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Teachers' Competency Level In The Use Of ICT For Teaching Oral English In Yala Local Government Area, Cross River State

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ABSTRACT

This study surveyed teachers' competency level in the use of ICT for teaching Oral English in Yala Local Government Area, Cross River State. The independent variable is Teachers' Competency and the Use of ICT for teaching Oral English is the dependent variable. The aim of the study was to investigate teachers' competency level in the use of ICT for teaching Oral English in public secondary schools. Review of the literature was done under conceptual framework, theoretical framework and review of empirical studies. The study was anchored on three fundamental theories: Albert Bandura's observational learning theory, Medley's theory of teachers' competence, and Hiltz model of the theory of Computer Medicated Communication, followed by empirical reviews and summary of literature review. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of the entire 54 English Language teachers in the 23 public secondary schools in the study area. The teachers were sampled using the census sampling technique. Mean (x) and Standard Deviation (SD) were used to answer the research questions, while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance Finally, this work was summarized in five subtopics with one of the recommendations; Teachers' competency level in the use of ICT and its tools in the teaching of Oral English should be of utmost concern when planning academic curriculum by the public secondary schools' administrators and the Cross River State secondary school Board for effective teaching and learning in this 21st century.

Keywords: Teachers Competency, ICT, Oral English

INTRODUCTION

The study of Oral English in senior secondary schools is a very important aspect of the English Language curriculum. The aim is not farfetched from the need to develop the oral communication skills of students in preparation for the world of work, for pursuing higher education and or for entrepreneurship, and also importantly to prepare students for the senior secondary school certificate examinations. More so, communication skill is known to be one among the 21st century skills a learner has to be equipped with, and the senior secondary school is where the foundational knowledge of oral communication is perfected. What a student learns or fails to learn at this level of education has the potential of greatly affecting him/her afterwards. The outcome of a student's learning is however greatly predicated on the competencies of the teacher, and in a dispensation as this when Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become the new normal in virtually all aspects of human endeavour, and also when teachers' instructional effectiveness is being correlated with their level of ICT literacy (Eliana, 2015), the competency level of Oral English teachers in the use of the technology for instructional delivery becomes an area of knowledge that is worth researching.

Information and communication technology (ICT) refers to information-handling tools used to generate, store, process, spread and share information (Alfonso, 2022). In the opinion of Ugboja (2017), Information and communication technology (ICT) refers to those different types of technologies which are utilized for processing, transmitting and communicating data and information. Tools such as computers, internet, interface boxes, e-mail, varieties of software and materials form important aspects of ICT. Similarly, Akubuilo, Nnam and Ugo (2021) averred that information communication technology (ICT) is the processing and maintenance of information, and the use of all forms of computer, communication network and mobile technologies to mediate information

ICT has immense application and usefulness for the teaching of Oral English in secondary schools. Drigas and Charami (2014) asserted that advances in technology in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have opened up new ways of investigating the articulatory and acoustic properties of speech and have substantially enlarged the scope of phonetics such that new frontiers such as forensic phonetics have been opened. Forensic phonetics is a new branch of phonetics which is used in the detection of criminals where the forensic phonetician uses his equipment for the detection of the voice. For Ugboja (2017), by using tapes, television and videos, the teacher can make the children listen and watch the enunciation of the standard varieties as well as other forms from across the world, thus creating versatility and flexibility in their speech. He further stated that language laboratories with at least a radio cassette player, television with a multimedia receiver like the DSTV, as well as the video compact disc player should be installed in all public schools for use in teaching English pronunciation.

Different technological tools are now available for effective spoken English teaching practice. They could be utilized by secondary school teachers in Yala LGA for effective teaching. Prominent among these tools include: audio blogs; podcasting; video casting; videoconferencing; and voice chatting. These tools are each expatiated on in subsequent chapters of this study. All of the tools in one way or the other involve real communication and it is widely agreed among researches that activities that involve real communication promote learning.

Statement of the Problem

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become a part and parcel of the instructional process, so much that the effectiveness of teaching and learning in this 21st century is now largely predicated on the use of this technology for the teaching-learning process. Factually, ICT has become so important to teachers today that the assessment of teachers' literacy and professional competence is being correlated with their competency level in ICT for instructional purposes. The teaching and learning of Oral English could be made more effective in public senior secondary schools in Nigeria by the teachers' ability to optimize the potentials of the various ICT tools, Apps and services available in the digital space. These tools and services have been proven beyond doubt to have revolutionary and transformational impact on all aspects of education when appropriately utilized. However, the extent to which the benefits of ICT accrue to the stakeholders of the classroom is dependent on the teachers' level of competence in the use of ICT, and unfortunately, teachers' poor level of competence or poor e-literacy of teachers has been a major drawback to the effective use of ICT in public schools in Nigeria (Ololube, 2015).

There could be no better time than now for the full adoption and integration of ICT in the teaching of Oral English in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, and the assessment of teachers' competency level as the performance of Cross River state students in the West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) in the past couple of years reveals serious deficiencies in English language. The Table below is an evidential report of the performance of students in WAEC between the period of 2016 and 2021 as acknowledged in National Bureau of Statistics (2018), National Bureau of Statistics (2020) and National Bureau of Statistics (2022).

Table 1.1: report of the performance of students in WAEC between the period of 2016 and 2021

YEAR	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
PERCENTAGE	58.3%	54.86%	53.77%	40.82	54%	53.8%

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2018)

This amounted to an average of 52.6% performance between the period of 2016 and 2021. In a prior study by Oguguo & Uboh (2020) covering the period of 2016-2020, Cross River state ranked 19th out of the 36 states in the federation, and there is no indication that the situation has improved for the

better yet. This obviously requires thorough scrutiny of the availability of ICT tools and services, and importantly, the level of ICT competency of teachers in these schools. To this end, the researcher sets out to investigate teachers' competency level in the use of ICT for teaching Oral English in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate teachers' competency level in the use of ICT for teaching Oral English in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State. Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. investigate male and female teachers' awareness of ICT tools for the teaching of Oral English in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State;
2. investigate the availability of computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English in urban and rural secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria;
3. find out the functional condition of available computers and ICT for teaching Oral English in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria;

Research Questions

The following research questions are posed to guide the study:

1. What is the male and female teachers' level of awareness of ICT tools for teaching Oral English in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State?
2. What is the level of availability of computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English in urban and rural secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria?
3. To what extent are the available computers and I CT tools for teaching Oral English in functional condition in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State?

Hypotheses

The researcher has formulated the following null hypotheses as a guide for the study:

1. The level of awareness of ICT tools for teaching Oral English by male and female Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State do not significantly differ.
2. No significant difference exists between the level of availability of computers and ICT tools in urban and rural secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area Cross River Stat for teaching Oral English.
3. There is no significant difference between the educational qualification level of Oral English teachers in the utilization of computer and ICT tools (software) for teaching Oral English in Yala Local Government Area Cross River State.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was therefore adopted for the study. This is a design that aims at obtaining information to systematically describe a population. This study was carried out in the 23 public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River state. The population of the study comprised of all the 54 permanent English Language teachers in the twenty-three public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Areas of Cross River State. The instruments for data collection developed by the researcher for this study are Observation Checklist and Questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using different statistical tools. The Observation Checklist for Availability and Status of ICT Tools and Service (OCASITS) was analysed using number count analysis. The Teachers' ICT Competency Rating Scale (TICRS) was analysed using mean and standard deviation statistics. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) was qualitatively analyzed using the deductive type of thematic analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research question 1: *What is the male and female teachers' level of awareness of ICT tools for teaching Oral English in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State?*

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation analysis showing the level of awareness of male female teachers in the use of ICT tools for teaching Oral English in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Awareness	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Male	26	23.50	7.78
Female	28	22.96	6.61

The mean awareness scores provide information into the average level of competency within each gender category. The mean awareness score for Male teachers is 23.5000, and for Female teachers, it is 22.964. These mean scores represent the average level of awareness of ICT tools in for teaching Oral English within each gender category. The higher mean score for male suggests that, male Oral English teachers are more aware of computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English than females in Yala Local Government Area of Cross Rivers State.

Table 2: Number count showing the status of availability of computer and ICT tools for teaching Oral English in urban and rural secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State.

S/N	Computers and ICT Tools	Availability in Urban			Availability in Rural			Availability
		Available	Not Available	Decision	Available	Not Available	Decision	Decision
1.	Computer	10	0	Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Available only in Urban Schools
2.	Television	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Not Available in any school
3.	Voice Recorder	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Not Available in any school
4.	Smart Board	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Not Available in any school
5.	Laptop	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Not Available in any school
6.	Android Phones	10	0	Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Available only in Urban Schools
7.	CD-ROMS	10	0	Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Available only in Urban Schools
8.	Interactive Whiteboards	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Not Available in any school
9.	Digital Cameras	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Not Available in any school
10.	Projectors	4	6	Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Available only in few Urban Schools
11.	Internet Connectivity	10	0	Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Available only in Urban Schools
12.	Electricity	10	0	Avail	0	0	Not Avail	Available only in Urban Schools

The table 2 provides information on the status of availability of computer and ICT tools for teaching Oral English in urban and rural secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State. The table includes different tools and their availability in both urban and rural schools. The availability of computers and ICT tools are as follows; Computer: The table shows that computers are available in urban schools (10 available) but not available in rural schools (0 available). The decision indicates that computers are only available in urban schools. Television: The table indicates that televisions are not available in any of the schools, neither in urban nor rural areas. Voice Recorder, Smart Board, Laptop, Interactive Whiteboards, Digital Cameras: These tools are not available in any

of the schools, indicating a lack of access to these ICT tools for teaching Oral English in both urban and rural areas. Android Phones, CD-ROMs, Internet Connectivity, Electricity: These tools are available in urban schools (10 available for each), but not available in rural schools (0 available). The decision suggests that these tools are only available in urban schools. Projectors: The table shows that projectors are available in a few urban schools (4 available) but not available in rural schools (6 not available). This indicates that projectors are only available in a limited number of urban schools.

The Table 2, thus shows the status of the availability of computer and ICT tools for teaching Oral English in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State is majorly unavailable. Computers, Android phones, CD-ROMs, internet connectivity, and electricity are available only in urban schools, while other tools such as televisions, voice recorders, smart boards, laptops, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, and projectors are not available in any of the schools, indicating a lack of access to these tools for teaching Oral English in both urban and rural areas. The table shows a huge disparity in resource availability between urban and rural schools, with urban schools having access to a limited number of ICT tools while rural schools lack most of these tools entirely in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Research Question 3: *To what extent are the availability computer and ICT tools for teaching Oral English in right good conditions in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State teaching?*

Table 3: Number count showing extent the available computer and ICT tools for teaching Oral English in right good conditions in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State teaching.

S/N	Computers and ICT Tools	Availability in both Urban and rural			Availability Condition			Condition Decision
		Available	Not Available	Decision	Good	Bad	Decision	Decision
1.	Computer	10	0	Available only in Urban Schools	0	10	Bad	Available but in Bad Condition
2.	Television	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Nil	Nil
3.	Voice Recorder	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Nil	Nil
4.	Smart Board	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Nil	Nil
5.	Laptop	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Nil	Nil
6.	Android Phones	10	0	Available only in Urban Schools	0	10	Bad	Available but in Bad Condition
7.	CD-ROMS	10	0	Available only in Urban Schools	0	10	Bad	Available but in Bad Condition
8.	Interactive Whiteboards	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Nil	Nil
9.	Digital Cameras	0	0	Not Avail	0	0	Nil	Nil
10.	Projectors	4	6	Available only in Urban Schools	0	10	Bad	Available but in Bad Condition
11.	Internet Connectivity	10	0	Available only in Urban Schools	0	10	Bad	Available but in Bad Condition
12.	Electricity	10	0	Available only in Urban Schools	0	10	Bad	Available but in Bad Condition

The table 3 provides information on the extent to which computer and ICT tools for teaching Oral English are available in good conditions in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State. The table includes the availability of tools, their condition, and decisions regarding their availability and condition. The availability of computers and ICT tools and the conditions are as follows; Computer: The table shows that computers are available but only in urban schools (10 available), while they are not available in rural schools (0 available). The decision indicates that computers are available only in urban schools. However, the condition of the available computers is bad, with all 10 computers reported to be in bad condition.

Television, Voice Recorder, Smart Board, Laptop, Interactive Whiteboards, Digital Cameras: These tools are not available in any of the schools, neither in urban nor rural areas. The decision states that these tools are not available so there is no assessment of their condition.

Android Phones, CD-ROMs, Projectors, Internet Connectivity, Electricity: These tools are available but only in urban schools (10 available for each). The decision indicates that these tools are available only in urban schools. However, the condition of these tools is reported as bad, with all 10 tools in each category mentioned to be in bad condition. The table reveals that the availability and condition of computer and ICT tools for teaching Oral English in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area are concerning.

Although computers are available, they are limited to urban schools, while rural schools lack access to this resource. Moreover, the available computers are reported to be in bad condition, which suggests a lack of maintenance or insufficient investment in upgrading the equipment. This hampers the effective use of computers for teaching Oral English and may negatively impact the quality of education provided. Other tools such as televisions, voice recorders, smart boards, laptops, interactive whiteboards, and digital cameras are reported to be unavailable in both urban and rural schools, indicating a lack of access to these tools. This signifies a significant limitation in utilizing these tools to enhance Oral English instruction.

Additionally, the tools that are available in urban schools, including Android phones, CD-ROMs, projectors, internet connectivity, and electricity, are reported to be in bad condition. This further underscore the need for maintenance and investment in ensuring that available tools are in good working order. The findings highlight the disparities in resource availability and condition between urban and rural schools. To improve the situation, there is a need for equitable access to computer and ICT tools across all schools. Additionally, investments in maintaining and upgrading existing tools are essential to ensure that they are in good condition and can effectively support Oral English teaching.

Hypothesis 1: The level of awareness of ICT tools for teaching Oral English of male and female Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross Rivers State do not significantly differ

Table 4: Mean, SD and Independent samples t-test analysis of level of awareness of ICT tools of teaching Oral English of male and female Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross Rivers State

Awareness	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	T	Sig.	P	Decision
Male	26	23.50	7.78	52	.273	.786	0.05	Accept Ho_1 P<0.05
Female	28	22.96	6.61					

The table 4 presents information on the mean, standard deviation, degrees of freedom (df), t-value, significance level (Sig.), and p-value for the level of awareness of ICT tools for teaching Oral English among urban and rural Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross Rivers State.

The mean awareness scores provide information into the average level of competency within each gender category. The mean awareness score for Male teachers is 23.5000, and for Female teachers, it is 22.964. These mean scores represent the average level of awareness of ICT tools in for teaching Oral English within each gender category.

The higher mean score for male suggests that, male Oral English teachers are more aware of computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English than females in Yala Local Government Area of Cross Rivers State.

To test the hypothesis, whether there is a significant difference in the level of awareness of ICT tools for teaching Oral English between male and female Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area.an independent samples t-test has been conducted. The t-test compares the means of the two groups (male and female) and determines if there is a significant difference between them. The t-value shows a value of .273 and the p-value is .786.

Based on the available information in the table, computed t (52) = .273, P >05, i.e., p = ..786 the p-value of 0.786 is greater than the significance level (0.05), suggesting that there is no significant difference in the level of awareness of ICT tools for teaching Oral English between male and female Oral English teachers.

Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho1) that there is no significant difference in the level of awareness between the two groups.is accepted. The results indicate that, based on the available data, the level of awareness of ICT tools for teaching Oral English does not significantly differ between male and female Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: No significant difference exists between the level of availability of computers and ICT tools in urban and rural secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area Cross River Stat for teaching Oral English.

Table 5: Mean, SD and Independent samples t-test analysis of level of availability of ICT tools for teaching Oral English in urban and rural Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State

Availability	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	T	Sig.	P	Decision
Urban	10	25.00	6.46	52	.870	.388	0.05	Accept Ho_1 P<0.05
Rural	44	22.81	7.29					

The table 5 presents information on the mean, standard deviation, degrees of freedom (df), t-value, significance level (Sig.), and p-value for the level of availability of computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English among urban and rural Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State.

The mean available score for urban computer and ICT tools is 25.00, with a standard deviation of 6.46. while the mean available score for rural computers and ICT tools is 22.81, with a standard deviation of 7.29. The mean available scores provide insights into the average level of availability within each group. The mean available score for urban computer and ICT tools is 25.00, while the mean availability of computers and ICT tools score for rural teachers is 22.81. These mean scores represent the average level of availability in each group. The higher mean available score for urban suggests that, on average, they may have a slightly higher level of availability regarding ICT tools for teaching Oral English compared to their rural counterparts.

To test the hypothesis, whether there is a significant difference in the level of availability of computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English between urban and rural schools in Yala Local Government Area.an independent samples t-test has been conducted. The t-test compares the means of the two groups (urban and rural) and determines if there is a significant difference between them. The t-value shows a value of .870 and the p-value is 0.388.

Based on the available information in the table, computed t (52) = .870, P >05, i.e., p = .388 the p-value of 0.388 is greater than the significance level (0.05), suggesting that there is no significant difference in the level of availability of ICT tools for teaching Oral English between urban and rural secondary schools.

Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho1) that there is no significant difference in the level of availability of computers and ICT tools between the two groups.is accepted. The results indicate that, based on the available data, the level of availability of computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English does not significantly differ between urban and rural secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State. This implies that both urban and rural schools possess a similar level of availability regarding the availability of computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the educational qualification level of Oral English teachers in the utilization of computer and ICT tools (software) for teaching Oral English in Yala Local Government Area Cross River State.

Table 5: Mean, SD and One-way ANOVA Analysis of difference in the level of competency of utilization of computers and ICT tools (software) for teaching Oral English for teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State

Edu Qua.	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	F	Sig.	P	Decision
WASSCE/NCE	7	9.857	3.236	2,51	1.419	.251	0.05	Accept Ho_1 P>0.05
HND/BSC	26	12.80	3.888					
M.SC Above	21	12.28	4.605					

The table 6 presents the results of a one-way ANOVA analysis to test the hypothesis that the level of competency in the utilization of computers and ICT tools (software) for teaching Oral English does not significantly differ among Oral English teachers in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State with different educational qualifications.

The table 4.8 shows the mean scores that provide insights into the average level of competency (software) within each educational qualification category. The mean competency score is 9.857 for WASSCE/NCE, 12.80 for HND/BSC, and 12.28 for M.SC Above. These mean scores represent the average level of competency in the utilization of computers and ICT tools (software) for teaching Oral English within each category.

The slightly higher mean scores for the HND/BSC and M.SC above categories suggest that, on average, teachers with higher educational qualifications may have a slightly higher level of competency in using computers and ICT tools for teaching Oral English compared to those with WASSCE/NCE qualifications.

The hypothesis tests whether there is a significant difference in the level of competency in the utilization of computers and ICT tools (software) for teaching Oral English among teachers with different educational qualifications in Yala Local Government Area.

Based on the available information in the table, the table 4.7 reveals that the computed F (1, 52) = .1.419, P >05, i.e., p = .251 is statistically not significant at the chosen alpha level of 0.05 indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in the level of competency among teachers with different educational qualifications. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho1) shows that there is no significant difference in the level of competency among teachers with different educational qualifications is accepted. Based on the available information, the results suggest that there is no statistically significant difference in the level of competency in the utilization of computers and ICT tools(software) for teaching Oral English among teachers with different educational qualifications in Yala Local Government Area.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the competency level of teachers in the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for teaching Oral English in Yala Local Government Area, Cross River State, plays a critical role in enhancing the quality of education. The effective integration of ICT tools in the teaching process not only improves instructional methods but also facilitates a more interactive and engaging learning environment for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings, discussions and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The state secondary school board should create awareness for teachers through organizing of training. seminars and workshops for their teachers on how to use and utilize computer devices and its ICT tools computer for effective teaching and learning process.
2. The government should support the public secondary schools by providing and make available more ICT tools (hardware and software) and technical personnel for easy operation and maintenance of the tools for the teachers. The public secondary school authorities should organize and provide prospects for teachers to acquire digital and computers literacy skills through workshops, seminars, and conferences to enable them learn the contemporary technological skills in their chosen field of discipline.
3. Teachers should engage in meaningful practices and enroll in online programs that will improve their proficiency in ICT competency level.
4. Teachers should participate and explore more in activities like video conferencing, audio-blogging, podcast, on-line classes, google classroom meeting, you tube lessons that will enhance their competency level in using ICT tools thereby improving their impact in the teaching of Oral English.

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