

An Evaluation of Students’ Effective (ESL) Acquisition through ICT in Nigeria

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Abstract. The contemporary teaching and learning processes of languages in general and English Language in particular are characterized by a host of innovations and manipulations. The integration of digital media helps in developing a favourable attitude and impetus of students towards English Language acquisition being a foreign language. This paper therefore examined an evaluation of students’ effective ESL acquisition through ICT in Nigeria. A number of methods have been employed to solve the problem of lack of proper acquisition of English Language as a Second Language in Nigeria. This is due to the status ascribed to English Language as a lingual franca which serves as medium of communication used in ministries and parastatals. It is also the medium of instruction in Nigerian schools. This has called for acquisition of additional language, especially in a classroom context which is not an easy task and takes a long time. It is viewed by (Pulido, 2007) that the cognitive and linguistics processes involved in language acquisition are complex. That is, the learner of another language is already an adult who has been used to the grammar/syntax, phonology and the vocabulary of his L1. It may be difficult for this learner to reconcile the differences between his L1 and the new/target language to acquire. It was on this note that this study investigates the ICT and its attendance impact on the students’ effective acquisition of Second Language in some

selected secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The population comprises the Senior Secondary School 2 students in Ekiti State. Two groups of schools were selected. The first group was subjected to the use of ICT for teaching and learning of English Language while the other group used conventional methods. Four schools were randomly selected as sampling technique for equal representation. A total of 400 students formed the sample size for the study. The results of the two groups were analyzed using ex-post-factor design. The result of the finding showed that using ICT facilities in Nigerian secondary schools have a significant impact in acquisition of L2. It also revealed that the use of ICT create an alternative and easy access to linguistic facilities apart from the classroom’s teaching learning process for effective acquisition of second language.

1. Introduction

The digital age and its divergent media have almost taken over all aspects of human life, especially; it has dominating virtually every human endeavour. Human beings are engrossed and have cause to interact with these digital devices to the point that it has become difficult to do anything without the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accompaniment. The younger generation have particularly affected by digital media. In a way,

these digital media have the capacity of diverting the attention of students from acquiring the right skills due to diver services capable of offering. This therefore necessitates a new dimension which is imperative to incorporate electronic media in today's classrooms. In view of the importance of digital media for acquisition of English language in Nigeria to enhance more linguistics facilities for the learners, this study is hereby set to investigate the usefulness of these digital media to acquisition of English as Second Language in Nigeria.

2. Language Acquisition

The term language acquisition is used to refer to the process by which a child unconsciously picks up the first language L1 or his mother language. Any normal child acquires the command of language. Even though we acquire the first language, other languages take the process of learning. Language acquisition takes the process of acquiring language as a result of natural and largely random exposure to language. It is regarded as a sub-conscious process or a creative process by which the rules of the first language are internalized. It is a natural process not brought about by any formal teaching. This concept has been influenced greatly by the psychological study of the learning process (Iwual, 2004). It includes not only the learning skills or the acquisition to learn and learning to think, the modification of attitudes, values or roles and even changes in personality. An individual in lifetime without any specific tuition acquires new terms, meanings, jargons, slangs, code or register. The learner may learn new dialect in multilingual setting; most of the acquisition may go without formal learning and some outside conscious awareness of the learner. Ferguson (1968) observes that much of the second language teaching and learning takes place by relatively informal, unplanned imitation and use actual communication situation.

To avoid confusion, it is necessary to apply a common sense distinction between L1 and L2 of foreign language. At more technical level, the

follow table as adapted from (Iwual, 2004) will be suitable:

L1	L2
First Language	Second Language
Native Language	Non-native language
Mother-tongue	Foreign language
Primary language	Secondary language
Stronger language	Weaker language

In view of the table above, the two set of terms indicate a subjective relationship between a language and individual group.

3. ICT as a Source of Linguistics Facilities for ESL Learners of English

Information communication technology (ICT) is a good channel for L2 learners of English to learn faster, better and more inside and outside the classroom due to limited linguistics facilities. Possession of any kind of these digital media will expose the learners to learn in greater variety of ways and learn to be creative. The limited time available for English language study and practice as provided on the time-table could not avail sufficient linguistics facilities needed for L2 learners to attain the competency expected of the near native-like. As a complementary partner to what is obtainable in actual classroom situation, ICTs are increasingly playing an important role in organisations and in society's ability to produce, access, adopt and apply information. Darboux (2012), reports that Universities in Benin Republic face a plethora of problems. One of which is inadequate instructional time. As such, Trucano (2012:31) provides a concise data stating that: "Data from the World Bank (2011) suggest that much of what is happening in many classrooms across Africa is not yielding much impact". This is as a result of inadequacy of the instructional time available for English studies to make classroom-based instructions to be significantly effective. This is also in agreement with the report of Isaacs and Hollow (2012:32) which states that: "Survey respondents say that ICT has the potentials to accelerate, enrich, and deepen skill; to motivate and engage students in learning English language and relate school experiences to work practices. This will contribute to radical changes as they access and read more

information from these digital devices. Reading is the bedrock of formal education and so, no one can neglect it and still find learning in a formal situation easy. In agreement with this view, Wilkins in Ogugua(2006) states that, it is only through massive exposure to language that vocabulary meaning could be acquired which could be more enhance, if, these digital media are judiciously utilized for efficient learning.

4. Statement of the Problem

The era of social media has done more havoc than the good expected from its usage where students' papers in assaulting written English are full of punctuation mistakes, inappropriate abbreviations, graphemes and contractions. It is believed that this trend could hinder the expected progress that digital media could bring to actualize effective learning of L2 in and outside classrooms situation.

Studies have shown that ICT and its social media had neither contributed but served as a cog to the wheel of the progress of second language acquisition. O'Connor (2006) expresses her concern about what she describes as the "bastardization" of the English language, that is, the use of bad grammar, poor punctuation and improper abbreviations in academic writings which she claims is traceable to the digital writing culture. John Humphrys in September 28, 2007, in an article in *Mail Online* describes the new orthographic forms encouraged by SMS practices as "pillaging our punctuation; savaging our sentences; and raping our vocabulary". It is believed that this could affect learners' proficiency in second language learning. Against this bedrock, the researcher investigated the students' effective acquisition of English as second language in Nigeria.

5. The Objective of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To evaluate the students' effective acquisition of English of ESL through ICT in public secondary schools in Ekiti State
- To examine the effect of ICT on students' effective acquisition of ESL in public secondary schools in Ekiti State

6. Research Questions

- What are the perceived ICT facilities for effective ESL acquisition?
- To what extent are students exposed to ICT for effective ESL acquisition?

7. Hypothesis

HO₁: There is no significant different performance of students who are ICT compliance and those that are not.

8. Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research for data collection. The target population for this study was SS2 students in all the public secondary schools in Ekiti State. This population is so chosen because it is at this level that any course that is intended at improving the effective acquisition to enhance better performance at the external examination. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select two public secondary schools equipped with ICT and two public secondary schools that were not equipped with ICT facilities from each of the 3 Senatorial districts in Ekiti State, totaling 12 public secondary schools.

Stratified proportional random sampling was used to select 400 SS2 students from the population of 3,756. A self-constructed questionnaire titled 'ICTESLAQ' was used as the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in English Language Education and Test and Measurement.

9. Results and Discussion

The results of the study are presented below:

Research Question 1: What are the perceived ICT facilities for effective ESL acquisition?

Table1. Perceived ICT facilities for effective acquisition

S/N	Facilities	Available	%	Not Available	%
Flip Classroom	188	47	212	53	
Video Conference	172	43	228	57	
Tape Recorder	214	53.5	186	46.5	
Computer	232	58	168	42	
Bulletin Boards	253	63.25	147	36.75	
Internet	159	39.75	241	60.25	
Electronic Board	116	29	184	71	
Projectors	173	43.25	227	56.75	
Slides	156	39	244	61	
Mean		46.19		53.81	

Table 2: To what extent are students exposed to ICT for effective ESL acquisition?

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D
1	There are functional internet facilities	62	73	120	255
2	There are periodic training for students on the use of ICT	30	46	208	116
3	ICT materials are enough for teaching-learning	56	81	134	129
4	ICT enhances effective teaching-learning	134	126	98	42
5	ICT helps students to be more knowledgeable	88	79	142	91
6	Most secondary schools lack computer facilities	182	144	41	33
7	Inadequate power supply impedes the use of ICT	156	173	36	35
8	The use of ICT facilities make learning boring	89	66	102	143
9	I prefer ICT for improvement on language acquisition	109	133	83	75
10	ICT helps to enrich the listening and learning skills	98	115	125	82
11	Using ICT is a waste of time in ESL acquisition	94	65	136	105
12	ICT helps to captivate the attention of the students	128	137	86	49
	Total	1226	1238	1311	1155

The table above showed the rate of exposure of students to the use of ICT and the impact of the exposure on the acquisition of second language.

Table 3: t-test Analysis on the significant difference among those that are ICT compliance and those that are not.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-Cal	T-Cri	Decision
ICT Compliance	200	22.57	17.34		398	1.86	1.29
ICT Non-Compliance	200	10.01	6.26				Sig

The above table shows that the calculated t-value was 1.86. This was tested for significance by comparing it with critical value at 0.05 alpha level with 398 degree of freedom. The calculated value of 1.86 was greater than the critical t-value 1.29. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. The implication is, there is significant difference among those that are ICT compliance and those that are not. This is justified by the data analysis as the t-cal is greater than t-critical.

10. Discussion of Findings

The findings in table 1 revealed that ICT facilities i.e. flip classroom, video conference, tape recorder, computer, bulletin boards, Internet, electronic board, projectors and slides were scantily available in Nigerian schools. Despite this, the respondents that were ICT compliance showed the improvement they had on their performances through the use of ICT.

This presupposed that if ICT facilities are adequately provided, there would be opportunity for easy acquisition of English as Second language.

Table 2 explains the interrelationship that exists between the accessibility of ICT as a supplement and avenue for further linguistic facilities to aid effective acquisition of L2 and students performance. This agrees with SCRIB (2009) that one of the benefits of online resources is that, it arouses students' interest. It could also serve as instrument of motivation for potential L2 proficiency. These online pedagogical resources serve as alternative linguistic facilities in the acquisition of ESL with dual ability of motivating learners to learn and enhance their understanding of the target language Irewole and Akinsuroju (2018).

Table 3 indicates that there is significant difference among those that are ICT compliance and those that are not in public Secondary schools in Ekiti State. The calculated value of 1.86 was greater than the critical t-value 1.29. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. The implication is, there is significant difference among those that are ICT compliance and those that are not in public secondary schools in Ekiti State. The finding is in line with Trucano (2012) and Isaacs and Hollow (2012:32) who posit that ICT has the potentials to accelerate, enrich, and deepen skills; to motivate and engage students in learning English as a second language in order to relate school experiences to work practices.

11. Conclusion

The finding of the study has shown that Nigerian secondary schools lack adequate application of ICT facilities that can enhance, motivate and encourage learners to learn and acquire second language through ICT media. The benefits of ICT should therefore propel Nigerian Institutions, organizations and individuals to develop a culture that places a high value on information and communication technology to actualize means of integrating extra-linguistics facilities which sustain learners beyond the classroom situation in L2 situation.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- The government should see the need to increase funding for entire educational sector with focus on provision of ICT facilities in all our secondary schools.
- Non-governmental organizations and individuals philanthropists should support the government to ensure adequate supply of these ICT facilities.
- There should be periodic/regular training of both teachers and students.

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