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FACTORS AFFECTING THE USE OF ICT FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BWARI ZONE OF THE FCT

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ABSTRACT

The 21 st century is an age of high technology in all spheres of human endeavour. Emerging trends in the use of information and communication technology for educational purposes imply that to succeed, teachers need to understand, adopt and use ICT tools as well as upgrade themselves in knowledge and skills that will enhance effective use of these tools in the classroom. This paper presents a descriptive report of a survey that investigated factors affecting the use of

information and communication technology by English language teachers in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone. In a survey research design, questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 20 teachers out of a population of 34 in the zone. The result showed that factors hindering the use of ICT tools by English language teachers in Bwari Zone of the FCT included unavailability and inaccessibitity of tools and facilities to enhance effective deployment of ICT. Teachers reported that the tools were too expensive for individuals to purchase and electronic gadgets that were procured by patrons were also not easy to operate and maintain. The$ndings also showed that less than 40% of the schools had any of the identifIed ICT tools for instructional purposes. Sixty percent (60%) of the teachers hardly used ICT tools for teaching English language. Based on the fIndings, it was recommended that teachers should endeavour to acquire ICT skills to enable them use and maintain ICT instructional materials for effective teaching of English language. Again, government, school managements, philantropists and other stakeholders in the education sector should make ICT tools available and accessible to teachers .

KEYWORDS: ICT, Language teaching

INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning English language in the traditional classroom setting which in the past was characterised by being limited to only what the teacher had to say to the learners, has evolved to present a situation where learners are more active in the teaching-learning process. The situation is explained better when considered against the background that human endeavours in the 2 1 st century are highly influenced by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Education is a key sector for enhancing principles that produce desired outcomes of all innovations. It has therefore become expedient to note that effective teaching and learning of English has gone beyond the mere stereotypical, regimented/traditional classroom teaching because of the emergence of various gadgets in information and communication technology. The importance of deploying ICT tools and gadgets in global and international transactions has informed concerns regarding their effective use in education.

Considering that English is a global language with impact spanning across human activities, advancement in technology means that the English language teacher needs to structure classroom activities to include the use of ICT for better delivery. Based on the foregoing, it has become imperative for English language teachers to realise the fundamental role of information and communication technology as a catalyst in the advancement of the frontiers of knowledge in language acquisition and learning. According to Samuel and Pulizala (20 14), whateveris learned with pleasure is never forgetten. Nuhu and Abdullahi (2012) maintained that teaching and learning can become both interesting and fun through proper deployment of instructional aids which include ICT tools which offer the learner pleasurable experiences. To them, making ICT tools available holds the key to potential creation, integration, cooperation and collaboration of a knowledge community that will readily share learning spaces and enhance smooth transition from instructivism to constructivism by which students are guided to create and own their learning in a pleasurable and fun-filled atmosphere.

The success or failure of a teaching-learning situation in language acquisition rests to a large extent on the teacher. According to Salleh and Laxman (2013), the positive impact of new technologies is yet to be felt in most Nigerian schools. The authors maintain that the greatest of all the challenges is teacher resourcefulness because the best of all resources in the hands of an illiterate or semi-literate language teacher can do more harm than good. A prior visit to some schools in Bwari Zone of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) revealed that many teachers are yet to ppgrade or familiarise with ICT and its application in the classroom setting. Considering the above, it can be inferred that the integration of ICTs in language education is still being faced with

general apathy on the part of teachers. In addition; poverty and perhaps lack of provision of these ICT components by proprietors 'of schools is inimical to the viability and sustainability of the use of ICTs in the English language teaching and learning process. Aremu and Sulymon (20 12) identified major constraints to the use ofICTs in language education to include:

Cost of electricity, phone lines (with internet connectivity), internet facilities, etc. which are either unreliable or very expensive

Locking video recorders and other ICT tools in storage closets thereby denying access to even the few teachers who know how to operate and incorporate them into their instructional programmes .

Poor maintenance of existing ICT gadgets (where available)

Absence of language and computer laboratories in virtually all schools.

According to Aremu and Su\ymc)n> Urge or overcrowded classes may also interfere with the objectives of the use of ICT for language instruction. However, if the teachers apply some strategies, they can manage such situations.

Evidence from the field suggests that the use of ICT and new media and ICT tools for langpage 1earning is growing in both developed and developing countries. However, cultural, social and economic contexts of each country impact upon the take off of these technologies for language learning. In countries with a high penetration of technology9 the population is more open to innovative applications of new media for language learning. Some educators are often resistant to using technologies which do not reflect what they consider to be current pedagogical best practice. Teachers inless technologically mobile nations often feel daunted by the speed of 21st century technological development which may threaten their relationship with learners who may be more skilled. Afshari,Abubakar, Wong, Bahaman and Fooi (2009) reported a number of factors influencing teachers' use of ICT to include years of experience, age, exposure and attitudes. Of all the factors, availability and accessibility turned out to be the most forward-looking factors. To Akintunde and Angulu (2015), most schools do not have language laboratories and audio-visual materials such as televisions, radios, tape recorders, CDs, earphones, microphones, cubicle mirrors, etc. Contemporary ICT tools such as desktop computers, laptops and PowerPoint projectors, among others, which should serve as part of the instructional materials to concretize learning can be added to the list. Moreover, the few that are available where the teachers are trained are either sub-standard or obsolete and there are no trained technicians to properly operate and maintain them.

It is necessary to integrate emerging technologies with evidence-based instructional interventions. In this view, a great deal of research evidence abounds, suggesting that

the integration of ICT is a necessary area of research to enhance the effectiveness of language instruction. For this to succeed, facilities have to be provided and properly managed for maximum utilisation. With smart and virtual classrooms fast becoming important fora for class interaction in developed countries such as the UK and USA, ICT tools as both aspect as well as medium continue to define teachers' relevance. English language teachers need to be skilled in tools and gadgets such as computers, audio-visual equipment, projectors and slide presentations, as well as social media platforms executed on lap-tops and telephone handsets which are popularly advertised for use to compliment the traditional book and chalk board classrooms. There is also a dimension to language teaching that assumes the use of computer software specially for effective learning. These software provide varieties of computer applications for the language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as the special categories of vocabulary, grammar, continuous writing and pronunciation. These help in shifting the traditional classroom procedures to more and better participation of learners. However, questions arise as to whether ICT tools are favoured for use in langBage teaching in Bwari Zone of the FCT

Salleh and Laxman (2013) suggested that technology often remains antiquated, limited to simple writing assignments and browsing the internet. To them, this has been due in part, to teachers' limited knowledge of the role played by communication technology in language instruction, a situation which shows that the use of computer is only a medium in which a variety of methods, approaches and pedagogical philosophies are implemented. However, English lessons that incorporate multimedia applications can exert powerful motivation and provide bored students with exciting new ways to learn. The use of ICTs enhances English language competence as well as the quality oflearners' experiences. The effective use of ICTs removes the time and space limitations found in traditional teaching, as classroom dialogpe can now extend beyond the time and space constraints. Other prospects of ICT in language teaching can be summarised as expanding access to language programmes, improving the quality of teaching and learning , providing access to current up-to-date materials and offering teachers and learners an avalanche of materials in different modes. English language teachers need ICT as an aspect in its right as well as a medium to achieve success. The availability and factors affecting the use of ICT tools for both purposes in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone of the FCT is therefore the focus ofthis study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study set out to investigate the use of ICT for teaching English in private and public junior secondary schools in Bwari. The availability and accessibility of ICT

tools as well as the readiness of teachers to deploy these tools in the classroom are factors that should not be ignored in an investigation such as this. English language teachers have been observed to carry on with classroom business in the same old approach of talk, chalk and board, pen and book. Whereas the 21st century has ushered in and witnessed the wide use of ICT tools for education in the developed and thriving nations, the Nigerian education sector seems to be lagging behind. Even in Nigeria, many educationally mobile states such as On(io and Ogun. among others, have been observed to adopt the use of ICT for instructional purposes. Many conferences have been convened and a lot of discussions carried out concerning the use of ICT for educational purposes. One wonders therefore, if the talk, talk, talk of conferences is being translated into action in FCT schools. It is on this note that this study investigated the factors affecting the use of ICT for English language teaching in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT.

PURPOSE

The study sought to ascertain factors affecting the use of ICT for English language teaching in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone of the FCT. Specifically, the study set out to determine:

1. the ICT tools available for teaching English language in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT
2. the frequency in the use ofICT tools by teachers of English language in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT.
3. the factors that enhance or hinder the use of ICT tools in teaching English language in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised to guide the research:

1. To what extent are ICT tools available and accessible for teaching English language in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT?
2. To what extent do English language teachers use ICT tools for teaching 'in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT?
3. What factors enhanceor hinder the use of ICT tools for teaching English language in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT?

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was used to investigate the factors affecting the use of ICT tools for teaching English in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone of the FCT. The population for the study comprised all English language teachers in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone of the FCT. There are 34 English language teachers in 35 junior secondary schools in the Zone. Twenty (20) teachers were

selected as sample for the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Factors Affecting the Use of ICT for Teaching English Language in Junior Secondary Schools" (FAUICTELJSSQ). The instrument was validated by two experts; one in English Education and the other in Tests and Measurement. The data collected was analysed using simple percentages to answer the research questions.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent are ICT tools available and accessible for teaching English langpage in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT?

Table 1: Table showing the availability and accessibility of ICT tools for teaching English language injunior secondary schools in Bwad Zone.

Questionnaire item:The following ICT tools are available and accessible to you

ICT tools	SA&A	%	D/SD	%
Desk top computer	8	40	12	60
Laptops	2	10	18	90
PowerPoint Projector	0	0	20	100
Printers	8	40	12	60
Internet facilities	2	10	18	90
Television	4	20	16	80
Radio	4	20	16	80
Tape/ CDs recorders/players Tape/ CDs - with language content	3	15	17	85
	3	15	17	85
Digital cameras Interactive	1	5	19	95
white boards	0	0	20	100

Table I showed that 40% of the respondents agreed that desktop computers and printers were available and accessible tO them for teaching E[n]gli[s]h l[a]nWag[e]9 [w]hile 80% disagreed. As for laptops and internet facilities, 10% agreed that theY were available and accessible to them while 90 % disagreed. N[one o]f th[e res]p[on]d[en]ts representing 0% agreed that PowerPoi[n]t p[rojec]t[or]s [an]d i[n]t[erac]ti[ve w]hit[e] b(\[ar]ds were available and accessible to them, while 100% disagr[ee]d- F[our re]sp[on]d[en]ts representing 20% agreed that television sets and radios were avail[a]bl[e an]d [access]ibl[e] to them whie 80% aisagreed. As for tape/CD recorders/players as well as tapes/CDs

with language content, 3 respondents representing 15% agreed that these were available and accessible for teaching English language while 85% disagreed. Only one respondent (5%) agreed that a digital camera was available and accessible for instructional purposes while 19 (95%) disagreed. The result presented in table 1 indicated that most English language teachers in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone do not have critical ICT tools available and accessible for instructional purposes.

Research Question 2:To what extent do English language teachers use ICT tools for teaching in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone of the FCT?

Table 2: Table showing the frequency ofuse regarding ICT tools for teaching English language

Questionnaire item: How often do you use these ICT tools for teaching English language in your school?

Use of ICT tools in schools	Weekly/Monthly	%	E [ardly/Nev€	Ir	%
Desk top computer	8	40	12		60
Laptops		10	18		90
PowerPoint Projecto	0	0	20		100
Printers	8	40	12		60
Internet facilities	2	10	18		90
Television	4	20	16		80
Radio	4	20	16		80
Tape/ CDs - recorders/players	3	15	17		85
Tape/ - with language content	3	15	17		85
Digital cameras	1		19		95
Interactive white boards	0	0	20		100

Table 2 showed that 40% of the respondents agreed that they used desktop computers and printers for teaching English language every week or on a monthly basis, while 60% said that they hardly or never used these tools. As for laptops and internet facilities9 10% agreed that they used them weekly/monthly while 90 % hardly or never used these. None of the respondents representing 0% ever used PowerPoint projectors and interactive white boards; meaning that all the respondents (100%) never used these tools. Four respondents representing 20'Y, used television sets and radios for teaching English every week/month while 80% hardly/never used them As for tape/CD recorders/players as well as tapes/CDs with language content, 3

respondents representing 15% agreed that they used them weekly/monthly for teaching English language while 85% hardly/never used them. Only one respondent(5%) agreed to using a digital camera weekly/monthly while 19 (95%) hardly/never used it. The result presented in table 2 indicated that most English language teachers in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone hardly/never used critical ICT tools for instructional purposes.

Research Question 3: What factors enhance or hinder the useof ICT tools for teaching English language in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone ofthe FCT?

Table 3 : Table showing the factors affecting the use of ICT tools by English language teachers in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone.

Questionnaire item: Select from the following statements that which is applicable to you.

Statement	S A/A	%	D/SD	%
I can use ICT tools in teaching English language if they are available and accessible to me	20	100	0	0
I can use ICT tools in teaching English language if I am trained in ICT skills to handle and maintain them	20	1	00	0 0
I can use ICT tools in teaching English language if I could purchase them ar have them made affordable to me.	20	100	0	0
Idonot use ICT tools in teaching English language because they are not available and/or accessible.	12	60	8	40
I do not use ICT tools in teaching English language because I am not computer literate	2	10	18	90
I do not use ICT tools in teaching English language because they are expensive and unaffordable.	4	20	16	80
I do not use ICT tools in teaching English language because they are not easy to use and marntarn	4	20	16	80

Table 3 presents the responses ofEnglish language teachers to statements concerning the factors that affect their useor lack of use of ICT tools for teaching in their schools. The result showed that all the respondents (100%) stated that they could use ICT tools if they were made available and accessible to them. They also agreed that they could use these tools if they were trained in skills to handle and maintain them- All 20 of them (100%) agreed that if the tools were less expensive they could use them. Twelve respondents representing 60% agreed that they did not use any ICT tOOl because they were not available and accessible while 8(40%) disagreed with the statement. Two of the respondents (10%) stated that they did not use ICT tools

because they were not literate in computer skills while 18(90%) disagreed. Four respondents representing 20% stated that the tools and gadgets were expensive, unaffordable and not easy to use and maintain while 16(80%) disagreed with the statement. The results indicate that English language teachers were willing and ready to deploy ICT tools if they were made available and accessible for use. The results also showed that respondents could use ICT tools if they were taught skills in computer literacy. Again, if the tools were inexpensive, affordable and easy to maintain, the respondents could use them for teaching English language. However, the result showed that many of the respondents were not using ICT tools to teach English language because ofthe cost and lack of computer literacy, among others.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that teachers in junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone of the FCT do not often use ICT tools and gadgets in teaching English language. Only a few have these tools available and accessible to them. This is in line with the assertion by Akintunde and Angulu (2015) that most schools in Nigeria do not have language laboratories and audio-visual materials among other instructional materials that serve to concretize learning. Again, the results agree with them that there are no trained personnel to maintain the tools in schools. The lack of computer literacy makes the teachers unable to use even their personal ICT tools such as handsets to access ICT facilities for teaching.

The results prove that because most junior secondary schools in Bwari Zone of the FCT do not have ICT facilities, English language teachers cannot access these tools for teaching even where the teachers are able and willing to use them. Besides, the teachers stated that ICT tools for teaching English language are expensive as they cannot purchase them. Moreover, the teachers maintained that ICT tools are not easy to handle and maintain.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the factors affecting the use of ICT tools for teaching English language in Bwari Zone of the FCT are numerous. They include among others, unavailability, inaccessibility and cost of the tools. On the part of teachers, their inability to procure the tools for themselves, lack of computer literacy and of skills to handle ICT tools for instructional purposes were found to be among the factors affecting effective use of ICT. However, there are clear indications that all respondents are ready to learn and use ICT tools to generate language teaching materials

In the 21st century, when Nigeria is striving to catch up u'ith the developed world, and the FCT administration is making efforts to set the pace for the country in all spheres of life, Bwari Zone needs to step up their provisions of ICT facilities to enhance educational practices in general and English teaching in particular.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. English language teachers should be trained and retrained to acquire necessary skills for handling and using ICT tools for instructional purposes. 2. Government, school managements and philanthropists should try to make ICT tools available and accessible to teachers
3. In-service training and workshops should be organised regularly to keep teachers abreast of developments in the importance and use of ICT in the education sector.
4. If possible, government should encourage teachers to own ICT tools by intervening in the cost ofprocurement.

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