks interval were correlated by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Researchers' presence during administration enhanced better understanding of the items in the instrument. Copies of the questionnaire were collected back immediately after completion by the researchers. The research showed that a smaller number of female students managed to pass their examination with lower scores. This result holds after controlling the field of study and individual attributes. He concluded that male students perform better than female students. This research suggests that performance in English language is gender dependent as males performed better than females. This means that there is need to adopt other methods for teaching of English language in order to encourage better performances amongst female students.

Akbari, Ramin, & Allvar (2010) researched on the L2 teacher characteristics as predictors of students' academic achievement. The study investigated three teacher-related characteristics: teaching style, teachers' sense of efficacy, and teacher reflectivity. This analysis aims to establish how these characteristics relate to student achievement in an English language class. The subjects were 30 EFL teachers and their students, 630 male and female eleventh graders. This research work was carried on in several public schools in the Iliam Province in Iran. The instruments that were used in the study are: The Teacher reflectivity questionnaire, the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale, the Lowman's Two Dimensional Teaching Style Scale, and an end-of-the-year achievement test for eleventh graders in high schools in Iran. The scores of the teachers on each of the three questionnaires were matched against their students' final English scores, and finally statistical procedures were run to interpret the results. The results showed a high correlation between teacher reflectivity and student achievement outcomes. Reflective teachers seem interested in growing and learning but not for learning's sake or necessarily for increased pedagogical skills, but to help them help their students. There is a positive relationship between a teacher's sense of efficacy and student achievement, teachers with high efficacy believes generate stronger student achievement than teachers with lower teacher efficacy. The results of the present study did not indicate a high correlation between interpersonal rapport as a component of the teachers' teaching style and student achievement. The authors concluded that their study provided some ideas on the need of some specific characteristics among teachers when viewed through the students' achievement perspective. These important qualities are: teacher efficacy, teacher reflectivity, and teaching style. The results of the study confirmed that these three variables can significantly predict student achievement.

Obed (2011) studied the effects of mastery learning strategies on teaching English language on the students' cognitive and affective outcomes in English. The study consisted of two levels of students; thirty (30) Colleges of Education students and thirty (30) University of Uyo undergraduate students. The subjects for this study were purposively selected from Osun State College of Education, Ila Orangun and University of Uyo, Ila Centre undergraduates. A total of 60 students, 30 from each category of the two levels were used for the study. The result showed that mastery learning technique enhanced student learning better and they were able to retain more. Students in each institution were randomly assigned into two groups making two groups of 15 students in the university and two groups of 15 students in the College of Education. The experimental groups were presented with mastery learning strategy while the control groups were presented with the conventional strategy. Instrumental guide on mastery learning strategy developed from English concept were presented to the students in Experimental group based on the procedure for learning the task. Students were equally presented with essay test that required a comprehensive description of the task presented to them. The second experiment was carried out with students that were randomly selected from 200 level Economics students of University of Uyo. The thirty (30) students were randomly assigned to mastery learning strategy and conventional strategy of the learning task in Economics unit for the two groups experimental conditions were held constant for the groups. The students were asked to respond to the descriptive written test as post-test. The result showed that the experimental group had a marginal but non-significant gain over the control group. The results had a clear-cut conclusion on teaching strategies Obed effectiveness in instruction using mastery learning approach. Thus teaching strategy could have a positive and effective impact on learning. The findings also showed that the conventional method is no longer an effective approach to teaching and learning. It is also possible that other variables not examined could affect teaching effectiveness in learning. Such variables may include difficulty level, students' specialization and course requirements, learning contents and students' communication skill. All these points and host of others may lead to findings based on empirical condition within the framework of teaching strategies effectiveness

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theory adopted for this study is Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory (1904–1990) is often referred to as the father of operant conditioning. The Skinner's theory explains the fact that when reinforcements are increased, it propels a desired response or outcome while the withdrawal of reinforcements may lead to extinction- a case of total or complete withdrawal. In the same way, the use of reinforcements can be used to obtain the desired learning outcomes or results in the classroom during the teaching and learning of English Language. The rewards can be in form commending students when they correctly answer questions, clapping and giving of gifts to encourage them. These series of actions are geared towards ensuring that desired learning outcomes are achieved during instruction. However, where reinforcements are

withdrawn in the course of learning, the learners are bound to go into extinction- a case in which the learners are no longer motivated to learn.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was a descriptive survey research design which is geared towards evaluating the factors that affect the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational zone particularly when segregated according to school ownership (govt and private ownership), school location and the gender of teachers and students. Mean and standard were used to answer and analyze research questions while the hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics.

### Analysis

**Question 1:** To what extent does School learning environment affect the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation scores obtained from the views of teachers and students with regards to the effect of School learning environment on the teaching and learning of English language in Senior Secondary Schools in Mubi**

| Variables                                 | Respondents | Sample Size (N) | (X)  | Standard Deviation | Remarks |
|---|-------------|-----------------|------|--------------------|---------|
| School Learning Environment               | Teachers    | 77              | 2.92 | 0.75               | High    |
| Teaching and Learning of English Language | Students    | 1882            | 2.07 | 0.39               | Low     |
| <b>Average Mean</b>                       |             |                 | 2.50 |                    |         |

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation scores obtained from the responses of teachers and students with regards to the effect of learning environment on the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in A. It is observed that the mean scores based on teachers' and students responses are 2.92 and 2.07 respectively. The average mean score is given as 2.50. This is exactly equal acceptance mean value of 2.50. It therefore indicates that School learning environment affects the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Nasarawa West Senatorial District to a high extent. The mean and standard deviation scores for teachers' and students' questionnaires based on each item of the questionnaires are included in appendix D.

**Question 2:** to what extent do teaching methods affect the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District?

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation scores obtained from the views of teachers and students with regards to the effect of teaching methods on the teaching and learning of English language in Senior Secondary Schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District**

| Variables                                 | Respondents | Sample Size (N) | Mean (X) | Standard Deviation | Remarks |
|---|-------------|-----------------|----------|--------------------|---------|
| Teaching Methods                          | Teachers    | 77              | 2.98     | 0.77               | High    |
| Teaching and Learning of English Language | Students    | 1882            | 2.08     | 0.40               | Low     |
| <b>Average Mean</b>                       |             |                 | 2.53     |                    |         |

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation scores obtained from the responses of teachers and students with regards to the effect of teaching methods on the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District. It is observed that the mean scores based on teachers' and students responses are 2.98 and 2.08 respectively. The average mean score is given as 2.53. This is above the acceptance mean value of 2.50. It therefore indicates that teaching method affects the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District to a high extent.

**Question 3:** to what extent does class size affect the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation scores obtained from the views of teachers and students with regards to the effect of Class Size on the Teaching and Learning of English language in Senior Secondary Schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District.**

| Variables                                 | Respondents | Sample Size (N) | Mean (X) | Standard Deviation | Remarks |
|---|-------------|-----------------|----------|--------------------|---------|
| Class Size                                | Teachers    | 77              | 2.84     | 0.71               | High    |
| Teaching and Learning of English Language | Students    | 1882            | 1.71     | 0.50               | Low     |
| <b>Average Mean</b>                       |             |                 | 2.28     |                    |         |

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation scores obtained from the responses of teachers and students with regards to the effect of class size on the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District... It is observed that the mean scores based on teachers' and students responses are 2.84 and 1.71 respectively. The average mean score is given as 2.28. This is below the acceptance mean value of 2.50. It therefore indicates that class size affects the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational zone, Adamawa North senatorial district to a low extent.

**Question 4:** to what extent does instructional resources affect the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District?

**Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation scores obtained from the views of teachers and students with regards to the effect of instructional resources on the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District.**

| Variables                                 | Respondents | Sample Size (N) | Mean (X) | Standard Deviation | Remarks |
|---|-------------|-----------------|----------|--------------------|---------|
| Instructional Resources                   | Teachers    | 77              | 2.25     | 0.50               | Low     |
| Teaching and Learning of English Language | Students    | 1882            | 2.61     | 0.64               | High    |
| <b>Average Mean</b>                       |             |                 | 2.43     |                    |         |

Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviation scores obtained from the responses of teachers and students with regards to the effect of instructional resources on the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools. It is observed that the mean scores based on teachers' and students responses are 2.25 and 2.61 respectively. The average mean score is given as 2.43. This is below the acceptance mean value of 2.50. It therefore indicates that School learning environment affects the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North senatorial District to a low extent.

**Question 5:** To what extent do students' interest affect the teaching and learning of English language when segregated by gender in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District?

**Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation scores obtained from the views of students with regards to the effect of students' interest on the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools when segregated by gender in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District**

| Variables                                 | Gender | Sample Size (N) | Mean (X) | Standard Deviation | Remarks |
|---|--------|-----------------|----------|--------------------|---------|
| Interest                                  | Male   | 1284            | 2.90     | 0.73               | High    |
| Teaching and Learning of English Language | Female | 598             | 2.79     | 0.70               | High    |
| <b>Average Mean</b>                       |        |                 | 2.85     |                    |         |

Table 5 shows the mean and standard deviation scores obtained from the views of respondents with regards to the effect of students interest the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District.

It is observed that the mean scores based on male and female respondents are 2.90 and 2.79 respectively. The average mean score is given as 2.85. This is above the acceptance mean value of 2.50. It therefore indicates that student's interest affects the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District to a high extent.

## CONCLUSION

It has been proved that factors such as school learning environment, and teaching methods and teacher qualification have a significant effect on the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi

Educational Zone, Adamawa North District of Adamawa State. There was a significant difference between the views of public and private school students regarding the factors affecting the teaching and learning of English language in senior secondary schools in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa North Senatorial District.

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