

**A SURVEY OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE PROBLEMS MILITATING
AGAINST THE EFFECTIVE LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

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BENIN CITY.**

MAY, 2024

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATIONS, FACULTY OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT OF THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A/ED) IN ENGLISH
AND LITERATURE EDUCATION**

MAY, 2024

CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned, certify that this research work was carried out by **Ruth Omokhagbo Afeh**, with the matriculation number **EDU1903239**, in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City.

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DEDICATION

This project work is solely dedicated to God Almighty for His goodness, kindness, provision, unending favour and mercies.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the student's perception of problems militating against effective the learning English language in public secondary school in Oredo educational zone.

The design adopted was the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised of 13 public schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo state, with the total population of 2626,785 students. Simple random technique was adopted with a total number of 250 students. The research instruments used for the study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. "Section A" was designed to generate personal information of the respondents. While the "Section B" comprises of items on the topic under research. It was constructed to reflect the problem of the study such that the items would be relevant to the purpose of the study. The instrument was reviewed and certified by the project supervisor and two (2) other lecturers in the Department of Educational Foundation. Faculty of Education in University of Benin. Data collected were analyzed using "test re-test" method for the study.

The findings of the study revealed that students they lack concentration in English language because of mother tongue interference; They also the lack qualified teachers; They are influenced by the home background which affects their English language learning; They lack proper classroom and also without classroom necessity and amenities. It was recommended that Students are to take their academic seriously, avoid bad companies, engage actively in class, struggle to assuage the effects of factors they cannot control such as poor background by way of determining to learn and be successful.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Nigeria is a country with about four hundred different languages. Some of these languages are spoken by millions of people while others are spoken by only a few thousands persons some of these languages also are believed to have gone extinct. Following the 1963 census. The major languages of the nation are put at Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba Hausa is used as first language (L1) by some 11.5 million persons, Yoruba by 9.5 million persons and Igbo by 7 million people. Each of these languages is also spoken as a second language (L2) by an estimated one million people.

Nigerian languages are used as a great deal in the everyday lives of the people. They are used in school's market places, in offices, in factories and at school gatherings. Books are published in most of the Nigeria languages and the major languages have newspapers, magazines, holy books, and comics written in them traditional theatre and musical groups are found in many parts of the country, using the indigenous Nigerian language.

In spite of the widespread use of indigenous Nigerian language in Nigerian society, no single Nigerian language has yet emerged as the country's dominant language. This is because

no single language is spoken and understood by an overwhelming majority of Nigerians. The Nigerian language situation is thus one in which multiplicity of language Coexist. Obanya, secondary English Teaching (Lagos, Macmillan Nigeria Publishers (1982) P1. Institute of Education University of Ibadan publication “Language arts methods” (1981) P3. As a result of this multiplicity of languages and consequently tribes and culture there is a problem of which language should be given prominence over the other languages. There have been calls and concerted efforts towards the development and adoption of a common national language, but the question still persists; which language should be given prominence over the other? Due to this reason, even when two people from the same language community speak, they are forced to resort to some English words in order to drive home their points.

Based on this multilingual nature of Nigeria English language readily tends to meet some of the conditions which the indigenous languages have failed to meet. English language can be said to be playing a unifying role in Nigeria. It is the only language which Nigerians of diverse linguistic, geographical, social and religious backgrounds have in common. It is used to conduct the various official business of the nation. It is the language of the legislature commerce, the mass media as well as the language of instruction in schools and colleges. This is of course in addition to the indigenous language of the local community. It is to be noted however that English language is the medium of instruction in the senior primary, the secondary school and in tertiary institutions. In these schools the native language or mother tongue is offered as a school subject.

Speakers of English language fall into three categories. The native speakers; speaker of English as a foreign language and speakers of English as a second language (L2) a speaker of English as a native language acquires English naturally as a young child. This is usually because his parents use English as their normal means of communication with him and with each other and it is the language used by the community in which he is growing up. It is spoken as a native language in Britain, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand etc. As a foreign language, English is usually taught as a subject at school or college. A speaker in this situation lives in a country where English is used as a second language (L2). A speaker of English as a second language usually lives in a country where English is not the native language of the indigenous inhabitants. However, in his country, English is frequently used as a means of communication between speakers of different native languages. It is the language of education, commerce and politics. These children are often exposed to English before they learn and use it at school.

In Nigeria, English is an important item in the school syllabus which is prescribed and which must be followed. It is a compulsory school subject and a credit pass in it is a prerequisite for admission into institutions of higher education in the country. This is of course irrespective of the course of study. At the University level a pass in the use of English is a prerequisite for the award of a degree certificate. In spite of the glorious position occupied by English language in Nigeria, the number of people who understand the language is limited. Efforts have to be made to increase the number of people who understand English. The model advocated for is the Standard English which until recently is the model prescribed for Grammar, vocabulary and spelling and the Received Pronunciation (RP) as the model for pronunciation. This could be taught through the mass media of schools and colleges. The method of teaching the English language and the problems associated with each shall form the basis of this essay. The problem associated with the learning of English language can be classified into instructional and infrastructural problems as well as biases and interferences from the first language (L1). Language learning does not have to follow the same path whatever the objective and circumstances. The teacher faced with decisions on the methods and techniques that he has to use and bear in mind the conditions under which he will be working. The teacher also has to take into account his own qualities and the characteristics of his pupils both physical and other conditions in which he has to work. In learning English in a second language situation, the learner is taught English at school and unconsciously “picks it up” out of school from his family and friends, from the radio, from Newspapers, from films, from public speeches etc. Most of the English he will be exposed to out of school will be incorrect English because it will be spoken by people whose first language is not English. In addition, he will face problems in learning English as a result of interference from the mother tongue: for example, if the mother tongue does not contain /r/ sound he will probably pronounce “river” as “liver”.

Another problem area in the learning of English is the widespread use of pidgin. It makes the learning of grammar difficult because the grammar of pidgin has, in most cases, been implied and made to come as near as possible to that of some indigenous Nigerian languages. Kamler (2001) pointed out that the very poor performance of students in the West African Certificate in English Language is as a result of unqualified teachers and poor background knowledge of English. On the issue of trained manpower, the student in this situation might be taught English by a teacher who has not attained a very high level of competence in the language. The size of the class and the number of classes equally has a role to play in teacher’s efficiency. English

language learning in schools covers the following areas: Vocabulary, reading, writing, speech and grammar. These areas also have associated problems. It is important to note that despite the catalogue of problem listed above the situation is far from hopeless. Various techniques and methods are to be adopted to remedy the situation.

Statement of the Problem

It is common to often hear people complain about the poor performances of students in English language in both internal and external examinations, and even in the verbal usage of the spoken language. Various reasons have been advanced for this trend. Some of these reasons include the inability of candidates to differentiate between two apparently similar sounds and orthography, this inability to differentiate between these sounds is as a result of interference from the first language (L1) on the acquisition of the second language (L2) skills which in this case is the English language. The shortage of trained English teachers, the size of the class, home background of the student, also the Interference of the mother tongue, are some of the problems that affect the effective acquisitions of English language skills by students.

One of the major problem border on the shortage of trained English teachers. Tudor P.J., once talking about the importance of trained teachers said that; the most creatively constructed curriculum will be fruitless if teachers are not trained to work and adapt intelligently. The professionally trained English teacher is necessary for improve students' performance.

Some of the classes in our secondary schools are too large. It is not uncommon to see classes having over seventy students in a single arm of a class. It is difficult for a teacher to give all the students the individual attention needed for effective language study in a class of forty minutes. Instructional aids facilitate the acquisition of language skills. But these aids are lacking in most of the secondary schools in Egor LGA, Edo state.

Finally, students' home background is one other factor which affects students' performance in the acquisition of language skills. Homes where there are no books to aid the student learning of English language, leads such students come to school unprepared. The researcher intends to examine these stated problems and to examine some of the variables that may constitute the to the problems perceived by student to militate against the effective learning of the English language.

Research questions

1. Does the mother tongue interfere with the acquisition of the English language skills?
2. Does the shortage of trained English teachers affect the effective learning of English language?
3. Does the size of class affect the student ability to acquire English language skills?
4. Does the students' home back ground affect the learning of English language skills by the students?

Significance of the Study

It is my belief that based on the identified problems of teaching English language in secondary schools in Egor LGA, Edo state, coupled with suggested improvements, there will be an improved standard in the teaching/learning situation and consequently an improvement in the performance of the students on the field. Students will be able to communicate more effectively. It will also help the student to improve on their performance in other subject areas since English language is the medium of instruction.

Scope / Delimitations

This study is intended to cover some selected secondary schools in Egor LGA, Edo state. The research intends to look into the problems militating the effective teaching and learning of English language in secondary schools in Egor LGA, Edo state, and proffer solutions to the stated problems.

Definition of Terms

First language (L1) – it is the language a person learns first. In most cases, it is usually the mother tongue.

Second language (L2) – This is the language adopted by a country through administrative or judicial decision. It could be an indigenous or local language or a foreign one.

Standard English – Standard English is the type of English written by educated English men.

Received Pronunciation (R.P)- Received Pronunciation is the type of English most often heard among educated people in southern England. It is used by majority of Londoners who have had university education and it is commonly heard in oxford and Cambridge.

Pidgin – Pidgin is a mixture of at least two languages. Christopherson, p – An English phonetic course (London, Longman (1955 p9.)

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an insight to findings concerning effective learning of English language. The term "effective learning" is used in a broad sense than simply student behavior, or what occurs between teachers and students in the classroom. This chapter is outlined under the following sub heading.

- Concept of Learning
- Importance of Learning English Language
- Problems of Effective Learning of English Language
- Appraisal on the Learning of English Language
- Students Perception on the effective learning of English Language
- Summary of Reviewed Literature

Concept of Learning

Learning is "a process that leads to change, which occurs as a result of experience and increases that potential for improved performance and future learning" (Ambrose et al., 2010, p.3). The change in every learner may happen at the level of knowledge, attitude or behavior. The change is not merely incidental or natural in the way that our appearances change as we get older. It is a relatively permanent change, usually brought about intentionally.

In common parlance the word 'learning' carries at least two meanings. There is a general one of some kind of change, often in knowledge but also in behavior. However, learning cannot be defined merely in terms of changes in behavior. But there is also a more intense sense of the verb 'to learn' meaning to memorize, to learn by heart (Roger, 2003, p.86).

To say that 'learning is change' is too simple. Not all change is learning. What we usually mean by 'learning' are those more or less permanent changes and reinforcements brought about voluntarily in one's patterns of acting, thinking and/or feeling (Roger, 2003, p.86).

According to Ambrose et al. (2010, p.3):

Learning is a process, not a product

Learning is a change in knowledge, beliefs, behaviors or attitudes

Learning is not something done to students, but something that students themselves do

There have been several attempts to describe the different areas of learning change. The traditional distinction has been between learning knowledge and learning skills; but others have elaborated on this. Several point to the need to include attitudes as a third area. In the field of learning objectives, knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) is a well-worn path (Rogers, 2003, p.86).

Importance of Learning English Language

A language is a systematic means of communication by the use of sounds or conventional symbols. It is the code we all use to express ourselves and communicate to others, it is communication by word of mouth.

English language is widely considered to be the lingua franca of the world and is the standard language in a variety of fields, including computer coding, international business, and higher education. English is the language international communication; it is the official language of 67 countries around the globe, as well as an official secondary language in a further 27 countries and the most common second language in the world.

The ability to communicate in English connects us to people, both personally and professionally, English can be vital for education with essential mastery of the four skills of a language (reading, writing, listening and speaking). The English language bridges gap between nations and offers everyone the possibility of attaining wide exposure. The adoption of the English language as the principal source of communication has resulted in the increasing international relationships in travel and tourism, education, business, entertainment, science and technology etc.

The learning of English language helps individuals to transcend international boundaries and get global reach. Effectively, with the support of good understanding and communication skills, a person can easily transfer ideas and thoughts to one another. An insight of the English language increases the chances of a good career.

Many nations have included English as their second language in their school curriculum to assist students in the learning of English language at a young age. The initiative of using the English language as a medium of instruction in schools and colleges brings a commonality to the structure of education and brings multiple positive impact to the students.

Problems of Effective Learning of English Language

The following are some relatable problems of effectively teaching and learning of the English language

Home background

The home is the first socializing agent of a child. It comprises the father, mother, brother, sister and others living with them. The home is one of the agents that creates the first impression which lasts throughout a child's life and also seen as a place that shapes the child's attitude and behaviour towards career development (Amadi and Ani, 2017). Students come from different home backgrounds and therefore have different upbringing (Osuafor and Okonkwo, 2013). Students home background is a major factor influencing learning because different students background characteristics exert a strong influence on their academic performance (Kakumbi et al., 2016). According to Dzever (2015), there is a significant relationship between the three dimensions of parenting styles at home and the academic performance of secondary school students. It was further found that parental restrictions on child behaviour and parental involvement in their children education is higher among urban students than their rural counterparts (Doley, 2018). This signifies that the academic performance of secondary school

students can as well be influenced by urban and rural localities. According to Owoeye and Yara (2011), students in the urban locations have a very great advantage by learning in an urban environment, which apparently enriches their academic performance, despite the apparent disadvantage of having to learn in large classes. Students in urban environment enjoy amenities like electricity, television, computer, and other facilities that can facilitate learning

Overpopulation of Students in A Class

Class size can have a significant impact on student and effective delivery of teaching instruction studies have shown that smaller classes lead to higher achievement and improved student behavior, particularly for students from low-income background. According to Federal Government of Nigeria in her national policy on education (FGN,2018), teaching and learning process should be seen as activity engaged by teachers and students in a conducive atmosphere, thus the student teacher ratio should not exceed 1:40.

The effect of overpopulation on academic performance is a major controversy. The lower the teacher-student ratio allow for more effective communication between student and teacher. A study by Emeka (2013) reported that the positive relationship between certain variables such as class sizes, teacher-student ratio, student factors and performance in examination. They were discovered to be factors that have strong and direct influence in academic performance of school students, schools with larger class size and popular and high teacher-student ratio recorded poor performance while better academic performance associates with schools with small size and lower teacher-student ratio.

Shortage of Qualified Teachers

The mastery of a subject is determined by the performance of the students in such subject at a prescribed examination. The impact of the teachers in the performance of the students is germane because teachers are the facilitators who are to impart into the students the concept expected to be learnt. The significant importance is efficient in the propagation of learning contents by the teachers, and their academic and professionally qualified teacher's motivational abilities are obvious on their students' academic achievement as well as their fellow teachers. Similarly, Fuller (2005) states that highly qualified teachers produce greater student's achievement than their comparatively less qualified counterparts. Since teachers are important key players in teaching English language at secondary school level, it is important that they have good knowledge of the subject matter. Unfortunately, in most Nigerian schools, teachers who are not

qualified or competent enough to teach English are employed to do so resulting in mass failure among students at external examination such as West African Examination Council (WAEC) or the National Examination Council (NECO) and even the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board(JAMB) examinations.

Interference of Mother Tongue

It is undeniable that language plays an important role in human life. It is not only a tool for communication but also a tool for thought and a means of identifying oneself with a particular group. The language that a person first learns, i.e. their mother tongue, is the most important and influential language in their life.

A mother tongue is the language that a person has grown up with and is most comfortable with. It is the language that a person first learns and is the most influential language in his life. A mother tongue can have a significant impact on a person's English language skills. There are a number of reasons why mother tongue can affect English language skills. Firstly, mother tongue can influence the way a person learns English. If a person's first language is very different from English, he may find it more difficult to learn English. For example, if a person's first language is Chinese, he may have difficulty understanding the way English words are put together. Mother tongue can also influence the way a person uses English. If a person's first language is very different from English, he may find it difficult to use English in a way that is natural and fluent (Robert, 2021).

Mother tongue interference can manifest in numerous ways during the process of learning and speaking English, especially for students whose mother tongue is significantly different from English. Challenges may arise in effectively communicating in class, which can, in turn, impact academic performance adversely (Robert, 2021).

Appraisal on the Learning English Language

In today's interconnected world, the importance of learning English cannot be overstated. As the global language of communication, education, science, technology, and international relations, English has become an indispensable tool for individuals, communities, and nations. This essay appraises the significance of learning English, highlighting its benefits, opportunities, and impact on personal and societal development.

Cultural Enrichment and Understanding:

Learning English provides a window into the world's diverse cultures, enabling individuals to explore and appreciate different perspectives, customs, and beliefs. Through English literature, music, and art, learners can gain a deeper understanding of the world's rich cultural heritage, fostering empathy, tolerance, and global citizenship.

Academic and Professional Advancement:

English is the language of international education, research, and scholarship. Proficiency in English opens doors to top universities, academic journals, and research opportunities, enabling individuals to pursue their academic and professional goals. In the workplace, English is the language of international business, trade, and diplomacy, making it an essential skill for career advancement and global competitiveness.

Global Connectivity and Communication:

English is the lingua franca of international communication, facilitating connections between people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Learning English enables individuals to engage in global conversations, participate in international events, and build relationships with people from around the world.

Economic Opportunities and Development:

English is a key driver of economic growth, trade, and investment. Countries with high levels of English proficiency attract foreign investment, tourism, and talent, driving economic development and competitiveness. Individuals with strong English skills are more likely to secure better job opportunities, higher salaries, and career advancement.

Personal Growth and Empowerment:

Learning English can be a transformative experience, boosting individuals' confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills. It opens up new opportunities for personal growth, travel, and cultural exchange, enabling individuals to navigate the world with ease and independence.

In conclusion, learning English is an invaluable investment in personal and societal development. It offers a wealth of benefits, from cultural enrichment and academic advancement to global connectivity and economic opportunities. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the importance of learning English will only continue to grow. Therefore, it is essential that individuals, communities, and nations prioritize English language education, empowering themselves and future generations to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Student Perception on Effective Learning of English Language

Student perception plays a significant and crucial role in the problems of effective English language learning. Some students may view English as an unimportant or difficult subject and they may not be motivated to learn it others may have low self-esteem or a negative view of themselves as learners which can make it difficult for them to engage in the learning process. Students who come from families or communities that do not value education, can also make it difficult for them to see the value of learning English language.

According to Aroma (2005), presently, Nigeria secondary school students have problems with learning the English language as revealed in their performance in the subject at public examinations. Ogunsiji and Fakeye (2009) state that the poor performance of students in the English language at public examinations in recent times has been explained as a major cause of the decline of academic achievement and the standard of education in Nigeria. One major reason why students fail the English language woefully in the yearly school certificate examination is the negative attitude of some students to the subject, (Fakeye,2010). Student's attitude to the language is likely to be one of the personal variables that affect their performance in the English language. The attitude of the learner towards language learning matters a lot of the learner is going to gain mastery of the subject for better performance.

In conclusion, students face various challenges in learning English, including ineffective teaching methods, limited practice opportunities, fear of error, inadequate resources, and personal factors. To address these issues, educators and policymakers must prioritize student-centered approaches, incorporating technology, authentic materials, and inclusive teaching practices. By doing so, we can create a supportive and engaging environment that fosters students' enthusiasm and success in learning English.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

Nigeria has been making effort to promote the use of English language, however, there are still problems or factors militating against the learning of English language. This research has found and outlined the major problems militating against the learning of English language in Oredo educational zone which includes, mother tongue interference, class size, availability of quality teachers and students home background. By addressing these challenges, we can:

- Improve students' English language proficiency

- Enhance their academic and career opportunities
- Foster greater cultural understanding and global connectivity
- Empower individuals and communities to reach their full potential

In conclusion, the effective learning of English is hindered by several key challenges, including Mother Tongue Interference, large Classroom Size, Students' Home Background, and the Availability of English Teachers. However, by understanding the complexities of these issues and implementing targeted strategies, we can create a more supportive and inclusive environment for English language learners.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodological approach employed to ascertain Students' Perception of the Problems militating against the Effective Learning of English Language in Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis. It details the:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the instrument
- Method of Data Administration and Collection
- Method of Data Analysis
- Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey research design to investigate Students' perception of problems militating against the effective learning of English language in secondary schools in Benin Metropolis.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprises of the thirteen (13) public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo state, with the total population of twenty-six thousand, seven hundred and eighty-five (26,785) students (male and female)

Sample and Sampling Technique

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals from a population in such a way that the individual represents the large population from which they are selected. The sampling technique adopted is the simple random sampling technique. Five (5) schools were selected from the thirteen (13) public schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The researcher will sample out twenty (50) students from the five (5) public secondary schools each making a total of 250 students.

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was designed and used to collect information from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two different sections. Section A and B, section A sought the demographic data of the respondents, while section B items focused on the various research questions raised for the study.

Validity of Instrument

The instrument was validated and certified by the supervisor and two (2) other lecturers in the Faculty of Education in the University of Benin to determine the effectiveness of the instrument before the final draft. Following revisions and approval, the instrument was ready for data collection.

Reliability of the instrument

To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the instrument was administered to twenty (20) students from a mixed public secondary school that was not part of the main study. The data was analyzed using the Cronbach alpha and a reliability coefficient of 0.716 was realized.

Method of Administration and Collection

The questionnaires were distributed directly to respondent in their schools. The respondents completed the questionnaires independently, and the researcher collected them upon completion. This method allowed participants to respond at their own pace and minimized researcher influence on their answers.

Method of Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics namely, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The result was presented in tables to explain the various responses to each of the questions using the formula 2.5 as cutoff point (for acceptance $X \geq 2.5$) will be used to present the data on the basis of conclusion drawn and acceptance made

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter entails the presentation of data analysis and interpretation of data collected. The data collected was through the use of questionnaire while the analysis was based on research questions stated earlier in chapter one of this study. Tables and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the research questions, and descriptive statistics deals with data presentation, analysis and discussing of the findings.

Research Question One: Does the shortage of trained English teachers affect the effective learning of English language?

Table 1: The shortage of trained English teachers on the effective learning of English language

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	S.D
1	Do you have English Teachers in your school?	151 60%	99 40%	- -	- -	250	3.60	0.49
2.	Have you considered outside help such as tutoring to improve your English skills?	52 21%	173 69%	- -	25 10%	250	3.00	0.78
3.	Are you satisfied with your English Teacher's method of teaching?	103 41%	97 39%	25 10%	25 10%	250	3.11	0.95
4.	Have you experienced any difficulty in learning English due to unavailable English teacher?	74 30%	52 21%	98 39%	26 10%	250	2.69	1.00
5.	Are you able to acquire English skills with the help of your English Teacher?	100 40%	127 51%	- -	23 9%	250	3.21	0.85

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

Total Mean = 15.61

Decision: weighted average = $15.61/5 = 3.122$

As represented in table 1 above, the result suggests that for item (1), 100% of the students either strongly agree (60%) or agree (40%) that English teachers are available in their school. This finding suggests that the effective learning of English language is affected by the availability of English teachers.

For item (2), (90%) of students expresses either strongly agree (21%) or agree (69%) that they have considered tutoring to improve their English skills. This shows that shortage of English teachers affects student learning of English skills

Item (3) also received a great measure of responses with a significant portion (80%) of students in agreement either strongly agree (41%) or agree (39%) that they are satisfied with their English teacher's method of teaching. The findings suggest that they are able to learn English with the help of their English teacher.

For item (4), some students (51%) expresses either strongly agree (30%) or agree (21%) in agreement that they have not experienced any difficulty in learning English due to unavailable English teachers. This shows that the learning of English is not affected by unavailable or shortage of English teachers.

Item (5) received a significant portion, (91%) of students are in agreement that they are able to acquire English skills with the help of their English teacher. This finding suggests that the students are able to learn English skills with the help of their teacher.

Research Question Two: How does the size of classroom affect the student ability to acquire English language skills?

Table 2: Classroom effect on student’s ability to acquire English language skills.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	S.D
1	Smaller class size result in more meaningful interactions and discussions in the classroom.	150 60%	25 10%	75 20%	- -	250	3.30	0.90
2.	Are you comfortable in your learning environment?	100 40%	100 40%	27 10%	23 10%	250	3.10	0.93
3.	Are you able to acquire English Language skills in a populated classroom?	176 70%	74 30%	- -	- -	250	3.70	0.46
4.	Smaller class size promotes engagement and participation among students.	100 34%	74 30%	25 10%	51 20%	250	2.89	1.14
5.	Class size rarely affect the learning of English Language.	101 40%	25 10%	48 20%	76 30%	250	2.60	1.28

Source:Researcher’s Fieldwork,2024

Total Mean = 15.59

Decision: weighted average = $15.59/5 = 3.118$

The findings from table 2 above suggest that item (6) received positive responses, with 70% of respondents expressing agreement (SA and A), and 20% expressing some level of distrust (D). The total mean score for this item is 3.30, indicating a great record of consensus among respondents. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that majority of students agree that smaller class size results in more meaningful interaction and discussion in the classroom.

Item (7) received mostly positive responses, with 80% of respondents agreeing (SA and A) and only 20% expressing disagreement (D and SD). The total mean score for this item is 3.10, which is above the mid-point. Therefore, this statement was accepted indicating that a significant

portion of students are comfortable in their learning environment which attributes to the effective learning of English skills.

Item (8) received mostly positive responses with 100% of respondents agreeing (SA and A). The total mean score for this item is 3.70, indicating strong agreement among respondent. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that the students are able to acquire English language skills in a populated classroom.

Item (9) received a massive positive response, with 70% of respondents agreeing (SA and A), and only 30% expressing disagreement (D and SD). The total mean for this item is 2.89, indicating strong agreement among respondents. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that smaller class size promotes engagement and participation among students.

Item (10) received 50% each of respondents agreeing (SA and A) and expressing disagreement (D and SD). The total mean for this item is 2.60, indicating a perfect consensus amongst respondents. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that class size rarely affects the learning of English language.

Research Question Three: Does the mother tongue interfere with the acquisition of English Language Skills?

Table 3: Mother tongue interference on English language skills.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	S.D
1	Is it difficult to learn English because of the mother tongue?	52 20%	49 20%	98 40%	51 20%	250	2.40	1.03
2.	Do you agree that your mother tongue influences your accent when speaking English?	99 44%	50 22%	50 22%	26 12%	250	2.98	1.06
3.	I find it challenging to pronounce English words because of my mother tongue	51 20%	50 20%	98 40%	51 20%	250	2.40	1.03
4.	The mother tongue hinders the ability to communicate in English effectively	76 30%	25 10%	98 40%	51 20%	250	2.50	1.13
5.	The mother tongue is a barrier to improving your overall English skills.	27 10%	73 30%	99 40%	51 20%	250	2.30	0.92

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

Total Mean = 12.58

Decision: weighted average = $12.58/5 = 2.516$

For the data analysis presented in table 3 above, item (11) indicates that only 40% of respondents agreeing (SA and A), and 60% expressing disagreement (D and SD). The total mean score for this item is 2.40 indicating a strong disagreement among respondents. Therefore, this statement was rejected, suggesting that there is no difficulty in learning English due to the mother tongue.

Item (12) received mostly positive response, with 66% of respondents agreeing (SA and A), and only 34% expressing disagreement (D and SD). The total mean score for this item is 2.98, which is above the mid-point. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that majority of the student's accent is influenced by the mother tongue when speaking English.

Item (13) indicates that only 40% of respondents agreeing (SA and A), and 60% expressing disagreement. The total mean score for this item is 2.40, indicating a great record of dissensus among students. Therefore, this statement was rejected, suggesting that majority of the students do not find it challenging to pronounce English words due to their mother tongue.

Item (14) received a massive response, with only 40% of respondents agreeing (SA and A), and 60% expressing disagreement (D and SD). The total mean for this item is 2.50. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that the mother tongue hinders the ability to communicate in English effectively.

Item (15) received mostly negative responses with only 40% of respondents agreeing (SA and A), and 60% expressing disagreement (D and SD). The total mean score for this item is 2.30. Therefore, this statement was rejected, suggesting that the mother tongue does not influence the improvement of the overall English skills.

Research Question Four: Does the student's home background affect the learning of English language skills?

Table 4: The effect of student’s home background on the learning of English Language.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	S.D
1	Home environment affect motivation towards acquiring English skills.	103 46%	25 11%	72 32%	25 11%	250	2.92	0.92
2.	My parents/guardian speaks English fluently.	125 56%	50 22%	25 11%	25 11%	250	3.22	1.10
3.	Language spoken outside the classroom affects my fluency in English skills.	124 55%	51 23%	25 11%	25 11%	250	3.2	1.03
4.	I receive support from family in acquiring English language skills	175 70%	50 20%	25 10%	- -	250	3.60	0.66
5.	I engage in conversation or activities in English with family members at home.	143 57%	42 17%	49 20%	16 6%	250	3.25	0.98

Source:Researcher’s Fieldwork,2024

Total Mean = 16.61

Decision: weighted average = $16.61/5 = 3.322$

The findings from table 4 suggests that item 16 received positive responses, with 57% of respondents expressing trust (SA and A) and 53% expressing some level of distrust (D and SD). The total mean of this item is 2.92 indicating a great record of consensus among respondents. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that the majority of student’s home environments affects their motivation towards acquiring English skills.

Item (17) indicates that 78% agreed (SA and A), and only 22% (D and SD) expressed disagreement. The total mean score for this item is 3.22, indicating strong agreement among respondent. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that the respondent parents/guardian speaks English fluently in response to their learning of English language skills.

Item (18) indicates a significant portion of respondents 78% (SA and A) agreed, and 22% expressing some level of disagreement (D and SD). The total mean score for this item is 3.22 indicating a perfect consensus among respondents. Therefore, this statement was accepted,

suggesting that the language spoken outside the classroom affects the respondent's fluency in English skills.

Item (19) received mostly positive responses, with 90% of respondents agreeing with (SA and A), and only 10% expressing disagreement (D). The total mean score for this item is 3.60, indicating strong agreement among respondents. Therefore, this statement was accepted, indicating that the respondents received a fair share of support from family member in acquiring English skills.

Item (20) received a massive response, with 74% of respondents engaged in conversation or activity in English with family members at home (SA and A), and 26% expresses some level of difficulty (D and SD), The total mean score for this item is 3.25, indicating a perfect consensus among respondents. Therefore, this statement was accepted, suggesting that respondents engage in conversation or activities in English with family members at home.

Discussions of Findings

Research question 1: Does the shortage of trained English teachers affect the effective learning of English language?

This research question seeks to find out to what extent the shortage of English teachers affects the learning of English Language. This result reveals that the shortage of trained English teacher is highly affected by the effective learning of English language.

Research Question 2: How does the size of classroom affect the student ability to acquire English language skills?

Table 2 shows how the size of classroom affects the student's ability to acquire English skills. With the results analyzed, the student's perception on the effect of the class size towards their ability to acquire English language skills is positive.

Research Question 3: Does the mother tongue interfere with the acquisition of English Language Skills?

Table 2 shows the response of the students if the mother tongue interferes with the acquisition of English language skills is positive. This finding reveals that the mother tongue interferes with the student's ability to gain in-depth knowledge in the learning of English language.

Research Question 4: Does the student's home background affect the learning of English language skills?

It is showed that the students home background impacts the students on their use of English language. This result reveals that the student's learning of English language skills shows relationship with their home background.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was carried out to survey students' perception of problems militating against the effective learning of English language. To achieve the ultimate goal, four research questions were stated to guide this study. A structured questionnaire was used as the main instrument to gather data from five (5) selected public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area. A total number of 250 copies of questionnaire were appropriately completed and returned for data analysis. The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

1. Does the shortage of trained English teachers affect the effective learning of English language?

2. How does the size of classroom affect the student ability to acquire English language skills?
3. Does the mother tongue interfere with the acquisition of English Language Skills?
4. Does the student's home background affect the learning of English language skills?

The population of the study comprises of all the thirteen (13) public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government with the total number of 26,785 students (male and female) in which five (5) schools were selected. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using simple percentage. The findings revealed that:

1. Shortage of trained English teachers affects the effective learning of English language.
2. The size of classroom affects the student's ability to acquire English language skills.
3. The mother tongue interferes with the acquisition of English Language Skills.
4. The student's home background affects the learning of English language skills.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that having a shortage of trained English teachers in schools affects the effective learning of English language for the students. The result showed that having a large population of students in the classroom affects the students' ability to acquire English language skill as the classroom will be noisy due to the population hence hindering some persons from focusing on what is being taught, and also a smaller size classroom also affects the students' ability to acquire English language skills. The result also indicated that the mother tongue is a big interference when it comes to the acquisition of English language skills.

The study also concludes that the students home background affects the learning of English language skills as some parents often use their mother tongue to communicate with their children which makes the mother tongue to interfere with their fluency in English language skills.

Recommendations

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

1. Government should employ more teachers, implement good teacher's welfare program and funds, provide sufficient facilities and resources, encourage the use of English language by providing more scholarships, training and competition programs for both students and teachers.
2. The need for professional development, attending training, and deploying the best method in teaching English language should be implemented to curb inadequate trained English teachers in public schools.
3. Students are advised to take academic work seriously, avoid bad companies, engage actively in class, struggle to assuage the effects of factors they cannot control such as poor background by way of determining to learn and be successful.

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY**

**QUESTIONNAIRE: A SURVEY OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE PROBLEMS
MILITATING AGAINST THE EFFECTIVE LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Dear Respondent,

The questionnaire is designed as an instrument for gathering information about your perceptions and experiences regarding the problems militating against the effective learning of English language. Kindly read the following questionnaire items and tick the answers that accurately reflect your choice where appropriate. The responses you give are purely for research purposes and will be treated confidentially. Please do not write your name.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Researcher.

SECTION A: (Demographic Data)

1. Gender

Female [] Male []

2. Age Distribution

13-15 [] 16-18 []

Please tick (✓) where appropriate

SECTION B:

Keys to Responses: SA (Strongly Agree); A (Agree); D (Disagree); SD (Strongly Disagree)

	Does the shortage of trained English teachers affect the	SA	A	D	SD
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	effective learning of English language?				
1.	Do you have English Teachers in your school?				
2.	Have you considered outside help such as tutoring to improve your English skills?				
3.	Are you satisfied with your English Teacher's method of teaching?				
4.	Have you experienced any difficulty in learning English due to unavailable English teacher?				
5.	Are you able to acquire English skills with the help of your English Teacher?				
	How does the size of classroom affect the students ability to acquire English skills?				
6.	Smaller class size result in more meaningful interactions and discussions in the classroom.				
7.	Are you comfortable in your learning environment?				
8.	Are you able to acquire English Language skills in a populated classroom?				
9.	Smaller class size promotes engagement and participation among students.				
10.	Class size rarely affect the learning of English Language.				
	Does the mother tongue interfere in the acquisition of English language skills?				
11.	Is it difficult to learn English because of the mother tongue?				
12.	Do you agree that your mother tongue influences your accent when speaking English?				
13.	I find it challenging to pronounce English words because of my mother tongue				
14.	The mother tongue hinders the ability to communicate in English effectively				
15.	The mother tongue is a barrier to improving your overall English skills.				
	Does the students home background affect the learning of language skills?				
16.	Home environment affect motivation towards acquiring English skills.				
17.	My parents/guardian speaks English fluently.				
18.	Language spoken outside the classroom affects my fluency in English skills.				
19.	I receive support from family in acquiring English language skills				
20.	I engage in conversation or activities in English with family members at home.				