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**IMPACT OF ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING INSTRUCTION ON SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDE ON ORAL ENGLISH IN OHIMINI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BENUE STATE**

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**Abstract**

This study investigated the Impact of Computer Assisted Language Learning Instruction (CALLI) on Senior Secondary two students' attitude towards Oral English in Ohimini Local Area of Benue State. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The study adopted a quasi-experimental design. The population of the study consisted of all the 3,641 Senior Secondary School SS2 students in the 41 secondary schools in Ohimini local government area out of which two intact classes of 86 students were sampled for the study. The instrument for data collection was Oral English Attitude Survey (OEAS) and Oral English Performance Test (OEPT). The data were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean attitude score of students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction. Therefore, it was recommended that workshops and seminars should be organised by government and non-governmental organizations for teachers to sensitize them on the effectiveness and efficient use of the Assisted Language Learning Instruction in order to boost students' attitude towards the learning of Oral English in secondary schools among others in Ohimini Local Government Area.

**Keywords:** Language Learning Instruction, Senior Secondary School, Attitude and Oral English

**Introduction**

English language occupies a strategic place in the political, social, economic and educational spheres of Nigeria. It cuts across the curriculum as the language for teaching and learning, a subject of instruction and the language of examination (Udu, 2017). Its importance has led the Government of the Federation to make its teaching and learning mandatory in schools. At the secondary school level of education, candidates wishing to proceed to tertiary schools must earn a credit pass in English language. This development has placed a heavy demand on English language. Experts in teaching English language are in short supply and many of those teaching the subject are not using effective teaching methods in teaching the subject. On their part, students device different ways of passing the subject to the extent that some engage in examination malpractice.

The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) Chief Examiners' report (2019; 2020; 2021) for English language has consistently decried that students' performance in English language is not entirely satisfactory. One component that students are not performing well is the oral English component. Candidates often show a poor grasp of pronunciation, stress and intonation. This is particularly worrisome because, the spoken aspect of language is the most basic and students need this aspect to be able to interact with others on the streets, in the market place, worship centres and most importantly on school campuses. The students need to communicate intelligibly and be communicate with in English as this will pave the way to also understand other subjects in the curriculum (Agayo & Udu, 2020).

This crucial aspect falls under what is popularly called oral English. Enyeazu (2020) defines oral English as the systematic study of the sounds of language and the way in which they are produced. The best way to learn the pronunciation of the sounds which is embedded in oral English is by a systematic study of the sounds of the language through intensive drills. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which is dominated by superhighway Information Communication Technology (ICT), experts are advocating for the use of ICT-supported teaching strategies for more effective classroom instruction. It is on this basis that Assisted Language Learning Instruction easily comes to mind.

Assisted Language Learning according to Parab (2015) is yet another manifestation of mediated language learning instruction. The first phase of the Assisted Language Learning Instruction was conceived in 1950 and was implemented in 1960s and 1970s. In this strategy, the computer gives a stimulus to the learners by being not a mere tool but also an instructor which facilitates the teaching and learning of all the subjects in the curriculum.

Many learners of English language as a second language face have difficulty with pronunciation of English sounds. The problem is made worse by the phenomenon of mother tongue or first language interference. Apart from the problem of poor pronunciation, students in secondary schools have poor intonation and lack the required skills in phonetic transcription. All these areas are tested in the oral English paper in national examinations such as Senior School Certificate Examination and Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations. The teaching of oral English is weighed down by various factors which have contributed to the slow pace and ineffectiveness in teaching the course. For instance, the predicament that second language speakers face is that, even if they know the words when they see them written down or hear them in isolation, they may not recognize them when they hear them in connected speech. Could, teaching strategies, students' attitude and gender exacerbate these problems? Efforts to investigate this problem have led researchers to test the efficacy of using computer assisted instruction to determine if students' attitude and performance in oral English can be enhanced. Assisted Language Learning Instruction represents a teaching tool or strategy that involves the use of a computer programme to facilitate the education of a group of students.

Alshwairkh (2020) and Baturay, (2022) affirm that learners consider the computer a useful tool to discover and learn new vocabulary and to supplement in-class instruction. Assisted Language Learning Instruction could increase students' attitude and hence improve their academic performance as it provides them with more stimulating experiences than the form-focused approach.

In the teaching and learning of oral English, attitude stands out as an important determinant of success. Invariably students' academic performance in oral English is influenced in one way or the other by their attitude in the subject. Okoro (2011) is of the view that attitude is an emotionally oriented trait which determines the vigour of the learner tackling education and other activities; and results in the tendency to seek out and participate in activities of choice as against others.

It is assumed that if students are taught with the strategies and method that makes them think creatively and develop positive attitude, and actively participate in learning they will be able to reach the predetermined objectives. One of the teaching methods believed to lead to the attainment of predetermined instructional objectives in computer assisted language learning instruction. Corroborating this view, Hussain and Ali (2012) revealed that computer assisted language learning instruction makes students to show positive attitude and retain the concepts learnt for a long period of time thereby improve their performance. Testing this assumption, Wang (2011) studied the effect of computer-assisted whole language instruction on Taiwanese University students' English learning in Taiwan. A total of 212 freshmen (98 low level and 114 high level students) were randomly selected as the participants of the study. The results of the study indicated that most students evaluated the instruction positively. While the significant difference in the gain scores of the t-test revealed that integrated instruction was effective in improving students' reading ability ( $p=0.00$ ), basic-level students had much greater improvement than advanced-level students, whose scores even showed slight regression.

Apart from methods of teaching, gender is also a factor that may influence students' attitude and academic performance in oral English. Singh (2010) opines that gender refers to a socio-cultural construct that connotes the differentiated roles and responsibilities of men and women in a particular society. This definition implies that gender determines the role, which one plays in relation to general political, cultural, social and economic system of the society.

Deficiency in the components of oral English such as vowel sound, consonants sound, diphthongs, stress and intonation and emphatic stress can be a great limitation to anyone that needs to survive in an environment where English is the tool of politics, education, commerce, religion and information among others (Omojuwa, Timothy & Obiekezie, 2009). Oral English is an aspect of

English language which is very important in assessing the attitude and performance of students in senior secondary school because it determines their effectiveness in pronunciation, oral English is concerned with the concrete characteristics of the sounds used in language (Udu, 2013). Assisted teaching could be an effective strategy involving the use of the computer software, computers, the internet, online dictionaries, radio, handset, compact disc (CD), vide compact disc (VCD) to reinforce students' attitude and improve performance in English language. This study thus, seeks to investigate the impact of assisted language learning on SS2 students' attitude and performance in oral English in Ohimini Local Government Area of Benue State.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate impact of Assisted Language Learning Instruction on Senior Secondary School two (SS2) students' performance and attitude to in oral English in Ohimini Local Government Area of Benue State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the mean attitudescoresof students' taught oral English using computer assisted language learning instruction and those taught using form-focused approach.
2. Determine the difference in the mean attitudescoresof male and female students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction.

#### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by two research questions as follows:

1. What are the mean attitude scores of students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instructionand those taught usingForm-focused Approach.
2. What is the difference in the mean attitudescoresof male and female students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction?

#### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested for the study:

1. There is no significant difference in mean attitudescores between students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction and those taught using form-focused approach.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean attitudescoresof male and female students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction.

#### **Method**

##### **Research Design**

The researchers adopted a pre-test post-test quasi-experimental design. Quasi-experimental design according to Dinardo (2018) is a research design in which a treatment or stimulus is administered to only one of two groups whose members were randomly assigned. The target population for this study consisted of all the 3,641 Senior Secondary School (SS2) students in the 71 secondary schools in Ohimini Local Government Area of Benue State during the 2022/2023 academic session. The choice of SS2 students for the study was considered appropriate because observation has shown that senior school students perform poorly in oral English. Two public schools were purposefully selected. This was to ensure that the researchers selected schools equipped with computer laboratories. The sample of the study consisted of eighty-six (86) senior secondary school two (2) students during the 2022/2023 academic session.

The researchers utilized Oral English Attitude survey (OEAS) and Oral English Performance Test (OELPT). The researchers constructed 25 items on (OEAS) consisting of two sections: A and B Section "A" elicited personal information from the respondents, while Section "B" sought information on students' attitude in Oral English 4-points scale. The weightings of the responses were Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point). The respondents ticked the options to reflect their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements in the Oral English Attitude Survey. To determine the reliability of the instruments, the instruments trial-tested on 20 students within the study area who were not part of the main study. The results were used to compute the instruments' reliability using Kuder-Richardson 21 for OEAS and Cronbach coefficient alpha for OELPT. A reliability coefficient of 0.76 was obtained for OEAS while that of OELPT was found as 0.78 both instruments were considered reliable since they met Emaikwu's(2019) recommendation of the 0.70 of minimum coefficient. The instruments were supported with minimum lesson plans designed by researchers following the four recommended steps by Anderson (2018).

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the mean attitude ratings of students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction and those taught using form-focused approach?

**Table 1:** Mean and Standard Deviation of Attitude Ratings of Students Taught Oral English Using Assisted Language Learning Instruction and those Taught in the Control Group

Method	N	Pre-attitude		Post-attitude		Mean gain
		x	SD	x	SD	
CAI (Experimental Group)	45	2.56	.32	3.03	.30	0.47
Form-focused approach (Control Group)	41	2.45	.43	2.87	.42	0.37
Mean Difference						0.10

Table 1 shows the mean interest ratings of students taught Oral English using computer assisted language learning instruction and those taught using form-focused approach. The table shows that 45 students were taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction while 41 students were taught oral English using form-focused approach. The table reveals that the mean attitude ratings of English language students taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction was 2.56 with a standard deviation of 0.32 at pre-test, their post test scores was 3.03 with a standard deviation of 0.30. While the mean attitude ratings of students taught Oral English using form-focused approach was 2.45 with a standard deviation of 0.43 at pre-test and their post test scores was 2.87 with a standard deviation of 0.42. Table 1 further shows that the mean gain of students taught Oral English using computer assisted language learning instruction were 0.47 and that using approach was 0.37. The mean difference between the two groups is 0.10 in favour of students taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in mean attitude ratings between students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction and those taught in the form-focused approach.

**Table 2:** ANCOVA on Mean Attitude Ratings between Students taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction and those taught in the form-focused approach

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	8.584(a)	2	4.292	128.622	.000
Intercept	1.338	1	1.338	40.098	.000
Pre-Attitude	8.061	1	8.061	241.554	.000
Approach	.238	1	.238	7.129	.009
Error	2.736	83	.033		
Total	751.854	86			
Corrected Total	11.320	85			

R Squared = .758 (Adjusted R Squared = .752)

Table 3 reveals that  $F(185) = 7.129$ ;  $p=0.009 < 0.05$ . Since the p value (0.009) is less than the alpha level (0.05), the null hypothesis is not accepted. This means that the Assisted Language Learning Instruction has a significant impact on students' performance than the control group. Thus, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the mean attitude ratings between students taught oral English using computer assisted language instruction and those taught using form-focused approach. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean attitude ratings of students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction and those taught using form-focused approach.

**Research Question 2:** What is the difference in the mean attitude ratings of male and female students taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction?

**Table 3:** Mean and Standard Deviation of Attitude Ratings of Male and Female Students taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction

Gender	N	Pre-attitude		Post- attitude		Mean gain
		x	SD	x	SD	
Male	28	2.54	.30	3.01	.27	0.46
Female	17	2.55	.38	3.03	.37	.47
Mean Difference						0.01

Table 2 shows the mean attitude ratings of male and female students taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction. Table 2 shows that 28 male students and 17 female students were taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction. Table 2 indicates that the mean attitude ratings of male students was 2.54 with a standard deviation of 0.30 at pre-test and the post test scores was 3.01 with a standard deviation of 0.27. While the mean attitude ratings of female students taught using Assisted Language Learning Instruction was 2.55 with a standard deviation of 0.38 at pre-test, the post test scores was 3.03 with a standard deviation of 0.37. Table 2 further reveals that the mean gain of male students taught using Assisted Language Learning Instruction was 0.46 and that of the female students taught using Assisted Language Learning Instruction was 0.47. The mean gain difference between the two groups is 0.01 in favour of the female students.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean attitude ratings of male and female students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction

**Table 4:** ANCOVA on Mean Attitude Ratings between Male and Female taught Oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3.925(a)	2	1.962	339.765	.000
Intercept	.344	1	.344	59.471	.000
Pre-Attitude	3.919	1	3.919	678.478	.000
Gender	.001	1	.001	.180	.674
Error	.243	42	.006		
Total	413.004	45			
Corrected Total	4.168	44			

R Squared = .942 (Adjusted R Squared = .939)

Table 4 reveals that  $F(1,44) = 12.050$ ;  $p = 0.674 > 0.05$ . Since the p value (.674) is greater than the alpha level (0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significant effect on the mean attitude ratings of male and female students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction. Thus, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that significant difference does not exist between the mean attitude ratings of male and female students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction.

### Discussion of Findings

The finding revealed that the students that are taught using Assisted Language Learning Instruction had higher positive attitude in the learning of Oral English than those taught using form-focused approach. To further confirm if the difference is statistically significant the corresponding hypothesis was tested and it was found that there is a significant difference in mean attitude ratings between students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction and those taught using form-focused approach. A similar finding has been reported in a study by Chinwendu and Agommuoh (2017) that Assisted Language Learning Instruction had significant impact on students' attitude in physics, where students in the Assisted Language Learning Instruction group performed more. The finding is also similar to findings reported by Nattapong and Saowalak (2015) who found that the experimental group taught using Composition Aided Instruction attained significantly higher

development in English reading and writing at the .001 level and registered significantly higher attitude at the .01 level.

It was also found that the mean difference between the attitude ratings of male and female students taught Oral English using Computer Assisted Language Learning Instruction was 0.01 in favour of the female students. However, the value (0.01) was considered insignificant. This implies gender is not a factor in determining the impact of Assisted Language Learning Instruction on the students' interest in oral English. To further confirm if the difference is statistically significant, the corresponding hypothesis was tested and the result shows that there is no significant difference in the mean attitude ratings of male and female students taught oral English using Assisted Language Learning Instruction. This finding disagreed with that of Jones, Howe and Rua (2000) who found that more male than female students indicated they were interested in atomic bombs, atoms, cars, computers, x-rays, and technology, whereas more females reported interest in animal communication, rainbows, healthy eating, weather and AIDS. Generally speaking, the use of computer technology makes students to develop positive attitude and the class more interesting. The language teacher makes less effort in making students focused at the learning task.

#### **Conclusion**

The findings of this study have shown that students' attitude in oral English is enhanced by usage of Assisted Language Learning Instruction. Gender was not found to be a factor in determining student's attitude in oral English.

#### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made:

1. Workshops and seminars should be organized by the Government of Benue State through the Teaching Service Board for teachers teaching English language at the Senior Secondary School Two level. Such teachers need to be sensitized about the effectiveness of Assisted Language Learning Instruction in developing students' attitude towards the learning of oral English in secondary schools.
2. The Government of Benue State should ensure that all state-owned secondary schools have the required computers and ICT tools relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century classroom. This will also place Nigerian secondary school products at par with their peers in other parts of the world.

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