
JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES FOR COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR IN ABEOKUTA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study is a meta-assessment aimed at investigating the quality of junior secondary school teachers' assessment of techniques and resources for communicative teaching of English grammar in Abeokuta, Nigeria. The descriptive survey of the cross sectional type was adopted in this study to select all junior secondary school teachers in one hundred schools in Abeokuta as the target population. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select two hundred and fourteen junior secondary school teachers. A researcher-designed questionnaire was used for data collection. Research questions were answered using item-by-item analysis with mean rating and hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 alpha level. The study revealed that junior secondary school teachers assessed wrongly the techniques and resources for communicative teaching of English grammar. This implies that junior secondary school English language teachers lack proper understanding and appropriate use of the techniques and resources for communicative grammar teaching. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers should update their professional

knowledge and skills by constantly attending seminars, workshops, in-service training and reading of academic journals as well as other related materials as these would expose them to the new developments in the use of different communicative techniques and resources in teaching. Teacher-training colleges and faculties of education should also ensure pre-service teachers are exposed to communicative language teaching, including its techniques and resources.

Keywords: Assessment, Techniques, Resources, Communicative teaching and English Grammar.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has its techniques and instructional resources which the teacher must be conversant with for effective deployment in grammar classes. According to (Lawal & Sanusi, 2015), the communicative approach is using functional and inductive methods in teaching grammatical categories, patterns and relations. They further noted that the teacher moves from the specific (actual language use) to the general (rules) using authentic sentences (i.e. utterances). The task material in CLT lessons is authentic whenever possible, and (Lawal, 2015) justified this by stating that students should be given a chance to develop strategies for understanding the target language as one uses it in reality. Some of these techniques include the use of games, role-plays/simulations, group discussions and information gap techniques, etc. Lawal (2015) mentioned text-based materials,

task-based materials and realia as instructional resources teachers can use for communicative language teaching.

Gender issues have been linked with pedagogical implications in second language teaching and learning, particularly second language teaching but without any definite conclusions. Maduekwe (2021) reported that female teachers performed better than male teachers in the use of instructional resources for teaching and learning. Richards & Rodger (2022); Aliu (2022); Lawson (2023) and Ammadu (2023) are of the view that gender is no issue in terms of the effectiveness of instructions.

Despite the important and central position grammar holds in a language, especially in the English language, the deficiency of the English language teacher will hamper the success of grammar teaching and learning in the classroom. This is because the teacher is an important factor in the teaching and learning process. According to Lawal (2004), the teacher plays a critical role in the curriculum process by providing the specific learning objectives and learning activities and by evaluating the learners.

Many secondary school students in Nigeria are faced with challenges in effective communication in the English language, most especially in speaking and writing. Many studies have revealed that the majority of learners after six years of language learning at the secondary school level are yet not able to master and speak correctly and fluently in the English language. Nwosu (2010) discovered that students who enter our tertiary institutions are ill-equipped to use English adequately and incapable to manipulate language with competence. Olajide (2010) also admitted that students after secondary school education are quite deficient in the use of English language.

Amuseghan (2007) observed that Second or Foreign language situation poses unique challenges in that the learners come to the classrooms with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Researchers and scholars such as Olajide and Idiagbon (2010) have written extensively on the issues relating to ESL and have tried to come up with dependable solutions. However, these issues boil down to the good grasp of grammar since grammar is central and inevitable in the learning of any language whether as a foreign or second language.

Of all the language methods of teaching grammar, scholars such as Hut (1972); Lawal (1991); Nwosu (2000); and Lawal (2015) agreed on the evolution of Communicative Language Teaching as prominent. Olajide (2010) observed that most students fail to write accurately because of their inability to construct grammatically correct sentences, spell common words correctly, and punctuate simple sentences effectively. This is because the teachers do not have adequate knowledge of the appropriate means of teaching the English grammar in a communicative manner.

With the growing concern for students' poor competence in the English grammar in Nigeria, Larsen-Freeman (2000) examined the challenges associated with teaching and learning of English grammar in Nigerian secondary schools and found out that the problems in the English grammar can be minimised through teachers' and learners' commitment to the task of teaching and learning. He suggested that this task can only be accomplished by competent teachers who are conversant with modern trends in language teaching. Olajide (2010) attributed this poor performance of students to unavailability of instructional

resources. Anyandiegwu (2012); Olajide (2014); and Lawal (2015) opined that techniques and materials are very central to the teaching. Ahmed (2021) also confirmed that poor teaching methods and techniques adopted by some teachers contribute to the poor performance of students in schools. There are diverse grammar teaching techniques and instructional resources which could be employed in classroom situations but not all are effective for teaching English grammar communicatively.

Despite the evolving prominence of the communicative language teaching method, especially for English grammar lessons, no study has focused specifically on junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the techniques and resources of communicative teaching of grammar, especially in Abeokuta, Nigeria. This study intends to fill that research gap. Hence, there is a need to examine if English teachers can assess the appropriateness of the techniques and resources for communicative teaching as an indirect way of assessing their pedagogical knowledge and practices in English grammar lessons.

The study generally sought to examine junior secondary school teachers' assessment of techniques and resources for communicative teaching of English grammar in Abeokuta, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated:

- a. The junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar.

- b. The junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of resources for communicative teaching of English grammar.
- c. The difference between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar.
- d. The difference between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of resources for communicative teaching of English grammar.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Background Literature on Techniques and Resources for Communicative Teaching of English Grammar

In teaching, the objective of technique is very important. The success or otherwise of teaching is measured by how far the objectives of the teaching have been attained in the teaching-learning process. For the objectives of teaching to be attained, there is the need for the teachers to appropriately and effectively choose techniques that will enhance the desired result of in the teaching-learning process of communicative teaching of English grammar (Nwosu, 2000 & Lawal, 2015). Ahmed (2021) also asserts that teachers have several teaching techniques to choose from but the task of making the appropriate choice for teaching communicative English grammar has to be done by considering several factors because students at various levels in senior secondary schools have some characteristics peculiar to them, and these various peculiarities must be put into consideration before the choice

of a particular technique. Ahmed states further that the teacher can develop a variety of techniques to facilitate the teaching and learning of communicative teaching of English grammar. The teacher's techniques would be determined by some factors such as the age of the learners, the environment where the teaching-learning takes place, availability of material resources, and of course, the time available for the class, all these will make the technique more appropriate and relevant.

Dotse (2019) posits that technique can be said to be a sneaky and tricky or a systematic formula by which a task is accomplished. Dotse (2019) states further that teaching technique is a unique way of carrying out particular task in teaching and learning process thus, it is individual teacher's unique way of applying strategy. Teaching technique can therefore be the skills acquired with experience and applying it as required. In another development, Aliu (2022); and Lawson (2023) contends that applying particular techniques and approaches in teaching and learning English grammar such as student-centred activities can be exciting and uplifting experience because the learning process provokes students' thoughts and interpretation.

In a similar instance, Ammadu (2023) suggests three models for communicative teaching of English grammar, and these are:

- a. The Cultural Model which is also regarded as the traditional approach for communicative teaching English grammar where the learners need to discover and infer through the teaching ideologies of their teacher while learners are encouraged to understand the ideologies. This model is teacher-centred where the teacher is seen as the only custodian of knowledge.

b. The Language Model is another approach that offers learners an opportunity to learn communicative teaching English grammar. This model allows the teachers to apply strategies such as cloze procedure, prediction exercise, jumbled sentences, summary writing and creative writing. Ammadu observes that students engaged in this type of exercise are usually versatile in linguistic practice and language activities.

c. The Personal Growth Model is an approach that focuses on the personal development of the students including emotional and personal characteristics. This is regarded as learner-centred approach, in that it requires students to relate with one another through conversations and dialogues. This model encourages students to learn at their own pace, and it also encourages them to come out of their shells. This would make the students to share their imaginative and learning shortcomings with their peers. This method is also regarded as group discussion technique which provides learners the opportunity to exchange ideas orally around problems or topical issues thus improving their communicative and grammatical competencies.

Resources on the other hand are the materials in the teaching and learning activities and they cannot be over flogged in that they enhance and aid quick and concrete assimilation in teaching-learning process. Lawson (2023) affirms that the idea that human and material resources are to be assembled together by educational administration within the school system for effective teaching and learning cannot be overemphasised. All materials and non-material factors that are necessary and contribute to attainment of goals in pedagogy are regarded as resources. Lawson argues further that educational resources include humans and non-humans that

students require to facilitate learning. Other resources are audio visual, school environment, and community materials available in an academic environment to facilitate and simplify pedagogy. Similarly, National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) (2020) states that education resources include the teachers in the school, human beings in the society, real objects, specimen or models, display boards, school buildings and lay out, the community at large and other fundamental materials like pencils, pens, books, etc. which learners are expected to have at any point in time to facilitate learning and make also to make learning more meaningful and comprehensible to learners.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive survey of cross-sectional type. The target population included all the junior secondary school teachers of English language in one hundred schools, both public and private schools in Abeokuta. Stratified and Proportionate sampling technique were adopted to select a total number of one-hundred schools (100) and the Purposive sampling technique was used to select a total of two hundred and fourteen (214) junior secondary school teachers for this study. A researcher-designed questionnaire was used for data collection. This was validated by experts in test and measurement and had reliability co-efficient of 0.72.

3.1 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar.

H₀₂: No significant difference exists between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of resources for communicative teaching of English grammar.

4. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Item-by-Item analysis with mean rating was used to answer research questions one and two.

Research Question 1: How do the junior secondary school teachers assess the appropriateness of techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar?

**Table 1. Mean Rating of Junior Secondary School Teachers
Assessment of the Appropriateness of Techniques for
Communicative Teaching of English Grammar**

S/N	Techniques	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1	Role plays i.e. classroom communication activity focusing on imitating a particular character e.g., a lawyer	3.03	0.73	10 th
2	Focusing on grammatical rules, e.g. word-plural formation	3.26	0.85	5 th
3	Simulation i.e. learning technique that enables students to participate in a simplified representation of the society.	3.09	0.81	8 th
4	The use of games i.e. competitive language activities for purpose of communication and interaction.	3.14	0.69	7 th
5	Use of memorisation e.g. mastering vocabulary lists or wordlists.	2.98	0.87	11 th
6	Explaining grammatical facts, e.g. words and their opposites.	3.45	0.67	1 st
7	Reading of comprehension passages	3.42	0.79	2 nd
8	Contextual teaching of grammar through authentic texts	3.29	0.78	3 rd
9	Use of repetition and mimicry when teaching grammatical structures	2.86	0.87	12 th
10	Focus on cooperative group activities to enhance student intercommunication	3.06	0.84	9 th
11	Use of dialogues and discussions	3.24	0.85	6 th
12	Illustrating grammatical categories such as parts of speech, moving from specific to general	3.28	0.83	4 th
Average Total		3.18	0.80	

Source: the Authors' own work.

Table 1 shows the analysis of how the junior secondary school teachers assess the appropriateness of techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar. All items were ranked based on the magnitude of the mean scores.

Based on empirical and theoretical literature, it is shown that the junior secondary school English language teachers wrongly assessed the appropriateness of the techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar in Abeokuta. This is revealed in their assessment analysis ranking “explaining grammatical facts, e.g. Words and their opposites” with mean score (3.45) followed by “reading of comprehension passages” with mean score (3.42) first and second respectively. These two highest ranked assessed items are not the appropriate techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar, indicating their failure in the assessment. Some of the appropriate techniques include contextual teaching of grammar through authentic texts, use of dialogues and discussions, use of games, simulation and role play.

Research Question 2: How do the junior secondary school teachers assess the appropriateness of resources for communicative teaching of English grammar?

To answer research question two, responses of the junior secondary school teachers in relation to the appropriateness of resources for communicative teaching of English grammar were coded and subjected to item-by-item mean rating. The result of the analysis is shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Mean Rating of Junior Secondary School Teachers Assessment of the Appropriateness of Resources for Communicative Teaching of English Grammar

S/N	Resources	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1	Literary texts e.g. comprehension passages and newspapers.	3.46	0.72	1 st
2	Visual images e.g. coloured pictures and drawings.	3.16	0.66	3 rd
3	Audio devices such as audio-tape recorder, players/mp3/audio CDs.	2.92	0.99	9 th
4	Flashcards e.g. common and proper noun flashcards.	2.82	0.96	11 th
5	Game boards e.g. scrabble boards for vocabulary development.	2.65	0.98	13 th
6	Maps e.g. road maps	2.63	0.93	14 th
7	Charts e.g. anchor charts for words and their opposites.	3.04	0.93	7 th
8	Realia (Real-life/ Concrete Objects) e.g. cups, fruits to explain countable and uncountable nouns.	3.14	0.93	4 th
9	Exercise handbooks containing different information for interaction	3.03	0.96	8 th
10	Dictionaries e.g. Longman dictionary for words and their meanings.	3.24	0.88	2 nd
11	Audio visual devices e.g. video players and projectors	2.91	0.92	10 th
12	Role play cards with characters, words and expressions.	3.13	0.76	5 th
13	Puzzle Boards e.g. crosswords and Jigsaw puzzle boards for teaching adjectives.	2.81	0.92	12 th
14	Wordlists i.e. a set of words learners memorise for vocabulary development.	3.13	0.75	5 th
Average Total		3.01	0.88	

Source: the Authors' own work.

Table 2 shows the analysis of how the junior secondary school teachers assess the appropriateness of resources for communicative teaching of English grammar.

Based on empirical and theoretical literature, it is shown that the junior secondary school English language teachers wrongly assessed the appropriateness of the resources for communicative teaching of English grammar in Abeokuta. This is revealed in their assessment analysis ranking literary texts e.g. comprehension passages and newspapers with mean score (3.46) first, followed by dictionaries e.g. Longman dictionary for words and their meanings with mean score (3.24) second. These two highest ranked assessed items are not the appropriate techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar, indicating their failure in the assessment. Some of the appropriate resources for communicative teaching of English grammar include realia, game boards, charts, role play cards and exercise handbooks containing different information for interaction.

Table 3. t-test on Difference between the Male and Female Junior Secondary School Teachers' Assessment of the Appropriateness of Techniques for Communicative Teaching of English Grammar

Gender	No	Mean	Std.	t-value	Df	p-value	Remark
Male	103	38.09	3.97	0.10	212	0.91	Not Significant
Female	111	38.14	3.98				

*Significance@0.05

Source: the Authors' own work.

Results in Table 3 show a t-value of 0.10 and p-value of 0.91 which is greater than 0.05 ($0.91 > 0.05$). Since 0.91 is greater than 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of techniques for

communicative teaching of English grammar. It also implies that the review of the appropriateness of techniques by both groups is wrong, irrespective of their gender. Therefore, there was no significant difference between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' wrong assessment of the appropriateness of techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar.

Table 4. t-test on Difference between the Male and Female Junior Secondary School Teachers' Assessment of the Appropriateness of Resources for Communicative Teaching of English Grammar

Gender	No	Mean	Std.	t-value	Df	p-value	Remark
Male	103	41.98	5.86	0.23	212	0.82	Not Significant
Female	111	42.16	5.78				

*Significance@0.05

Source: the Authors' own work.

Results in Table 4 show a t-value of 0.23 and p-value of 0.82 which is greater than 0.05 ($0.82 > 0.05$). Since 0.82 is greater than 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of resources for communicative teaching of English grammar. It also implies that the review of the appropriateness of resources by both groups is wrong, irrespective of their gender. Therefore, there was no significant difference between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' wrong assessment of the appropriateness of resources for communicative teaching of English grammar.

5. DISCUSSION

The result of this study revealed that the junior secondary school English language teachers wrongly assessed the appropriateness of the techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar. This implies that majority of the teachers are not aware of the appropriate techniques for communicative teaching of English grammar. This result is in agreement with the findings of Lawal (2015), Lawal and Sanusi (2015) and Ammadu (2023) who highlighted the importance and centrality of techniques and materials to teaching. The findings revealed that the junior secondary school English language teachers wrongly assessed the appropriateness of the resources for communicative teaching of English grammar. This implies that majority of the teachers had poor judgment on the resources for communicative teaching of English grammar. This supports the findings of Olajide (2014) who opined that if all the instructional resources are adequately utilised, they are capable of enlightening learners as well as assisting teachers on specific teaching and learning.

The result of this study also showed there was no significant difference between the male and female junior secondary school teachers' wrong assessment of the appropriateness of techniques and resources for communicative teaching of English grammar. This means that teachers' assessment of the appropriateness of techniques and resources for communicative teaching of English grammar is independent of their gender. This result is in line with Richards and Rodger (2022), Aliu (2022), Lawson (2023) and Ammadu (2023) in their studies that gender had no influence on the teacher's

performance. Therefore, the teaching process should not be dependent on whether a teacher is a male or female, rather, the sole aim of teaching should be based on the overall success of the learners, teachers and even the whole educational system.

6. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Considering the findings of this study, it was concluded that junior secondary school teachers assessed wrongly the techniques and resources for communicative teaching of English grammar, revealing their lack of proper understanding and appropriate use of the techniques and resources for communicative grammar teaching. It was also discovered that there was no significant difference in male and female junior secondary teachers' wrong assessment of the techniques and resources for communicative teaching of English grammar. Based on the conclusion and limitations of this study, the following recommendations were proffered that English language teachers should constantly attend seminars, workshops, in-service training and read academic journals as well as other related materials to update their professional knowledge and skills as these would expose them to the new developments in the use of different communicative techniques and resources in teaching. Teacher-training Colleges and Faculties of Education should review their curricula to ensure they cultivate the right values. Future researchers could carry out further studies on other academic level such as the senior secondary schools to expose pre-service teachers to the communicative language teaching, including its techniques and resources.

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