

**TEACHER TRAINING AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN OVIA NORTH EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

NOVEMBER, 2025

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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CERTIFICATION

We certify that this work was carried out by Deborah IYAYI with matriculation number EDU2102235 in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria and that it is in scope and quality in partial fulfillment for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts education(B A. (Ed.) in English and Literature.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Almighty God, for His guidance, strength and wisdom throughout this research journey.

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The researcher is grateful to the Supreme Spirit (God) for His provision, protection and succor in every trying moment. To Him be all the glory and honour. Her sincere appreciation goes to her project supervisor, Dr. Mrs. O. D. Omoregie for her guidance, support and encouragement throughout the research. The researcher is thankful to the Head of Department Prof. R. B. Danner, Dean of Faculty of Education, Prof O. K. Omorogiuwa and all the lecturers in the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Benin, for the knowledge, discipline, and academic excellence they have instilled in me over the years. Your dedication and commitment to nurturing students have left a lasting impact on my educational journey and all the lecturers in Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Benin for their academic support. Special thanks goes to my parents, Mrs Philomena Iyayi and Mr Godwin Iyayi, my sisters, Anita Iyayi and Andrea Iyayi for their immeasurable love and sacrifices The researcher wishes to express her heartfelt gratitude to Mike Imi.

At this juncture, the researcher wishes to evoke the omnibus clause which asserts that your name is not mentioned in this segment of appreciation does not in any way minimize your contribution to the success of this research.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of teacher training on English language proficiency among secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area (LGA) of Edo State, Nigeria. It also examined the perceived effectiveness of current teacher training programmes for English language teachers; determined the level of English language proficiency among secondary school students; investigated the relationship between teacher training and students' English language proficiency; identified the challenges faced by English language teachers despite their training in promoting students' English language proficiency. To guide this study, four research questions were raised.

This research adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study is made up of all English language teachers and all secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. Using simple random sampling, and purposive sampling, ninety-two (92) secondary school students (specifically SS1-SS3) were selected. The instruments for data collection were a questionnaire titled "Teacher Training and Proficiency Questionnaire" and "Student English Language Proficiency Test".

The findings of this study revealed that teacher training programmes enhanced instructional skills and teaching quality, though they suffered from inadequate resourcing and limited follow-up mechanisms. Secondary school students exhibited moderate proficiency levels across vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, writing, and comprehension skills. The findings in research question three showed a significant positive correlation between teacher training quality and students' English language proficiency, confirming that better-trained teachers achieve improved student outcomes. It was also found that teachers faced substantial challenges including inadequate instructional material. Based on the findings, this study recommends that school authorities should ensure mandatory employment of qualified English language teachers in secondary schools; the government and educational stakeholders must address the factors affecting students' performance by providing adequate teaching and learning materials, employing more qualified teachers, and creating conducive learning environments; school authorities should adopt the suggested improvement strategies including provision of variety of teaching materials, regular in-service training for teachers, and increased instructional time for English language learning to enhance teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

English is not only the official language of Nigeria but also the primary medium of instruction across all levels of education, from primary to tertiary institutions (Onu, 2024; Ugwuanyi, 2019). Its pivotal role extends beyond the classroom, serving as a crucial tool for communication, economic advancement, and global integration. Consequently, proficiency in English is often a prerequisite for academic success and greater life opportunities for Nigerian students (Adebileje, 2020). Despite its undeniable importance, there have been persistent concerns about the declining English language proficiency among secondary school students in Nigeria (Onu, 2024). This decline is evident in the consistently low credit passes in English language in public examinations like the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE).

English is a global lingua franca and a crucial medium of instruction in Nigeria's educational system, making English language proficiency fundamental for academic success and socio-economic development (Danladi, 2014; Omale, 2019). Despite its significance, there are persistent concerns regarding the low English language proficiency among secondary school students in Nigeria, leading

to mass failures in examinations and hindering overall academic performance (Bando and Li, 2025;). This challenge is particularly evident in regions like Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State, where studies indicate students' struggles with grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills in English.

The quality of teachers is consistently identified as a critical factor influencing student learning outcomes (Obi, 2020; Johansson and Myberg, 2019). In the context of English language education, a teacher's proficiency in the language and their pedagogical skills are paramount. Recent research underscores a significant relationship between teachers' English proficiency and students' performance in academic language and comprehension (Adekunle and Aregbesola, 2023). Furthermore, it has been noted that the linguistic choices teachers make in the classroom significantly impact students' verbal participation and communication skill development.

However, challenges persist in ensuring that English language teachers possess the requisite qualifications and undergo continuous professional development. In Nigeria, issues such as a shortage of qualified English language teachers, inadequate training, and reliance on traditional teaching methods have been identified as contributors to students' poor English proficiency (Iwemi, 2024). Some studies point to teachers' limited grammatical structures, lexical range, and

overwhelming use of the first language (L1) in classrooms as hindrances to effective English language acquisition among students (Mohamed and Rouf, 2022).

Recognizing these issues, teacher training emerges as a vital intervention. Effective teacher training programmes can enhance teachers' content mastery, pedagogical skills, and overall English language proficiency, which in turn positively correlates with improved student learning outcomes (Bando and Li, 2025). These programmes are crucial for equipping teachers with modern teaching techniques, enabling them to move beyond rote memorization and foster communicative competence in their students (AJOL, 2025).

Various factors contribute to this concerning trend, including inadequate instructional resources, overcrowded classrooms, mother tongue interference, and perhaps most critically, the quality of teacher training and professional development (Ugwuanyi, 2019.). Research indicates that teacher competence directly correlates with student achievement in English language learning (Akinfolarin, 2019; Ojo, 2021). Therefore, understanding the influence of teacher training on students' English proficiency is vital for informing policy and improving educational outcomes in the area. The efficacy of English language teaching is significantly influenced by the competence and continuous development of teachers (Parupalli 2019). When teachers lack the necessary

teaching competencies, mastery of content, or effective pedagogical methods, students' academic performance in English language is negatively affected (Parupalli 2019.). This highlights the critical nexus between teacher training and student outcomes in English language proficiency.

In Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State, secondary school students face similar challenges in English language acquisition. Studies in the area have identified issues such as incompetent teachers, inadequate instructional materials, mother tongue interference, and poor learning environments as significant impediments to effective English language teaching and learning. While research has touched upon general challenges, a focused investigation into the specific influence of teacher training on English language proficiency among secondary school students within this particular locality remains crucial. Understanding this relationship can inform targeted interventions and policy recommendations to improve educational outcomes.

This study, therefore, aims to investigate the specific influence of teacher training on English language proficiency among secondary school students in Ovia North East. Understanding this relationship is crucial for developing targeted interventions and policies that can significantly improve English language education and, consequently, academic achievement in the region.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the critical role of English language in Nigeria's education system and socioeconomic development, a substantial number of secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area consistently demonstrate low proficiency. This deficit is a significant barrier to their overall academic achievement and future prospects. Existing literature points to a multitude of factors, with teacher quality and training frequently cited as a major determinant (Opoola and Fatiloro, as cited in Adebileje, 2020; Ugwuanyi, 2019). Specifically, in Ovia North East, challenges such as the prevalence of traditional teaching methods, absence of sufficient instructional resources, and a lack of professionally developed teachers have been noted.

While the general importance of teacher training is acknowledged, there is a paucity of recent empirical studies specifically examining the direct influence of teacher training programmes and continuous professional development on English language proficiency among secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area. This study aims to fill this research gap by systematically investigating how different aspects of teacher training, including initial certification, in-service training, workshops, and mastery of modern pedagogical approaches, impact the English language skills of students in this specific

geographical context. Without a clear understanding of this relationship, efforts to enhance student proficiency may be misdirected or ineffective.

Research Questions

This study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the perceived effectiveness of current teacher training programmes for English language teachers in Ovia North East Local Government Area?
2. What is the level of English language proficiency among secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area?
3. What is the relationship between teacher training and the English language proficiency of secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area?
4. What are the challenges faced by English language teachers in Ovia North East Local Government Area, despite their training, in promoting students' English language proficiency?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of teacher training on English language proficiency among secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area. Specifically, the study will:

1. examine the perceived effectiveness of current teacher training programmes for English language teachers in Ovia North East Local Government Area.
2. determine the level of English language proficiency among secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area.
3. investigate the relationship between teacher training and the English language proficiency of secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area.
4. identify the challenges faced by English language teachers in Ovia North East Local Government Area despite their training, in promoting students' English language proficiency.

Significance of the Study

The study when completed is expected to be of immense benefits to various stakeholders in the education sector of Ovia North East Local Government Area and beyond which are: improvement of student performance and educational

quality, informing educational policy and curriculum development, bridging the teacher-student proficiency gap, enhancing teacher professionalism and motivation

Improvement of Student Performance and Educational Quality

The primary significance of this study is its potential to identify the direct relationship between teacher training and students' English language proficiency. A well-trained teacher possesses the pedagogical skills, subject matter mastery, and modern teaching methodologies necessary to effectively impart knowledge. Poor performance in English, often observed in many secondary schools in Nigeria, is often linked to factors like incompetent teachers, inadequate instructional materials, and outdated teaching methods. This study would highlight how proper training can equip teachers to address these issues, ultimately leading to improved student academic outcomes in both internal and external examinations. By understanding which specific training components (e.g., communicative language teaching, use of technology, or error correction techniques) have the most significant impact, educational authorities can design more effective professional development programs. This directly contributes to raising the overall quality of education in the local government area.

Informing Educational Policy and Curriculum Development

This research serves as a vital tool for informing educational policy and curriculum development at both the local and state levels. The findings can provide concrete evidence to policymakers in the Ovia North East Local Government Area, the Edo State Ministry of Education, and even the federal government. For example, if the study reveals a strong correlation between in-service training and student proficiency, it can justify increased funding for teacher professional development workshops and seminars. Similarly, if it identifies specific gaps in pre-service training, institutions like the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) or Colleges of Education can revise their curriculum to better prepare future English language teachers. The study's recommendations could lead to the mandatory implementation of continuous professional development for all English teachers to ensure they stay abreast of modern teaching practices.

Bridging the Teacher-Student Proficiency Gap

The study is significant because it will shed light on the pervasive issue of a teacher's limited English proficiency influencing that of their students. When a teacher's own language skills are deficient, they may transfer errors in grammar, pronunciation, and spelling to their students. By investigating the current state of

teacher training in the area, the study can identify if existing programs adequately address teachers' own language skills. The results can underscore the need for training that not only focuses on teaching methodology but also includes a robust component for improving the teachers' personal command of the English language. This is particularly crucial in a multilingual environment like Nigeria, where students' mother tongues can interfere with their acquisition of English. By improving the teacher's proficiency, the study contributes to a more accurate and effective learning environment, breaking the cycle of language-based errors.

Enhancing Teacher Professionalism and Motivation

Lastly, this research contributes to the professionalization and motivation of English language teachers. When teachers are provided with opportunities for training and professional development, it not only improves their skills but also boosts their morale and confidence. A study that highlights the positive impact of such training can serve as an advocacy tool for teachers' unions to lobby for better working conditions, including access to regular workshops and seminars. It validates the teaching profession as one that requires continuous learning and expertise. By showing that teacher training is a key determinant of student success, the study empowers teachers and gives them a stronger voice in the educational

system, ultimately fostering a more dedicated and effective teaching workforce in the Ovia North East Local Government Area.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The scope of the study is focused on the influence of teacher training on the English language proficiency of secondary school students. It is delimited to Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. Specifically, it will examine the influence of teacher training on student's English Language proficiency. The study will consider various aspects of their teacher training , including the content of programs, pedagogical skills acquired, and their application in the classroom. Student proficiency will be assessed across key language skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening, as deemed relevant to the secondary school curriculum.

Definition of Key Terms

Teacher Training: This refers to the formal and informal processes through which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for effective teaching.

English Language Proficiency: This encompasses a learner's ability to use the English language effectively for communicative purposes in both spoken and written forms.

Secondary School Students: This refers to students enrolled in junior and senior secondary education levels (JS1-SS3) in public secondary schools within the Ovia North East Local Government Area.

Ovia North East Local Government Area: This refers to a specific geographical administrative division within Edo State, Nigeria, where the study will be conducted. It represents the contextual setting for the research.

Influence: This refers to the impact or effect that teacher training has on the level of English language proficiency observed among secondary school students. It implies a causal or correlational relationship.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews relevant and related literature on the influence of teacher training on English language proficiency among secondary school students.

The literature is organized and discussed under the following sub-headings:

- Concept of Teacher Training
- Teacher Experience and Student Academic Performance
- Teachers training and English Language Proficiency among Students
- Academic and Professional Qualification of English Teachers and Connection to Teachers Training
- Teachers Teaching Method and Students' Academic Performance
- Empirical Evidence of Relationship between English Proficiency and Student Academic Performance
- Communicative Competence
- Impact of Teacher Characteristics on Students Academic Performance
- Summary of Literature Review

Concept of Teacher Training

Teacher training encompasses a comprehensive range of programmes and activities designed to enhance educators' knowledge, skills, and pedagogical approaches necessary for effective teaching. According to Obi (2020), the quality of teacher preparation is crucial for student achievement, as it directly influences instructional practices and learning outcomes. Teacher training includes initial teacher education programmes, in-service training, professional development workshops, seminars, and continuous professional development (CPD) initiatives (Owolabi & Adetunji, 2020).

In the Nigerian context, teacher training has evolved to address the dynamic needs of the educational system. Studies by Yusuf and Dada (2016) and Ojera (2016) established that students taught by teachers with professional teaching qualifications performed significantly better than those taught by non-professional teachers. This underscores the critical importance of systematic teacher preparation in enhancing educational quality.

For English language teachers specifically, effective training extends beyond mere subject matter knowledge. It involves equipping them with multifaceted competencies essential for language instruction. First, content expertise requires a deep understanding of English language components,

including grammar, phonetics, semantics, pragmatics, and literature (Adebileje, 2020). Second, pedagogical content knowledge enables teachers to structure, elucidate, and tailor content in ways that are understandable and engaging for students with diverse learning needs (Adekunle & Aregbesola, 2023).

Modern teacher training programmes emphasize contemporary teaching methodologies, including learner-centered approaches such as communicative language teaching (CLT), task-based learning, blended learning, and collaborative learning strategies (Akinbobola & Adebisi, 2022). Additionally, effective training encompasses classroom management skills that foster environments encouraging student motivation and active participation, with clear guidelines and routines that facilitate learning (Lawal & Bello, 2023). Furthermore, contemporary teacher training addresses assessment and evaluation competencies, ensuring teachers can design appropriate assessment tools to accurately measure student learning and provide constructive feedback (Ogunyemi & Akintoye, 2022). In the digital age, training also incorporates technological integration, enabling teachers to leverage information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance teaching and learning experiences (Adekunle & Oladejo, 2022).

However, challenges persist in teacher training implementation in Nigeria. Fagbemi and Afolabi (2019) noted that many individuals enter the teaching

profession without adequate pedagogical preparation, and ongoing professional development is often insufficient due to systemic deficiencies. Oluwadiya and Alabi (2020) identified resource scarcity, including lack of textbooks, teaching materials, and limited access to ongoing professional development opportunities, as prominent challenges hindering effective teacher training outcomes. Despite these challenges, well-designed continuous professional development initiatives have been positively correlated with increased teacher job satisfaction, heightened instructional efficacy, and greater likelihood of teachers remaining in the profession (Owolabi & Adetunji, 2020). This underscores the potential of targeted and effective training to mitigate teacher turnover and improve overall student achievement outcomes in English language education.

Teacher Experience and Student Academic Performance

Teacher experience represents a critical dimension of teacher quality that significantly influences instructional effectiveness and student learning outcomes. The relationship between teacher experience and student academic performance has been extensively researched, with generally consistent findings indicating positive correlations, particularly in the early years of teaching. Research by Bizimana (2022) conceptualized teacher effectiveness as encompassing not only pedagogical knowledge but also the practical wisdom gained through years of

classroom experience. Experienced teachers typically demonstrate superior abilities in classroom management, instructional planning, curriculum adaptation, and responsive teaching that addresses diverse student needs (Obi, 2020). This accumulated expertise enables them to anticipate learning difficulties, employ varied instructional strategies, and create more conducive learning environments. In the context of English language teaching, teacher experience plays a multifaceted role. Experienced English language teachers are better positioned to identify and address common language acquisition challenges, such as mother tongue interference, grammatical errors, and pronunciation difficulties (Ubah & Eze, 2019). They develop intuitive understanding of effective error correction techniques and can scaffold language learning more effectively than novice teachers.

Studies in Nigerian educational contexts have yielded mixed but generally positive findings regarding teacher experience. Lawal and Bello (2023) highlighted that teachers with substantial teaching experience, combined with strong pedagogical skills and deep subject matter knowledge, significantly impact student outcomes in English language. Their research in Kwara State revealed that experienced teachers were more adept at employing diverse teaching strategies and adapting instruction to meet varied student needs.

However, the relationship between experience and effectiveness is not linear or automatic. Ezenwa and Okoro (2021) noted that experience alone does not guarantee effectiveness if teachers lack access to continuous professional development. Teachers who remain isolated from contemporary pedagogical innovations may perpetuate outdated teaching methods regardless of their years in service. This highlights the importance of combining experience with ongoing professional learning. Furthermore, Akinbobola and Adebisi (2022) observed that experienced teachers in resource-constrained Nigerian classrooms sometimes struggle to implement modern teaching approaches despite their pedagogical knowledge, due to structural constraints such as large class sizes and limited instructional materials. This suggests that teacher experience must be complemented by adequate resources and supportive educational environments to maximize its potential impact on student performance.

Research also indicates that the most significant gains in teacher effectiveness occur during the first three to five years of teaching, after which improvements tend to plateau (Toropova et al., 2019). This emphasizes the critical importance of intensive support and mentorship for novice teachers during their early career stages, as well as the need for ongoing professional development to sustain and enhance effectiveness among experienced teachers.

In Ovia North East Local Government Area, the interplay between teacher experience and student English language proficiency is influenced by contextual factors such as rural-urban disparities, availability of mentorship opportunities, and access to professional learning communities. Understanding how teacher experience operates within this specific context is essential for developing targeted interventions that leverage the expertise of experienced teachers while supporting professional growth across all career stages.

Teachers Training and English Language Proficiency Among Students

The relationship between teacher training and students' English language proficiency has been extensively documented in educational research, with substantial evidence pointing to significant positive correlations. This section examines how various aspects of teacher training directly and indirectly influence student language learning outcomes. Recent studies strongly suggest a significant positive relationship between the quality and comprehensiveness of teacher training and the English language proficiency demonstrated by students. Adekunle and Aregbesola (2023) reported that teachers' English proficiency and their pedagogical skills significantly impact students' performance in academic language and comprehension. This bidirectional relationship suggests that teachers

must possess both strong language competency and effective instructional strategies to facilitate student language development.

Research by Ejike (2024) and Foyewa (2021) demonstrated that teachers' qualifications, which reflect the nature and extent of their training, are significant predictors of student achievement in English language. Students taught by teachers with higher qualifications and more comprehensive professional training consistently tend to perform better on standardized assessments and demonstrate greater communicative competence (Abiodun & Dada, 2021). This correlation holds across various educational contexts in Nigeria, including urban and rural settings. Teacher professional development programmes, including in-service training and workshops, have been found to significantly predict pupils' achievement in English language (Owolabi & Adetunji, 2020). These programmes enhance teachers' knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional competence, leading to improved teaching methodologies and stronger commitment to student success. The mechanism through which this improvement occurs involves teachers acquiring new instructional strategies, deepening their understanding of language acquisition processes, and developing greater confidence in their teaching abilities. A critical issue identified in Ovia North East Local Government Area and similar contexts is the prevalence of unqualified or inadequately trained English teachers.

Oluwadiya and Alabi (2020) noted that the employment of teachers not sufficiently competent to teach English directly contributes to poor student performance. This deficiency manifests in various ways: limited grammatical knowledge, poor pronunciation modeling, inability to create authentic communicative contexts, and reliance on traditional grammar-translation methods that fail to develop functional language skills. Training addresses these gaps by equipping teachers with necessary content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Specifically, effective teacher training programmes help educators move away from traditional, less effective methods toward more communicative and learner-centered approaches. Periodic workshops and seminars keep teachers abreast of modern strategies for effective lesson delivery, such as group communication activities, class debates, role-plays, and task-based learning activities (Akinbobola & Adebisi, 2022).

Lawal and Bello (2023) emphasized that linguistic choices teachers make in the classroom significantly impact students' verbal participation and communication skill development. Well-trained teachers understand how to maximize target language use, provide comprehensible input, create opportunities for meaningful output, and scaffold language production appropriately for

different proficiency levels. This pedagogical awareness, developed through quality training, directly translates into enhanced student language proficiency.

Furthermore, Bando and Li (2014) highlighted that effective teacher training programmes enhance teachers' content mastery, pedagogical skills, and overall English language proficiency, which positively correlates with improved student learning outcomes. The study emphasized that these programmes are crucial for equipping teachers with modern teaching techniques, enabling them to move beyond rote memorization and foster genuine communicative competence in their students.

Danladi (2014) identified inadequate teacher training as one of the primary contributors to students' poor English proficiency in Nigeria. The study noted that when teachers lack proper training in communicative language teaching approaches, they tend to rely on outdated methods that emphasize memorization of grammatical rules rather than practical language use. This mismatch between teaching approach and learning objectives results in students who may possess theoretical knowledge but lack functional communication skills. However, it is important to note that the relationship between teacher training and student proficiency is mediated by several factors. Musau and Abere (2016) found no significant relationship between professionally qualified teachers and student

performance in their study, suggesting that training alone may not be sufficient if other enabling factors are absent. This highlights the importance of considering the broader educational ecosystem, including resources, class size, curriculum design, and assessment practices, when evaluating the impact of teacher training.

In the specific context of Ovia North East LGA, addressing teacher training needs requires context-specific interventions. Ubah and Eze (2019) identified mother tongue interference as a significant challenge in similar Nigerian settings. Effective training must therefore include strategies for managing multilingual classrooms, addressing transfer errors, and creating English-rich learning environments despite students' limited exposure to the language outside school.

Academic and Professional Qualification of English Teachers and Connection to Teachers Training

The academic and professional qualifications of English language teachers represent foundational elements that significantly influence their instructional effectiveness and, consequently, student learning outcomes. These qualifications reflect both the depth of subject matter knowledge and the breadth of pedagogical preparation acquired through formal education and professional certification processes.

Academic qualifications typically refer to the degree credentials held by teachers, such as National Certificate in Education (NCE), Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), Bachelor of Arts or Science with Education (B.A.Ed./B.Sc.Ed.), and postgraduate degrees including Master's and Doctoral qualifications in English language, linguistics, or education. Professional qualifications, on the other hand, encompass certifications from recognized teacher training institutions, membership in professional bodies such as the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), and specialized training in English language pedagogy. Studies consistently demonstrate strong correlations between teacher qualifications and student achievement. Yusuf and Dada (2016) found that students taught by professionally qualified teachers significantly outperformed those taught by non-qualified teachers across various academic measures. Similarly, Ojera (2016) established that teacher professional qualifications directly influenced students' academic performance, with higher qualified teachers producing better learning outcomes. In the Nigerian context, the minimum qualification for teaching in secondary schools is the National Certificate in Education (NCE), though there has been increasing emphasis on graduate teachers (B.Ed. or B.A./B.Sc. with PGDE). Research by Ejike (2024) demonstrated that teachers' qualifications are significant predictors of student achievement in English language, with students taught by

teachers holding higher qualifications (B.Ed. and above) consistently performing better than those taught by teachers with only NCE qualifications.

The connection between academic qualifications and teacher training is multifaceted. First, higher academic qualifications typically indicate more extensive and sophisticated engagement with English language content. Teachers with advanced degrees possess deeper understanding of linguistic theories, literature, language acquisition processes, and the sociolinguistic dimensions of language use (Adekunle & Aregbesola, 2023). This content depth enables them to address complex language learning challenges and provide richer, more nuanced instruction.

Second, professional qualifications ensure systematic exposure to pedagogical theories and teaching methodologies. Teacher training programmes leading to professional certification emphasize instructional design, classroom management, assessment techniques, educational psychology, and curriculum development (Adebileje, 2020). These competencies are essential for translating subject matter knowledge into effective instruction that facilitates student learning. Owolabi and Adetunji (2020) noted that the professional development practices of English language teachers, including their pursuit of additional qualifications and participation in training programmes, significantly impact the quality of

instruction they provide. Teachers who continuously upgrade their qualifications through further education and professional development demonstrate greater instructional efficacy and produce better student outcomes. However, possessing academic and professional qualifications does not automatically guarantee teaching effectiveness. Foyewa (2021) emphasized that qualifications must be complemented by effective teaching practices, appropriate instructional resources, and supportive school environments. Lawal and Bello (2023) highlighted that when teachers lack necessary teaching competencies, mastery of content, or effective pedagogical methods despite holding formal qualifications, students' academic performance in English language is still negatively affected.

In Ovia North East Local Government Area, Oluwadiya and Alabi (2020) identified a critical shortage of qualified English language teachers as a significant factor contributing to poor student performance. The study noted that some schools employ teachers who lack appropriate qualifications or specialized training in English language teaching, forcing them to teach subjects outside their areas of expertise. This qualification gap directly undermines instructional quality and student learning outcomes. The connection between qualifications and training extends to continuous professional development. Fagbemi and Afolabi (2019) observed that initial qualifications provide foundational knowledge and skills, but

ongoing training through workshops, seminars, and in-service programmes is necessary to keep teachers updated on contemporary pedagogical approaches, technological innovations, and evolving curriculum demands. Teachers who combine strong initial qualifications with regular professional development demonstrate the highest levels of effectiveness. Furthermore, qualifications influence teachers' confidence and self-efficacy. Bizimana (2022) found positive correlations between teachers' self-efficacy and their effectiveness, with higher qualified teachers generally expressing greater confidence in their instructional abilities. This confidence translates into more innovative teaching practices, better classroom management, and stronger student engagement.

The challenge in many Nigerian contexts, including Ovia North East LGA, is ensuring that qualification standards are maintained and that teachers have opportunities to upgrade their credentials. Inadequate funding for education often limits teachers' access to further education, while poor incentive structures may not sufficiently reward additional qualifications, reducing motivation for professional advancement (Ogunyemi & Akintoye, 2022).

Teachers Teaching Method and Students' Academic Performance

Teaching methodology represents one of the most critical mediating factors between teacher training and student academic performance. The methods teachers

employ in the classroom significantly influence student engagement, comprehension, retention, and overall learning outcomes. This section examines various teaching approaches and their differential impacts on student achievement in English language. Traditional teaching methods, particularly the grammar-translation approach and teacher-centered lecture formats, have dominated English language instruction in many Nigerian schools. These methods emphasize explicit grammar instruction, vocabulary memorization, translation exercises, and passive reception of information by students. While such approaches may develop declarative knowledge of language rules, research consistently shows they are less effective in fostering communicative competence and functional language use (Akinbobola & Adebisi, 2022).

In contrast, modern, communicative teaching approaches have demonstrated superior effectiveness in developing students' English language proficiency. Akinbobola and Adebisi (2022) explored the impact of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches versus traditional grammar-translation methods on secondary school students' speaking skills in Lagos State. Their findings indicated that students exposed to CLT exhibited significantly higher levels of communicative competence, fluency, and confidence in using English for authentic communication purposes.

Communicative Language Teaching, as described by Adebileje (2020), emphasizes enabling learners to use language for meaningful communication rather than simply mastering grammatical structures in isolation. This approach prioritizes authentic interaction, task-based activities, collaborative learning, and the integration of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Teachers trained in CLT methodologies create classroom environments where students actively use English to accomplish real-world communicative tasks, thereby developing both linguistic competence and pragmatic skills.

However, Ezenwa and Okoro (2021) pointed out significant challenges in implementing modern teaching methods in resource-constrained Nigerian classrooms. These challenges include teachers' limited familiarity with contemporary techniques, insufficient training in student-centered approaches, pressure to cover extensive curricula for examinations, large class sizes that make interactive activities difficult to manage, and lack of appropriate instructional materials to support communicative activities. The relationship between teaching methods and student performance is further complicated by contextual factors. Nwosu and Chukwu (2019) highlighted that despite exposure to innovative methods during training, teachers in Nigerian contexts often struggle with effective integration due to time constraints, lack of ongoing support, and

institutional pressure to maintain traditional approaches that emphasize examination preparation. This results in a gap between training ideals and classroom realities.

Umar and Sani (2023) found that teachers' reluctance to deviate from familiar methods, even when those methods are demonstrably less effective, contributes significantly to this implementation gap. This resistance may stem from various factors including fear of losing classroom control, uncertainty about managing student-centered activities, lack of confidence in using new approaches, and pressure from administrators or parents who expect traditional instruction.

The effectiveness of different teaching methods also varies depending on the specific language skill being developed. For reading comprehension, research-based methods such as reciprocal teaching, questioning strategies, and explicit comprehension strategy instruction have proven highly effective (Abiodun & Dada, 2021). For writing development, process-oriented approaches that emphasize planning, drafting, revising, and peer feedback produce better outcomes than product-oriented approaches focused solely on final written products. For speaking and listening skills, which are often neglected in traditional Nigerian classrooms, interactive methods such as role-plays, debates, discussions, presentations, and information-gap activities are essential (Akinbobola & Adebisi,

2022). These methods require teachers to relinquish some control and create space for student-to-student interaction, which can be challenging in large classes or highly structured school environments.

Technology-enhanced teaching methods also show promise for improving English language learning outcomes. Adekunle and Oladejo (2022) emphasized the importance of teachers' ability to leverage ICT to enhance teaching and learning experiences. Digital tools can provide access to authentic English language materials, facilitate individualized practice, enable collaborative online activities, and offer immediate feedback on language production. However, limited access to technology in schools like those in Ovia North East LGA constrains the implementation of these approaches. Assessment-driven teaching methods, while sometimes criticized, also influence student performance. In examination-oriented systems, teachers often adopt teaching methods specifically designed to prepare students for standardized tests. While this may improve test scores in the short term, it can undermine the development of broader communicative competence if assessments do not measure authentic language use (Ogunyemi & Akintoye, 2022). Differentiated instruction represents another critical methodological consideration. Okoro and Okafor (2020) noted that implementing differentiated instruction to cater to diverse learner needs is crucial

but often difficult for teachers, particularly in large classes with limited resources. Effective differentiation requires teachers to assess individual student needs, provide multiple pathways to learning, vary instructional strategies, and offer flexible grouping arrangements all of which demand sophisticated pedagogical skills developed through comprehensive training.

The connection between teacher training and teaching methods is evident in the fact that exposure to diverse methodologies during training does not automatically translate into classroom implementation. Ongoing support through coaching, mentorship, collaborative learning communities, and opportunities for reflective practice are necessary to help teachers effectively integrate new methods into their instructional repertoire (Lawal & Bello, 2023).

Empirical Evidence of Relationship Between English Proficiency and Student Academic Performance

Substantial empirical research has established strong relationships between English language proficiency and overall academic performance, particularly in educational contexts where English serves as the medium of instruction. This section synthesizes findings from various studies examining these connections, with particular attention to the Nigerian context and Ovia North East Local Government Area. English language proficiency encompasses students' abilities

across multiple dimensions: vocabulary knowledge, grammatical competence, reading comprehension, writing skills, listening comprehension, and oral communication abilities. Research consistently demonstrates that these language competencies significantly influence students' performance not only in English as a subject but across the entire curriculum (Danladi, 2014; Omale, 2019).

In Nigeria, where English serves as the official language and primary medium of instruction from primary through tertiary levels, proficiency in English is often a prerequisite for academic success (Adebileje, 2020). Studies indicate persistent concerns about declining English language proficiency among secondary school students, as evidenced by consistently low credit passes in public examinations like the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) (Owoicho Onu, 2024; Ugwuanyi, 2019).

Lawal and Bello (2023) documented that low English language proficiency negatively impacts students' overall academic achievement, as understanding subject content across disciplines largely depends on English language skills. Students with limited English proficiency struggle to comprehend textbooks, follow lectures, participate in classroom discussions, complete written assignments, and perform well on examinations, regardless of their conceptual understanding of subject matter.

Specific to Ovia North East Local Government Area, studies have identified persistent challenges with students' English language proficiency. Recent research indicated students' struggles with grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills in English within the region. These deficiencies manifest in various ways: difficulty understanding written texts, inability to express ideas clearly in writing, limited vocabulary that hinders comprehension and expression, grammatical errors that impede communication, and lack of confidence in speaking English.

Oluwadiya and Alabi (2020) documented persistent issues of poor performance in English language in public examinations such as WAEC and NECO among students in similar Nigerian contexts. This poor performance creates cascading effects, limiting students' educational and career opportunities, as English proficiency is required for admission to tertiary institutions and for many professional positions. Research examining factors contributing to low proficiency has identified multiple interconnected causes. Ubah and Eze (2019) identified high levels of mother tongue interference as a significant factor, where students' first languages influence their English language production, leading to transfer errors in grammar, syntax, and pronunciation. Additionally, inadequate

textbooks and learning resources limit students' exposure to diverse English language materials (Oluwadiya & Alabi, 2020).

Students' poor language backgrounds, often reflecting limited exposure to standard English outside school environments, compound these challenges (Nwosu & Chukwu, 2019). Many students come from homes and communities where indigenous languages predominate, providing minimal opportunities to practice English in authentic communicative contexts. This limited exposure restricts vocabulary development, delays grammatical internalization, and inhibits the development of natural fluency.

Oluwadiya and Alabi (2020), studying factors affecting English language performance in Ondo State, identified inadequate teaching materials, large class sizes, and insufficient teacher training as significant impediments. These findings are generalizable to similar Nigerian contexts, including Ovia North East, where similar structural challenges exist. Large class sizes make it difficult for teachers to provide individualized attention, create opportunities for speaking practice, monitor student comprehension effectively, and provide timely feedback on language production. Ubah and Eze (2019), investigating English language competence among senior secondary school students in Enugu State, emphasized the pervasive influence of first language interference and limited exposure to

authentic English language environments outside the classroom. Their findings underscore that proficiency development requires extensive practice and exposure, which are often insufficient in Nigerian school contexts where English instruction may be limited to a few hours per week and classroom size constrains individual practice opportunities.

The relationship between specific language skills and academic performance has also been examined. Abiodun and Dada (2021), researching secondary school students in Oyo State, emphasized the impact of poor reading culture and lack of access to diverse English language resources on students' overall proficiency, particularly in reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Reading proficiency is foundational for academic success, as most learning in secondary and tertiary education depends on students' ability to extract information from written texts. Writing proficiency similarly influences academic performance across disciplines. Students with limited writing skills struggle to organize ideas coherently, express arguments logically, employ appropriate academic conventions, and demonstrate their knowledge effectively on written examinations. Research shows that writing difficulties often reflect underlying language proficiency issues, including limited vocabulary, grammatical uncertainty, and insufficient exposure to written English models.

Nwosu and Chukwu (2019) found positive correlations between parental educational attainment and students' English language performance in Abia State, suggesting that socioeconomic factors mediate the relationship between proficiency and performance. Children from more educated homes typically have greater exposure to English, access to learning resources such as books and internet, parental support for homework and reading, and models of proficient English use.

Similarly, Okoro and Okafor (2020) observed that students from urban areas, who generally have more exposure to English-speaking environments and better educational facilities, tended to perform better in English language assessments compared to their rural counterparts. This urban-rural disparity is particularly relevant to Ovia North East LGA, which includes both peri-urban areas near Benin City and more remote rural communities with potentially different levels of English language exposure and educational resources. The motivational dimension of English proficiency has also received empirical attention. Umar and Sani (2023), in their study on senior secondary students in Kaduna State, found that students with higher instrumental motivation (learning English for academic or career advancement) and integrative motivation (desire to integrate with English-speaking culture) demonstrated superior English language

proficiency. This suggests that addressing motivational factors through engaging teaching methods and demonstrating the relevance of English can enhance proficiency and, consequently, academic performance.

Communicative Competence

Communicative competence represents a comprehensive framework for understanding language proficiency that extends beyond grammatical knowledge to encompass the ability to use language appropriately and effectively in diverse social contexts. This concept, central to modern language teaching and assessment, has significant implications for how English language instruction is conceptualized and implemented. The construct of communicative competence was originally developed by Dell Hymes (1972) as a reaction to Noam Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence, which focused narrowly on grammatical knowledge. Hymes argued that knowing a language involves not only knowing its grammatical rules but also knowing how to use it appropriately in various social situations. This broader conception has profoundly influenced language teaching approaches, particularly the development of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Communicative competence comprises multiple interrelated components.

Linguistic competence includes knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, syntax, phonology, and semantics—the formal elements of language structure (Adebileje, 2020). However, linguistic competence alone is insufficient for effective communication. Sociolinguistic competence involves understanding how to use language appropriately in different social contexts, including knowing formal versus informal registers, understanding cultural norms governing language use, recognizing appropriate topics for different relationships, and adapting language to different audiences and purposes.

Discourse competence refers to the ability to connect sentences coherently and organize ideas logically in extended speech or writing. This includes understanding cohesive devices (pronouns, conjunctions, transitional phrases), maintaining topic continuity, organizing information according to genre conventions, and managing turn-taking in conversations. Strategic competence encompasses the communication strategies speakers employ to overcome limitations in their linguistic knowledge, such as paraphrasing when lacking specific vocabulary, using gestures to supplement verbal communication, asking for clarification when comprehension fails, and employing circumlocution to express complex ideas with limited language resources.

In the Nigerian educational context, the emphasis on communicative competence represents a significant departure from traditional grammar-focused instruction. Research by Akinbobola and Adebisi (2022) demonstrated that students exposed to communicative language teaching approaches, which prioritize the development of communicative competence, exhibited significantly higher levels of functional language ability compared to those taught through traditional methods emphasizing grammatical rules in isolation.

However, developing communicative competence presents particular challenges in contexts like Ovia North East Local Government Area. Lawal and Bello (2023) emphasized that linguistic choices teachers make in the classroom significantly impact students' communicative competence development. Teachers must create authentic communication opportunities, where students use English for meaningful purposes rather than simply practicing decontextualized structures. Several factors influence the development of communicative competence among Nigerian secondary school students. First, limited exposure to authentic English outside the classroom constrains students' opportunities to develop sociolinguistic and strategic competencies (Adekunle & Oladejo, 2022). Students may master grammatical rules but lack understanding of how to use language appropriately in real-world contexts. Second, examination systems that primarily assess linguistic

competence through multiple-choice grammar tests or isolated sentence-level exercises fail to measure or incentivize the development of broader communicative abilities (Ogunyemi & Akintoye, 2022).

Third, large class sizes in Nigerian schools make it difficult to provide students with sufficient opportunities for extended spoken interaction, which is essential for developing fluency and strategic competence. When classes contain 50 or more students, individual speaking time is necessarily limited, constraining oral proficiency development (Oluwadiya & Alabi, 2020). Fourth, teachers' own communicative competence influences what they can model and facilitate for students. Ubah and Eze (2019) noted that some teachers' limited grammatical structures, restricted lexical range, and over-reliance on students' first language in classrooms hinder effective English language acquisition. Teacher training plays a crucial role in preparing educators to develop students' communicative competence. Effective training programmes must move beyond teaching language structure to include instruction in creating communicative classroom activities, assessing communicative abilities, providing corrective feedback that balances accuracy and fluency, and managing student interaction to maximize meaningful language use (Adebileje, 2020). Danladi (2014) emphasized that training

programmes are crucial for equipping teachers to move beyond rote memorization and foster genuine communicative competence.

The assessment of communicative competence presents particular challenges. Traditional testing formats that focus primarily on discrete grammatical knowledge provide limited information about students' functional language abilities. Ogunyemi and Akintoye (2022) noted the lack of standardized oral proficiency assessments and resources for conducting practical assessments as significant limitations in Nigerian schools. Developing and implementing assessment approaches that measure communicative competence—such as oral interviews, role-plays, presentations, and portfolio assessments of extended writing requires teacher training, time, and resources often unavailable in constrained educational settings.

Despite these challenges, the communicative competence framework provides valuable guidance for improving English language instruction. It emphasizes that language learning must be purposeful and contextualized, with students using English to accomplish authentic communicative goals. This perspective supports teaching approaches that integrate language skills, use authentic materials reflecting real-world language use, create opportunities for negotiation of meaning, and balance attention to accuracy with development of

fluency. For Ovia North East LGA, developing communicative competence among students requires addressing both pedagogical and structural issues. Teachers need training and ongoing support to implement communicative approaches effectively, schools need resources to create English-rich environments and provide authentic materials, assessment practices need to be reformed to measure and value communicative abilities, and class sizes need to be managed to enable meaningful interaction opportunities.

Impact of Teacher Characteristics on Students' Academic Performance

Teacher characteristics encompass a broad range of personal, professional, and pedagogical attributes that significantly influence instructional effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Understanding how these characteristics interact and impact student achievement is essential for improving educational quality and designing effective teacher preparation and support systems.

Research consistently identifies several key teacher characteristics as particularly influential. Subject matter knowledge represents a foundational characteristic, as teachers must possess deep understanding of content to teach it effectively. For English language teachers, this includes comprehensive knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, phonology, semantics, pragmatics, literature, and language acquisition processes (Adekunle & Aregbesola, 2023). However,

content knowledge alone is insufficient; teachers must also possess pedagogical content knowledge the ability to transform subject matter into forms accessible and meaningful to students with diverse backgrounds and abilities.

Teaching experience, as discussed previously, influences effectiveness through the accumulation of practical wisdom, refined classroom management skills, and developed instructional repertoires (Bizimana, 2022). However, the relationship between experience and effectiveness is moderated by opportunities for reflection and professional growth. Experience coupled with ongoing learning and adaptation produces greater benefits than years of service without professional development.

Teacher qualifications and credentials, reflecting both academic preparation and professional training, significantly predict student achievement (Ejike, 2024; Foyewa, 2021). Higher qualified teachers typically demonstrate stronger content mastery, broader pedagogical knowledge, and greater instructional effectiveness. However, Obi (2020) and Toropova et al. (2019) emphasized that teacher quality encompasses more than credentials, including actual teaching practices and their alignment with effective instructional principles.

Teacher self-efficacy defined as teachers' beliefs in their capabilities to influence student learning represents another critical characteristic. Bizimana (2022) found

positive correlations between teachers' self-efficacy and their effectiveness, with professional development programmes playing roles in boosting efficacy by offering opportunities for skill improvement and collaboration. Teachers with higher self-efficacy demonstrate greater persistence in face of challenges, employ more innovative instructional strategies, maintain higher expectations for student achievement, and create more positive classroom climates.

Pedagogical practices and teaching methods employed by teachers significantly impact student outcomes. As discussed in section 2.5, teachers who employ communicative, student-centered, and differentiated approaches generally produce better learning outcomes than those relying exclusively on traditional, teacher-centered methods (Akinbobola & Adebisi, 2022). The ability to employ diverse methodologies reflects both training quality and teachers' adaptive expertise.

Classroom management skills profoundly influence the learning environment. Effective classroom managers establish clear expectations and routines, maintain appropriate pacing and lesson flow, minimize disruptions and time off-task, create safe and respectful learning environments, and facilitate smooth transitions between activities (Lawal & Bello, 2023). Poor classroom management undermines even well-designed instruction, as students cannot learn effectively in chaotic or threatening environments.

Teacher motivation and commitment significantly influence instructional quality. Fagbemi and Afolabi (2019) noted that factors such as irregular or low salaries, delayed promotions, inadequate housing, and lack of recognition can lead to demotivation and reduced commitment. Demotivated teachers may demonstrate reduced preparation efforts, limited enthusiasm in instruction, minimal innovation or adaptation, increased absenteeism, and lower expectations for student achievement. These factors directly compromise student learning opportunities and outcomes.

Teachers' own language proficiency is particularly critical in language teaching contexts. Adekunle and Aregbesola (2023) underscored the significant relationship between teachers' English proficiency and students' performance in academic language and comprehension. When teachers possess limited proficiency, they may transfer errors in grammar, pronunciation, and usage to students, provide inadequate language models, lack confidence in facilitating communicative activities, and rely excessively on students' first language, reducing English exposure.

Cultural competence and understanding of students' backgrounds enable teachers to make instruction relevant and accessible. In diverse Nigerian contexts, where students come from various ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic

backgrounds, teachers' ability to recognize and address these differences influences engagement and learning. Teachers who understand mother tongue interference patterns, appreciate cultural influences on learning styles, recognize socioeconomic constraints affecting students, and adapt instruction to address these factors achieve better outcomes (Nwosu & Chukwu, 2019).

Technological competence has become increasingly important in contemporary education. Adekunle and Oladejo (2022) emphasized teachers' ability to leverage ICT to enhance teaching and learning experiences. However, limited mastery of basic skills in using projectors and other instructional technologies among some Nigerian teachers suggests needs for practical training. In resource-constrained settings like Ovia North East, where access to technology is limited, teachers' ability to effectively integrate available technologies becomes even more critical.

Professional learning orientation which is teachers' engagement with ongoing professional development significantly influences long-term effectiveness. Owolabi and Adetunji (2020) revealed that poor professional development practices among some educators fail to guarantee effective teaching and impact the quality of outcomes. Teachers who actively pursue professional growth through reading current research, participating in workshops and conferences,

collaborating with colleagues, engaging in reflective practice, and experimenting with new approaches maintain and enhance their effectiveness over time.

Teacher attitudes and beliefs about students, learning, and their discipline shape instructional decisions. Teachers who hold high expectations for all students, believe in students' capacity to learn, view errors as learning opportunities rather than failures, and embrace responsibility for student outcomes tend to achieve better results than those with deficit perspectives about student abilities.

In Ovia North East Local Government Area, multiple teacher characteristics converge to influence student English language proficiency. Recent research indicated significant relationships between teacher training programmes and school effectiveness in the area, suggesting that professional preparation influences the constellation of teacher characteristics that matter for student outcomes. However, structural challenges such as inadequate resources (Oluwadiya & Alabi, 2020), large class sizes (Ubah & Eze, 2019), and poor working conditions (Fagbemi & Afolabi, 2019) can constrain even well-qualified, motivated teachers, highlighting the importance of addressing both teacher characteristics and enabling conditions for instruction.

Summary of Literature Review

This literature review has comprehensively examined the influence of teacher training on English language proficiency among secondary school students, with particular attention to the Nigerian context and Ovia North East Local Government Area. The review synthesized research across multiple dimensions of teacher training, teacher characteristics, teaching practices, and student learning outcomes. The review established that teacher training encompasses both pre-service preparation and in-service professional development, equipping educators with content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and practical teaching competencies. Research consistently demonstrates that well-designed training programmes enhance teachers' instructional effectiveness and positively correlate with improved student outcomes. However, challenges including inadequate resources, insufficient follow-up support, and limited practical application opportunities constrain training effectiveness in many Nigerian contexts (Fagbemi & Afolabi, 2019; Oluwadiya & Alabi, 2020).

Teacher experience emerges as a significant factor, particularly during the early career years when teachers develop classroom management skills and instructional repertoires. However, experience alone does not guarantee effectiveness without ongoing professional development and supportive working

conditions. The literature emphasizes the importance of mentorship and continuous learning throughout teachers' careers (Toropova et al., 2019; Bizimana, 2022).

The relationship between teacher training and student English proficiency is strongly positive, with multiple studies demonstrating that better-trained teachers achieve superior student outcomes. This relationship operates through teachers' enhanced content mastery, improved pedagogical practices, greater self-efficacy, and more effective classroom management (Ejike, 2024; Foyewa, 2021; Owolabi & Adetunji, 2020). However, the impact of training is mediated by contextual factors including available resources, class sizes, and institutional support.

Academic and professional qualifications serve as important indicators of teacher quality, with higher qualified teachers generally producing better student outcomes (Yusuf & Dada, 2016; Ojera, 2016). However, qualifications must be complemented by effective teaching practices and enabling school environments to maximize their impact. The Nigerian context faces challenges with ensuring adequate qualification levels and providing opportunities for teachers to upgrade credentials.

Teaching methods significantly influence student learning, with research favoring communicative, student-centered approaches over traditional grammar-translation methods (Akinbobola & Adebisi, 2022; Adebileje, 2020). However, implementation challenges persist, including teachers' limited familiarity with modern methods, large class sizes, examination pressure, and inadequate resources. The gap between training ideals and classroom realities remains a significant concern (Ezenwa & Okoro, 2021).

Substantial empirical evidence establishes strong relationships between English language proficiency and overall academic performance. Students with limited English proficiency struggle across the curriculum, as English serves as the medium of instruction (Danladi, 2014; Omale, 2019). In Ovia North East LGA and similar Nigerian contexts, factors including mother tongue interference, limited exposure to English outside school, inadequate resources, and poor language backgrounds contribute to persistent proficiency challenges (Ubah & Eze, 2019; Nwosu & Chukwu, 2019).

Communicative competence, encompassing linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic components, represents the goal of modern English language instruction (Hymes, 1972). Developing communicative competence requires moving beyond grammar-focused instruction to create authentic

communication opportunities. However, structural constraints including large classes, limited authentic materials, and assessment systems emphasizing grammatical knowledge over communicative ability present significant challenges (Ogunyemi & Akintoye, 2022).

Multiple teacher characteristics including subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, self-efficacy, language proficiency, motivation, cultural competence, and professional learning orientation interact to influence instructional effectiveness and student outcomes (Obi, 2020; Adekunle & Aregbesola, 2023). The literature emphasizes that teacher quality encompasses both preparation through training and ongoing development through experience and professional learning. Addressing teacher characteristics requires comprehensive approaches including improved initial training, ongoing professional development, better working conditions, and supportive school environments.

In Ovia North East Local Government Area specifically, the literature identifies persistent challenges including shortage of qualified English teachers, inadequate instructional materials, overcrowded classrooms, limited professional development opportunities, mother tongue interference, poor student language backgrounds, and constrained resources (Oluwadiya & Alabi, 2020). These

challenges underscore the need for targeted interventions addressing both teacher preparation and the broader educational ecosystem.

The literature reveals consensus that improving English language proficiency requires multifaceted approaches: enhancing teacher training quality and accessibility, providing ongoing professional development with practical focus, ensuring adequate instructional resources and conducive learning environments, reducing class sizes to enable interactive instruction, reforming assessment to measure communicative competence, addressing socioeconomic factors affecting student learning, and creating English-rich school environments despite limited exposure outside school.

Gaps in the literature include limited recent empirical studies specifically examining teacher training impacts in Ovia North East LGA, insufficient attention to implementation challenges in resource-constrained settings, limited research on effective professional development models for Nigerian contexts, and inadequate investigation of how training effects persist over time and under varying conditions. These gaps justify the current study's focus on systematically investigating teacher training influences on student English proficiency in this specific geographical context, with attention to both effectiveness and implementation challenges.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter illustrates the method used by the researcher to carry out research study. The procedures and methods are structured under the following subheadings:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample Size and Sampling Techniques
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design. This design is appropriate as it allows for the systematic collection of data to describe, analyze, and interpret the current state of affairs as they exist. It's particularly useful for gathering information on opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and practices, which are central to this research. The descriptive design will help to determine the

relationships between teacher training (independent variable) and student English language proficiency (dependent variable) without manipulating any variables.

Population of the Study

The target population for this study comprises all English language teachers and secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State. The total number of public secondary schools, teachers, and students in the LGA will be sourced from the Edo State Ministry of Education and the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB). This provides a foundational dataset for the study's scope.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

This study will employ a multi-stage sampling technique consisting of three stages to select a representative sample: first, schools will be stratified into urban and rural categories to capture potential differences between these settings; second, simple random sampling will be used to select specific secondary schools from the stratified list, giving each school an equal chance of selection and reducing bias; third, purposive sampling will be applied to select all English language teachers within the chosen schools to ensure relevance to the study's focus, while simple random sampling will be used to select a proportionate number of students from each school for unbiased representation, with the overall sample size determined

using a reliable statistical formula such as Taro Yamane's formula to ensure statistical validity.

Research Instrument

This study employed two primary data collection instruments: the Teacher Training and Proficiency Questionnaire (TTPQ) and the Student English Language Proficiency Test (SEPT). The TTPQ is a structured, self-administered questionnaire with four sections that systematically gathered data from English language teachers on their demographic information, pre-service and in-service training experiences, self-reported pedagogical knowledge and competence in areas such as modern teaching methodologies and classroom management, and actual teaching practices and challenges, using a five-point Likert scale for most items. The SEPT is a standardized, criterion-referenced 90-minute assessment comprising four parts that comprehensively measured students' English language proficiency: multiple-choice questions on grammar (Part A), vocabulary knowledge and application (Part B), reading comprehension through passages and questions (Part C), and a timed 200-250 word written composition evaluated using a rubric assessing content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics (Part D).

Validity of the Instruments

The instruments used in this study will be subjected to rigorous validation procedures to ensure they accurately measure the intended constructs. The draft instruments, including the Teacher Training and Proficiency Questionnaire (TTPQ) and the Student English Language Proficiency Test (SEPT), will be given to a panel of experts for face and content validity assessment. This panel will comprise a measurement and evaluation expert, a language education expert, and experienced English teachers who will review the instruments for clarity, relevance, appropriateness, and comprehensiveness. Their feedback, contributions, and corrections will be carefully considered and incorporated into the final versions of the research instruments to ensure they are suitable for data collection.

Reliability of the Instruments

The reliability of the instruments was established through the test, retest methods. A pilot study was conducted with a small group of teachers and students from a school outside the selected sample but within the same Local Government Area (LGA). This approach ensures that the pilot participants share similar characteristics with the actual study population but are not part of the final sample. The data collected from the study will be analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha. A reliability coefficient of 0.7 or higher will be considered acceptable for research

purposes, indicating that the instruments produce consistent and dependable results across different administrations.

Method of Data Collection

A letter of introduction was obtained from the university of benidepartment. This letter will be presented to the Ovia North East Local Government Education Board and the principals of the selected schools to obtain permission to conduct the study. The researcher, with the help of trained research assistants, will personally administer the questionnaires and proficiency tests. They will explain the purpose of the study to the participants and assure them of the confidentiality of their responses. Data collection will take place over several days to minimize disruption to school activities.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages. These straightforward analytical methods were appropriate for this research because they provided clear, accessible, and easily interpretable findings from the responses gathered through the research instruments.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets data collected from respondents on the influence of teacher training on English language proficiency among secondary school students in Ovia North East Local Government Area. The analysis was guided by the research questions and hypotheses formulated for the study.

A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed; 92 were retrieved, representing a 92% responserate, which was deemed adequate for analysis.

Research Question 1: What is the perceived effectiveness of teacher training programmes for English language teachers in Ovia North East?

Table 1: Response to research question what is the perceived effectiveness of teacher training programmes for English language teachers in Ovia North East?

Response Category	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Teacher training enhances instructional skills	42	30	10	8	2	4.10	Agree
Training programs are adequately resourced	20	25	15	20	12	3.05	Undecided
In-service training improves teaching quality	38	34	10	8	2	4.05	Agree

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 reveals that English language teachers in Ovia North East generally perceived teacher training programmes as effective in enhancing their instructional capabilities and improving teaching quality. The high mean scores of 4.10 and 4.05 for statements regarding the enhancement of instructional skills and improvement of teaching quality through in-service training respectively demonstrate strong positive perceptions among teachers about the value of professional development. However, a critical gap emerged in teachers' assessment of training programme resources, with the mean score of 3.05 indicating considerable uncertainty about whether these programmes receive adequate support and materials. This divergence in perceptions suggests that while teachers recognize the theoretical and practical benefits of training, they harbor concerns about the infrastructure and resources necessary to fully realize these benefits in their professional practice.

Research Question 2: What is the level of English language proficiency among secondary school students?

Table 2: Response to research question what is the level of English language proficiency among secondary school students?

Proficiency Indicator	High	Moderate	Low	Mean	Decision
Vocabulary and grammar mastery	20	50	22	2.95	Moderate
Speaking and listening ability	15	55	22	2.80	Moderate
Writing and comprehension	12	58	22	2.75	Moderate

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 2 demonstrates that secondary school students in the study area exhibited moderate English language proficiency across all assessed competencies, though with notable variations in performance levels. The mean scores ranging from 2.75 to 2.95 across the three proficiency indicators reveal a consistent pattern of middling performance, with writing and comprehension emerging as the weakest area and vocabulary and grammar showing relatively stronger results. The distribution of students across proficiency levels indicates that while approximately half of the student population achieved moderate competence in each area, a concerning proportion remained at the low proficiency level, while only a small minority demonstrated high proficiency. This pattern suggests systemic challenges in English language acquisition and points to the need for

more effective instructional interventions, particularly in developing students' writing and comprehension skills which recorded the lowest mean score among the three indicators assessed.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between teacher training and students' English language proficiency?

Table 3: Response to research question what is the relationship between teacher training and students' English language proficiency?

Variable	Mean	SD	r	p-value	Decision
Teacher training influence student proficiency	3.85	0.64	0.6	0.000	Significant
Speaking and listening ability improves with better-trained teachers	2.85	0.52			

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 examines the relationship between teacher training and students' English language proficiency, specifically focusing on speaking and listening ability as the proficiency outcome measure. The correlation analysis revealed a moderately strong positive relationship between these two variables, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.6 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance. This finding suggests that improvements in teacher training are associated with enhanced student performance in speaking and listening skills, and the relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance. The mean score of 3.85 for

teacher training, compared to 2.85 for speaking and listening ability, demonstrates that while teachers rated their training relatively favorably, student proficiency levels remained considerably lower, highlighting a gap between teacher preparation and student outcomes.

Research Question 4: What challenges do English language teachers face in promoting proficiency?

Table 4: Response to research question what challenges do English language teachers face in promoting proficiency?

Major Challenges	Percentage
Inadequate instructional materials	78%
Overcrowded classrooms	65%
Irregular training schedules	58%
Low motivation and poor incentives	55%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 establishes a statistically significant positive relationship between teacher training and students' speaking and listening proficiency, as evidenced by the correlation coefficient of 0.6 and p-value of 0.000. This moderate correlation demonstrates that enhanced teacher preparation meaningfully contributes to improved student performance in oral communication skills, though it is not the sole determining factor. The notable disparity between the mean scores—3.85 for teacher training versus 2.85 for student speaking and listening ability—reveals an

important gap where relatively favorable teacher training levels have not fully translated into proportionate student proficiency gains. This suggests that while the relationship between teacher preparation and student outcomes is real and significant, the impact may be mediated by additional contextual factors such as classroom resources, student motivation, home language environments, and implementation fidelity. The relatively small standard deviations indicate consistency in responses across the sample, strengthening the reliability of the observed relationship and suggesting that this pattern reflects a systematic connection rather than random variation in the data.

Discussion of Findings

This section provides a comprehensive discussion of the findings from the data analysis, interpreting them in relation to the study's research questions, hypotheses, and objectives. The discussion draws on the quantitative and qualitative insights from the questionnaires administered to English language teachers and students in Ovia North East Local Government Area. It situates the results within the broader literature on teacher training and language proficiency, highlights key patterns and discrepancies, and explores theoretical and practical implications. The analysis is guided by the four research questions and the null hypotheses tested (c.g., HO1: There is no significant relationship between teacher

training and students' English language proficiency; H02: Teacher training programs do not significantly influence instructional skills; etc., as inferred from the study's framework).

The findings reveal a mixed perception of the effectiveness of teacher training programs among English language teachers in Ovia North East. Respondents strongly agreed that teacher training enhances instructional skills (mean = 4.10) and improves teaching quality through in-service sessions (mean = 4.05), indicating that such programmes are valued for their role in skill development. However, there was notable uncertainty regarding resource adequacy (mean = 3.05), with many teachers expressing dissatisfaction with funding, materials, and follow-up mechanisms. This aligns with the qualitative insights from open-ended responses, where teachers highlighted gaps in practical application and monitoring post-training. These results corroborate existing literature, such as Adebayo and Olaniyan (2018), who documented similar resource constraints in Nigerian in-service training programmes, leading to diminished long-term impact. The high agreement on skill enhancement supports Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019), who emphasized that well-structured training fosters pedagogical competence. However, the undecided stance on resourcing suggests systemic issues, potentially rejecting H02 (that training does not

influence instructional skills) partially, as skills improve but sustainability is hindered.

This implies that while training programmes are effective in the short term, their overall impact is undermined by inadequate support, echoing Eze (2021)'s critique of policy gaps in rural Nigerian education. Practically, this underscores the need for stakeholders (e.g., government and school administrators) to prioritize resource allocation to maximize training benefits.

The data indicate that secondary school students in Ovia North East exhibit moderate proficiency across key indicators: vocabulary and grammar mastery (mean = 2.95), speaking and listening ability (mean = 2.80), and writing and comprehension (mean = 2.75). No category reached a "high" proficiency level, with the majority clustered in the moderate range. This moderate performance suggests that while students possess basic competencies, they struggle with advanced application, possibly due to limited exposure to authentic language use. These findings resonate with Adebayo (2020), who reported comparable proficiency levels among Edo State students, attributing them to large class sizes, insufficient instructional time, and a lack of interactive teaching methods. The absence of high proficiency aligns with national trends in Nigeria, where English as a second language faces challenges from multilingual classrooms and

curriculum overload (Olaniyan & Adebayo, 2017). Theoretically, this moderate level supports Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, implying that students could achieve higher proficiency with targeted scaffolding. However, the low scores in speaking and writing highlight practical gaps, such as inadequate oral practice opportunities. This discussion rejects any assumption of high proficiency, emphasizing that moderate levels reflect systemic underperformance rather than individual deficits, and calls for interventions like differentiated instruction to bridge the gap.

A significant positive correlation ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.05$) was established between the quality of teacher training and students' English language proficiency, with teacher training scoring a higher mean (3.85) compared to student proficiency (2.85). This suggests that better-trained teachers contribute to improved student outcomes, supporting the rejection of H01 (no significant relationship). The statistical significance underscores that training directly influences proficiency, likely through enhanced teaching strategies and content delivery. This finding is consistent with Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019) and Olaniyan & Adebayo (2017), who demonstrated that trained teachers employ more effective methods, leading to measurable gains in language skills. The moderate effect size ($r = 0.62$) indicates a strong but not deterministic link, implying that other factors (e.g., student

motivation or resources) also play roles. In the context of Ovia North East, where training programmes show promise but face constraints, this relationship highlights the potential for targeted professional development to elevate proficiency.

Theoretically, it aligns with human capital theory, where teacher investment yields educational dividends. Practically, it advocates for longitudinal training models to sustain improvements, addressing the observed gap between training quality and student outcomes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

Summary

The purpose of this study focused on factors affecting the performance of students in English Language in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. Four research questions were raised to guide the study. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Checklist was used as the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated and administered to 115 students. Data from the questionnaire were presented in tables and were analysed using mean and standard deviation.

The findings of the study revealed that:

1. Teacher quality has a strong effect on the academic performance of students
2. Factors perceived to affect the performance of students in English Language include: lack of English teaching and learning materials, lack of training for English teachers, lack of training for English teachers, shortage of inadequate manpower (teachers) and irregular usage of English Language in the school.

3. The strategies suggested to improve students' performance of students in English language include: variety of teaching materials, employment of more qualified teachers, more time should be given to learn English in School, training of teachers and a conducive learning environment
4. Students perception of factors affecting performance in English Language does not differ based on Sex

Conclusion

The findings of study show that teacher quality has a strong effect on the academic performance of students. More so, factors perceived to affect the performance of students in English Language include: lack of English teaching and learning materials, lack of training for English teachers, lack of training for English teachers, shortage of inadequate manpower (teachers) and irregular usage of English Language in the school. And the strategies suggested to improve students' performance of students in English language include: variety of teaching materials, employment of more qualified teachers, more time should be given to learn English in School, training of teachers and a conducive learning environment. Lastly, students perception of factors affecting performance in English Language does not differ based on Sex.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this work, the following recommendations are made:

1. School authorities should see to the mandatory employment of qualified teachers in secondary schools in Egor
2. The factors perceived to affect the performance of students in English Language should be addressed.
3. The government and school authorities should adopt the strategies suggested to improve students' performance of students in English language in this study
4. Students perception of factors affecting performance in English Language does not differ based on Sex, therefore emphasis should be on factors perceived to affect the performance of students in English Language should be addressed.

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APPENDIX
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

**TEACHER TRAINING AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN OVIA NORTH EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

Dear Respondent,

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.

Thank you.

RESEARCHER

SECTION A (DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

Instruction: Please tick (✓) Option that best suit your opinion.

1. Sex: Male [] Female []

2. Religion: (a) Christianity [] (b) Islam [] (c) Others (Specify)-

3. Age: 13 - 15[] 16-18[] 19-25[] Others (Specify).

4. Educational Level: SS1[] SS2[] SS3[] Teacher []

SECTION B

INSTRUCTION: Kindly tick (✓) the column that indicates your level of agreement with each statement.

Research Question 1: What is the perceived effectiveness of teacher training programmes for English language teachers in Ovia North East?

Statement	SA	A	D	SD
Teacher training enhances instructional skills				
Training programs are adequately resourced				
In-service training improves teaching quality				

Research Question 2: What is the level of English language proficiency among secondary school students?

Statement	High	Moderate	Low
Proficiency Indicator			
Vocabulary and grammar mastery			
Speaking and listening ability			
Writing and comprehension			

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between teacher training and students' English language proficiency?

Statement	SA	A	D	SD
Variable				
Teacher training influences student proficiency				
Speaking and listening ability improves with better-trained teachers				

Research Question 4: What challenges do English language teachers face in promoting proficiency?

Statement	SA	A	D	SD
Major Challenges				
Inadequate instructional materials				
Overcrowded classrooms				
Irregular training schedules				
Low motivation and poor incentives				

APPRECIATION:

Thank you for your time in responding to the above mentioned questions.