

**CAUSES OF POOR PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AMONG  
THE SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN EGOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**AREA OF EDO STATE**

**BY**

**OMORODION PEACE OVBOKHAN**

**EDU1702919**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**BENIN CITY**

**JANUARY. 2023**

**CAUSES OF POOR PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AMONG  
THE SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN EGOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
AREA OF EDO STATE**

**BY**

**OMORODION PEACE OVBOKHAN**

**EDU1702919**

**RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL  
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF  
BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (B.ED) DEGREE IN ENGLISH AND  
LITERATURE EDUCATION, IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN , BENIN CITY.**

**JANUARY. 2023**

## CERTIFICATION

this is to certify that this project work was carried out by **Omorodion Peace Ovbokhan** in the Department Of Educational Foundations, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo.

---

**Dr. O.E Osagiobare**  
(Project Supervisor)

---

**Dr. Mrs. .P .Y Iordye**  
(Project Coordinator)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Prof. O.K. Omorogiuwa**  
Dean, Faculty of Education

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## DEDICATION

I dedicated this project work to Almighty God for His grace throughout the course of study. And to my parent Mr. and Mrs. **Omorodion** for their love, support and encouragement.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to express special thanks of gratitude to my Head of Department and project supervisor Dr. O.E. OSAGIOBARE for his guidance and supervision in making this project success. And secondly my special friend DIDIJON .P. OJEVWE for your support all through the academic session. And lastly my parents Mr and Mrs EGBORO for presenting me this opportunity and making it all possible.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

CERTIFICATION

DEDICATION

UNDERTAKING

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

**CHAPTER ONE**

## **ABSTRACT**



## **Chapter one**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

English language is the instrument of communication in our post primary institutions, higher institution well as the official language of the country. Therefore, secondary school students need effective English to function properly or perform better. Fema, (2003) was of the view that “a person is functionally literate when he required the knowledge and skills in reading and writing which enables him to engage effectively in all those activities in which literacy is normally assumed in his culture of group”. English language normally has four basic skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is the medium of instruction in our schools and compulsory subject that must be passed at all levels of education in Nigeria (Danladi, 2008). However, it is disheartening to note that the poor performance of students in

English at public examinations in recent times has been explained as a major cause of decline in the general academic performance and standard of education in Nigeria. Oluwole, (2008) was of the view that “having difficulty in grasping fully the contents and concepts of the various subjects of the curriculum taught in target language seem to be one of the most serious problems that English as a first language students face in their particular course of study. This might be due to their weakness in English language (the medium of institution) which may be negative consequences on their overall performance.

The Daily trust of Wednesday, August 25, 2010 reported that “seventy-five percent of candidates who sat for May/June WAEC 2010 examination failed to meet the minimum entry requirement into tertiary institutions. The recently released WAEC results indicate that over seventy percent November/December results. 86612 candidates, representing 29.17 percent of the total number of candidates who sat for the Nov/Dec examinations of West African Examination Council

(WAEC), obtained credits in five subjects and above, including English and Mathematics. Again, the WAEC has released its who sat for the May/June 2014 WASSCE results, recording mass failure in Mathematics and English. Head of National Office. WAEC Charles Eguridu, while announcing the results said “A total of 529,425 candidate; representing 31.28 percent obtained credits. According to him when compared to the 2012 and 2013 May/June WASSCE, there was marginal decline in the performance of candidates as 38.81 percent was recorded in 2012 and 36.57 percent in 2013.

Out of 1,471,151 candidates that sat for the May/June WASSCE representing 94.36 percent, 923,486 candidates representing 59.22 percent, obtained minimum of number of credits in English Language. According Olu Adenipekun, said 786,016 candidates that sat for May/June WASSCE representing 49.98 obtained a minimum in English Language in 2018. Also, in 2019 out of “One million Twenty Thousand

Five Hundred and Nineteen (1,020,519), representing 64.18 percent obtained a minimum of credits and above in English Language.

## **1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of the study is to:

1. Fine out the main causes of poor performance in English Language among secondary school students in UDSS Benin City, Edo State
2. Find out the ways of improving learning of English Language among secondary school students in UDSS in Benin City, Edo State.

## **1.3 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

1. Performance: refers to the academic achievement of senior secondary students.
2. Lack or inferior standard or quality.

## **1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study shall consider the personal biodata of the respondents; the study shall focus on causes of poor performance in English Language

among the senior secondary students, also finding a lasting solution to the problem.

The limitations of the study shall include lack of time to conduct relevant interviews and carry out a thorough survey and insufficient fund for elaborate

### **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Each year, many students in the senior secondary schools, slide down the slipper, slope of poor performances. In this study, an attempt is made to find out the causes of poor performance students in English Language among senior students in UDSS.

School administrative would find study as a guild in dealing with the day to day problems of students and staffs that could enhance in the study of English Language among the students.

## **1.8 DELIMINATION OF THE STUDY**

The scope of the study is limited to the investigation into causes of poor performance in English Language among senior secondary students in UDSS Benin City, Edo State. More so, the investigation covers both students and staffs of the senior secondary school.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **1.9 English Language Learning and Teaching in Classroom:**

The teaching and learning process involve two participants in the classroom-the teacher and the learner, and that language learning does not fall entirely on the teachers. The students must also assume more, and that language learning does not fall entirely on the teacher. The students must also assume more responsibility for the learning process (Quist, 2000). For examples, Vuzo (2010) reported. "it is through interactions with each other that teachers and students work together

to create intellectual and practical activities that shape both the form and the content of the target subject. However, such situation is not commonly found in secondary schools in all subjects since lecturer method dominates the teaching and learning in which lead to passive learning and teaching in the (p.18). once cummings (2002) as quoted Wang et al. (1994) said: “when I hear, I forget. When I see, I remember and when I do, I learn” (p.111). Cummings noted that learning in which students are interactive produces far more interactive and teaching in the classroom will depend upon the educational repertoire teachers have. This idea concern with Quist (2000) in that successful teaching and quality of pupil learning is closely related to the teacher’s knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Furthermore, the English teacher is a figure in the language course.

Literature indicates clearly that it is the teacher who sets the tone for learning activities Allen & Vallete et al. (2000). Since to teach is to communicate. English teacher must have maximum communicative

competence. Also, a teacher must be knowledgeable in the language itself so that he/she can make useful decisions regarding what should be taught to whom, and how the teaching should be done. Researches clearly show that among the factors that lead to students' poor performance are qualities of teachers Harmer et al, (2003). Moreover, empirical studies showed that if early years at the school fail to provide the right foundation for learning, then no amount of special provision at later stages will be able to achieve the full potential of the child in terms of how his learning will proceed, and how beneficial his attitudes are towards his future life and learning Quist, (2000)

Teaching materials are very important in the teaching and learning of any subject. They are more pleasant to be students because they offer a reality of experience, which stimulates self-actively and imagination on the part of students. They also supply a concrete basis for conceptual thinking and hence, reduce meaningless word responses from students Nyamubi, (2003). For instance, Kapoli, (2001) noted that

authentic materials enable the students to explore the language used in day-to-day life and which is tailored to their needs and interest, UNESCO, (2000) reported that the provision of teaching and learning materials especially books are an effective way of improving results. However, the World Education Report (1998) reveals out that in many countries, conditions are difficult, whether they relate to the physical states of schools and the student population.

There are many causes of poor performance in English language among senior secondary school students. These include the following:

The dominance of mother tongue is regarded as one of the causes of poor performance in English language. Usman, (2012) was of the review that Nigerian Students are surrounded by a complex linguistic situation that force them to learn their first indigenous language and they are required to have a good command of the English Language. The Nigerian policy on education stressed the use of the immediate language of the community in instruction at the lower level of primary

education and combination of English and Language of the immediate community at upper part of primary education. In other words, the policy recommended the use of mother tongue in teaching at primary level. This situation contributes immensely in poor learning of English Language right from primary school and it extends to secondary school. Fema, (2003) was of the view that the major causes of the error in English used by Nigerians can be attributed to the interference of mother tongue in all their interaction and English is only used within the four walls of the classrooms and ends there.

The above situation clearly shows that dominance of mother tongue in Azare metropolis contributed immensely in poor performance in English language.

Inadequate qualified English language teachers also cause poor performance in English language in our secondary school. Due to the above-mentioned cause, in some schools' other subject teachers are forced to teacher English language and some who even read it exhibit

poor abilities in oral and written expression of it. Therefore, with the kind of situation these teachers can never teach effectively and hence poor performance from their products. Adedokun, (2011) was of the view that poorly trained English and untrained teachers (of English) were employed to teach and prepare secondary school's students for the school certificate examinations in English Language. The situation contributed immensely in poor English Language among secondary school students.

Through readings of different materials, poor performance of English language can be caused by low teaching and learning motivation. Low motivation in English acquisition can be derived from the fact that out of the classrooms, English serves no purpose as the community around the school environment does not use English D. Mustafa, (2013).

Therefore, the motivation for English acquisition is low. This can snowball to other effects causing low confidence to use teachers and students themselves.

Family's financial and educational background is also an issue worth looking at. Compared to urban parents, parents in rural area have low financial ability and almost all of them work primarily as farmers and fishermen. Excluding financial help from various government agencies such as 'e-kasih' and 'Brim', parents in this area do not have the means to support their children. This can be translated to not being able to support them to go tuition classes and buying extra learning materials compared to parents from the urban school. Besides that, parents' low educational attachment means that they also cannot support their children in learning from home Lamb, (2008). Therefore, learning is relegated to teachers and that can only happen in schools.

Therefore, is clear to use that inadequate qualified teachers in our secondary schools lead to poor performance in English.

Inadequate infrastructure facilities and instructional media are regarded as another cause of poor performance in English language in our secondary schools. Roger, (1981) was of the review that

instructional materials and facilities are important part of the process of learning as they provide practice and feedback in learning track. In our present-day secondary schools particularly, public one's students are in most cases sitting on the floor and window. In addition, some cases, students are living under trees or living in dilapidated classroom. In addition to that even where there are enough classes, they are overcrowded, and language laboratory are lacking. All these cannot allow for proper learning of English language and other subjects hence lead to poor performance. Sa'ad, (2007) was of the view that teaching and learning take place effectively when classes are moderate. But present-day Nigerian class is over populated with students over 120 and this cannot allow for proper teaching and learning. On the other hand, in the area of instructional resources or media, there is dominance of textbooks, dictionaries, workbooks and posters in the teaching of English language in secondary schools in Nigeria. Modern media such as audio, video tapes, language laboratories, programmed, texts, flash card; computer, magazines and newspapers are rarely used.

Mohammed, (1998) observed that the teaching of English language is bedeviled with many problems such as inadequate period of teaching, method of teaching and lack of adequate and useful resources.

Therefore, it is clear to us that inadequate infrastructural facilities leading to large class sizes and inadequate as well as obsolete teaching resources or media lead to poor performance in English language in secondary schools.

Another important cause of poor performance in English language in Nigeria is the negative attitude of students toward the learning of English language. Students, particularly in secondary and primary mostly show negative attitude learning of English language because they consider it foreign or not there. Mohammed, (2002) was of the view that most students put a kind of negative attitude in learning and use of English Language as well as making teachers task a difficult one in deed. It is obvious that for any students to be proficient in English

language, mastering of skill of listening, speaking, writing is necessary, and it requires a hardworking and dedication from the students.

Therefore, the negative attitude of students toward learning of English language is one of the causes of poor performance in the subject (English language)

Improper use of method of teaching also causes poor performance in English language among secondary school students. It is obvious that successful teaching and learning take place when right teaching methods are used by teacher's age, the topic, the time and background of the learners in choosing the method to be used by teachers. Ya'a, (1993) in Sa'ad, (2007) was of the view that successful achievement of stated objectives in teaching and learning is always associated with using the right method. Sometimes teachers of English language do not consider the learners' age, the topic, the time background of the learners in choosing the method to be used in teaching and this affects the level of learning of the students.

Therefore, teacher's inability to use proper teaching methods contributes in poor learning of English language among secondary school students.

Lately, teacher factor also plays an important role. In some, teacher turnover is high. Experienced teachers often transfer back to their original states thus taking their precious experience of teaching English to another school. To counter that, new teachers are posted but they don't have the experience to teach English effectively. Some teachers are also low motivated when they are posted to these rural schools and that can be carried into the classroom, rendering the teaching and learning process of English ineffective.

By looking at the various issues above, it is imperative that these issues be identified and chronicled into order according to their impact and severity before concrete steps can be formulated to overcome these issues.

There are many ways that can be followed to improve the English language performance of secondary school students. These are:

Abdullah, (2003), Sa'ad, (2007), Abdulganiyu, (2010) and Usman, (2012) were of the view that provision of enough instructional media/materials, qualified teachers as well as conducive classroom will assist a lot in improving their learning performance of secondary school students in English Language.

**2.0 Udumah, (1987) was of the view that teachers should device ways through which they can help the students to improve their learning, speech and their listening skills. He categorically stated that:**

- Students should be taught correct pronunciation in English language in order to make minimize the effect of the first language on the second (English language).
- Instructional materials and facilities should be provided for effective teaching and learning of English.

- More qualified teachers of English language should be provided, and they should be encouraging to undergo professional teaching courses, workshops and seminars to update them.
- Students should be encouraging to communicate in English language in and outside the classroom.
- Facilities like language laboratory should be provided to assist in proper teaching and learning of English Language.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Research methodology**

In this chapter, a detailed explanation of the procedure employed in this study will be outlined. We will center on the chosen population of study,

sample size, selection, the instruments of administration and method of collection of data, and the statistical method employed in the analysis of data collected.

### **Research design**

The design that was used in the study was descriptive survey. It was used because it permitted the researcher to study small sample and later generalized the findings to the whole population. Osuala, (2001) was of the view that in survey research small sample studied and the finding generalized to the population.

### **Research question**

This study attempted to provide answers to the following

1. What are the main causes of poor performance in English language among senior secondary students in UDSS
2. What are the way of improving learning of English language among senior secondary school students in UDSS

## **Population of the study**

the target population of study comprises of students in university demonstrative Senior Secondary. Due to the vast number of students this school, and in order to obtain information quickly and easily to speed up the process of this study, the accessible population consists of students in the UDSS.

## **Sample for the study**

The sample used in this study was two hundred and twenty teachers and students selected using stratified random sampling technique, in which three hundred were students and fifty were teachers were selected. The sample was selected based on Krejcie and Morgan's table of sample as contained in Kolo, (1992).

## **Sample Technique**

### **SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The sample size for this study of two hundred and ten (210) students was given as the target population size for the allocation of the questionnaires while two hundred were students and ten were teachers. A simple random sampling technique was adopted for the selection.

Simple random sampling is a statistical tool used to describe a very basic sample taken from a data population. This sample represents the equivalent of the entire population. Using simple random sampling allows researchers to make generalization about a specific population and leave out any bias. This can also help to determine how to make future decisions. Statisticians will devise an exhaustive list of a data population and then select a random sample within that large group. In this sample, every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected to be part of this sample.

## **Instrument for Data collection**

The major research instruments adopted for gathering data for this study was the questionnaire method. The questionnaire was a self-designed structured, made up of two (2) sections, A and B. The contents of part A section of the questionnaire was strictly on the respondents Bio-data, while that of section B contained Fifteen (15) structured questions in line with the topic of investigation, with four (4) options each, requiring respondents to choose only the options from among alternatives.

## **DATA ENTRY/METHODOLOGY OF DATA ANALYSIS**

After the collection and editing of the questionnaire, the were renumbered and coded to suit the desired technique. The collection of the coded data was done via electronic process using SPSS package for the coding. The computer package called the statistical package for social science (SPSS) was then used for data analysis since it has the facilities needed for the data analysis. The package (SPSS) makes it easy to access and analyze massive data. This took some few days before it was completely analyzed.

### **Ethical consideration**

The study primarily engaged those respondents in the area who had been viewed necessary for data collection. Accordingly, extreme confidently had to be promised and this was to be effected only, by promising secrecy to the selected respondents information provided.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter, we will deal extensively with the presentation and analysis of the data. Adopting the simple percentage method with aids of a computer, we shall outline in the form of tables in the various findings and brief comments on what the results suggest. The various questions

outlined in the questionnaire used to elicit various responds shall be taken in turn and analyzed in tabulated form as processed using the (via SPSS package).

