

**THE EFFECT OF USING TECHNOLOGY TASK BASED APPROACH ON  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT AMONG PRIMARY FOUR SCHOOL  
STUDENTS IN NIGERIA**

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To my father Alhaji Hussaini Shehu, who has been supporting and encouraging me all my life, To my loving and kind hearted mother Aisha Hussaini, who has been inspiring me throughout this journey, To my caring and loving wife Fatima Maigari, To my lovely son Muhammad Muhsin, To all the primary school students' and my late brother Shehu Malami, I dedicate this Doctoral thesis.



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## ABSTRACT

Learning English is essential in Nigeria because English is used as the medium of instruction and also taught as a subject in all Nigerian schools. Most of the school curriculum's are planned and communicated in English, but the poor performance of students in English at primary level has raised a lot of concern. This failure is attributed to teachers method of language teaching. Therefore, an English teaching approach was developed based on three (3) different methods (CALL, TBLT & P-GENRE) named as Technology Task Based Approach (TTBA). This study aimed to investigate the effect of TTBA on English proficiency skills in Nigerian primary schools. A quasi-experimental was employed as the research design in this study. The respondents of the study consisted of 62 primary school students in Nigerian primary schools that form into two (2) groups which were experimental group and control group. The experimental group was instructed using TTBA while the control group was taught using the traditional method. The period of the treatment lasted for eight (8) weeks. The collected data through pre-test and post-test was analyzed by using independent t-test and paired sample test at .05 level of significance. The findings of the study indicated that there is a significant effect of TTBA on the students' reading, speaking and writing skills. The results of the study revealed statistically significant differences in scores between the experimental group and control group. The result also showed that teachers and students have positive attitudes towards the application of TTBA. This teaching approach also proved that it is able to enhance students' interest in studying English. Thus, it is recommended that primary school students should reflect on the tasks, strategies, and activities of learning in TTBA and apply them in learning English. Primary school teachers should integrate tasks with technology in language teaching to improve students' language proficiency skills. Teachers should encourage students to join in the tasks and group activities with interest and attentiveness. Meanwhile the Nigerian Ministry of Education should organize teacher training on how to apply TTBA in language teaching.

## ABSTRAK

Mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris adalah satu keperluan kerana ianya digunakan sebagai medium pengajaran dan juga diguna pakai untuk mengajar di semua sekolah di Nigeria. Kebanyakan kurikulum sekolah dirancang dan disampaikan dalam Bahasa Inggeris, namun pencapaian murid yang lemah dalam Bahasa Inggeris di peringkat sekolah rendah amat membimbangkan. Kegagalan ini mungkin disebabkan oleh kaedah guru dalam pengajaran bahasa. Oleh itu, satu pendekatan pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris telah dibangunkan berdasar tiga (3) kaedah berlainan (CALL, TBLT & P-GENRE) dan dinamakan sebagai Technology Task Based Approach (TTBA). Kajian ini dijalankan bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti kesan TTBA terhadap tahap kemahiran berbahasa Inggeris dalam kalangan murid sekolah rendah di Nigeria. Satu kuasi-eksperimen telah digunakan sebagai reka bentuk kajian dalam kajian ini. Responden kajian terdiri daripada 62 orang murid sekolah rendah di Nigeria dengan dibahagikan kepada dua (2) kumpulan iaitu kumpulan kawalan dan kumpulan rawatan. Kumpulan rawatan telah diajar menggunakan TTBA manakala kumpulan kawalan diajar menggunakan kaedah tradisional. Tempoh proses kajian bagi kumpulan rawatan adalah selama lapan (8) minggu. Data kajian dikumpul melalui ujian pra dan ujian pos telah dianalisis menggunakan *independent t-test* dan *paired sample test* pada tahap signifikan .05. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan terdapat kesan signifikan TTBA terhadap kemahiran murid untuk membaca, bertutur dan menulis. Hasil kajian menunjukkan terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam skor antara kumpulan kawalan dan kumpulan rawatan. Hasil dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa guru dan murid mempunyai sikap positif terhadap pelaksanaan TTBA. Pendekatan pengajaran ini juga terbukti dapat meningkatkan minat murid dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Oleh itu, adalah dicadangkan agar murid sekolah rendah semak semula terhadap tugas, strategi dan aktiviti pembelajaran TTBA dan menggunakannya dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Guru di sekolah rendah harus mengintegrasikan tugas dan teknologi dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris untuk mempertingkatkan tahap kemahiran berbahasa murid. Guru juga harus menggalakkan murid untuk mengikuti tugas dan aktiviti berkumpulan dengan penuh minat dan penghayatan. Sementara itu, Kementerian Pendidikan Nigeria juga boleh menganjurkan latihan terhadap guru tentang penggunaan kaedah TTBA dalam pengajaran bahasa.

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AKAPS:	Abubakar Kigo Annex Primary School
CALL:	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CBI:	Content Based Instruction
ECCDE	Early childhood care and development education
EFL:	English as a foreign language
FGN:	Federal Government of Nigeria
GTM:	Grammar Translation Method
LGEA:	Local Government Education Authority
LPS:	Lamido Primary School
MOE:	Ministry of Education
NCE:	Nigerian Certificate of Education
NERDC:	National Educational Research and Development Council
NPE:	National Policy on Education
NTI:	National Teachers Institute
P-GENRE:	Process Genre Approach
SOI	Skill Oriented Instruction
SUBEB:	State Universal Basic Education Board
TBLT:	Task Based Language Teaching
TPR:	Total Physical Response
TTBASLT:	Technology Task-Based Approach
UBEC:	Universal Basic Education Commission



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

Nigeria is a multilingual country with different ethnic tribal groups. Each of these groups speaks a different language, making it hard to communicate with fellow countrymen. Moreover, it is equally difficult to learn how to speak all the languages. Nigeria consists of several indigenous languages, according to Ayilara & Oyedeji (2000), Nigeria has a total of 500 different languages. The National policy on Education, also recognizes Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba as the three languages of the larger ethnic groups in Nigeria. As a country, therefore, it becomes necessary to unify the language for the purpose of political, social and academic activities. To achieve this, a policy was established that English is the national language in Nigeria. This policy played a vital role in unifying the country (Danladi, 2013).

The National policy on Education (2004), states that from pre-primary to primary three (3) level, the language of the mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment should be used as the medium of instruction whereas English is taught as a school subject. From primary 4 to the tertiary level, English should be the medium of instruction while the language of the immediate environment should be taught as a school subject. Since English is the national language in Nigeria, it is necessary for all indigenes to learn English for them to be able to contribute actively to the nation's development. Thus, method of teaching plays a vital role in helping students' to acquire basic literacy skills. The first unified Nigerian educational system

after independence was carried out in 1976. This was to unify the educational systems of all the three zones (Northern, Southern and Eastern). The first system of education includes the seven years of primary, five years of secondary, two years of higher school certificate levels and three years of university education (7-5-2-3). Later on, in the early 80s, the educational system was reviewed to 6 years of primary, 3 years of Junior Secondary School (JSS), 3 years of Senior Secondary School and 4 years of tertiary institution (6-3-3-4). The educational system was last reviewed in 2008 that comprises of 9 years of basic education i.e. primary 1-6 to JSS 1-3, 3 years of Senior Secondary School and 4 years of tertiary institution (9-3-4) (Imam, 2012). In this educational system, English language is one of the core subjects in primary school. Table 1.1 summarizes the transitions of educational systems in Nigeria according to years.

Table 1.1: Educational Systems in Nigeria

S/No	Educational System				Year
	Primary	Junior Secondary	Senior Secondary	Tertiary	
1	7	5	2	3	1976
2	6	3	3	4	1980
3	9		3	4	2008

However, English is a compulsory subject at all basic levels of Nigerian educational system. At the final stage of secondary level, each student must write the West African Examination Council (WAEC). But poor performance in this examination have significantly affected students entry requirement in the tertiary institutions. For any student to be admitted into a Nigerian University, he/she must have a minimum of five (5) passes out of the nine (9) subjects registered by any candidate. A pass in English language is mandatory while four (4) passes in the remaining eight (8) subjects can be accepted to fulfill the entry requirements. Successful candidates are awarded the Senior Secondary Certificate (SSC). Failure to meet this requirement has made it difficult for some students' to gain admission to the university. Those students who achieve credit level or better grade in English and four other subjects relevant to the course of their choice are qualified to participate in the University Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). This is a centralized university admissions test managed by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). The cut-off mark

for most universities ranges from 180 to 200 out of 400. For the UTME, students must take exams in English and three subjects related to their program of study. Each student can choose up to six institutions: two universities, two polytechnics and two colleges of education. With first and second choice programs for each institution, when registering with JAMB for the UTME. The JAMB administers all admissions to bachelor degree programs at all Nigerian universities. Over the years, students' achievement was poor in English Language, and this has affected their transition to the tertiary level. An average of only 30% of candidates enrolled yearly for English Language passed it at the credit level.(Atanda & Jaiyeoba, 2011).

A study conducted by Atanda & Jaiyeoba (2011), they stated that the report of the West African Examination council shows poor students' achievement in English in the surveys from 1996 to 2007. They also mentioned that the current statistics revealed by the federal ministry of education on the statistics of students' performance in their WAEC in English examination shows no improvement because in 2007, out of 1,275,466 candidates, 325,754 (25.5%) passed English Language with other four subjects while, in 2008, 188,442 (13.76%) passed English with additional Four subjects (out of 1,369,42. This was even worse than 2007. In 2009, out of 1,373,009 candidates, 356,981 (25.9%) passed. The improvement in that year (2009) was appreciable. However, in 2010 the percentage of students who passed the English Language with four other subjects dropped to 24.9%, because only 337,071 passed out of 1,351,557 candidates. This revelation is very disturbing because on the average, only 23% of students are qualified to enter the university. There is no replacement for English language in Nigeria because almost all the school subjects are taught in English, and most of the school curriculum and textbooks are written and taught in English (Atanda & Jaiyeoba, 2011). So for any learner to be able to comprehend the lesson very well, then he/she needs to be proficient in the English language. Table 1.2 shows the students' final year examination performance summary.

Table 1.2: Percentage of students Passes in WAEC from 2007-2010

S/No	Year	Number of students pass	Percentage of student pass
1	2007	1,275,466	26%
2	2008	1,369,42	14%
3	2009	1,373,009	26%
4	2010	1,351,557	25%

Even though English is regarded as the medium of instruction, however the students perform better in other subjects as compared to English. In a comparative study conducted by Adeyemi & Adeyemi (2013), the performances of students studying English and social studies using achievement tests are analyzed. At the end of the study, more students were found with higher achievement in social studies as compared to English. They attributed this to the method of teaching, teaching materials and content of the curriculum. They further stated that the contents of the topics in social studies are associated with student's immediate environment hence, students find it easy to comprehend this subject than English.

Studies have revealed disappointing performances of learner's poor English proficiency skills in Nigeria. Egwuogu (2012) and Jude & Ajayi (2012), mentioned that Nigerian students' have little competence in reading and pronunciation due to poor teaching method. Agbatogun (2014) also reports similarly that participants that were taught with traditional teaching methods found with the lack of communicative competence. He attributed the challenge of poor English language skills to method of teaching.

English is the national language that unifies all the Nigerians therefore, poor performance of students in English is a significant problem towards academic future of them. The use of traditional method in teaching, lack of adequate teaching aids and lack of qualified teachers are identified factors militating against the success of teaching and learning English in Nigeria (Ajibola, 2010; Asokhia, 2009; UBEC, 2011; Udosen, 2011). It is globally recognized that education is a contributing factor in the development of any society. Particularly the success of education at primary level helps in developing a good base for educational system of any country otherwise it effects significantly the other levels of education. Primary four is the level that English must be used as the medium of instruction in Nigeria. As a result, this research will focus

on primary four students.

Moreover, in Nigeria, the national policy on education mentions that the objectives of primary education is to have basic literacy and numeracy skills. This is to ensure all students have the ability to communicate effectively (UBEC, 2011). Similarly, primary four is the level where English must be used as the medium of instruction in Nigeria. Therefore, there is a need to develop a new approach towards teaching English at primary level. Accordingly, to achieve the objectives stated in national policy on education and for a better and useful basic educational system, this research will focus on primary four students. It will also be helpful in solving the problems causing failure and poor academic achievement in Nigerian schools.

## 1.2 Background of the Study

English is considered as a second language in a country that have a different language as the mother tongue. However, English can be used as the medium of instruction in education and it is also a subject. It is the most spoken language on the globe, hence, it is a medium for many nationals to interact with one another. Though, English is a second or a foreign language in most of developing countries, however, weak learner's proficiency in English is a common problem in many developing countries. Many studies reveal that students in these developing countries like Malaysia, Pakistan, Zanzibar, Saudi Arabia have little proficiency and lack of communication skills (Mosha, 2014; Musa *et al.*, 2012; Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013; Tariq *et al.*, 2013). The teaching and learning of English in Nigeria have witnessed a lot of challenges. The reports of statistics department of Suru local government education authority regarding the learner's performances in the last four years in the core subjects are presented in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Statistics of students' failure in Core Subjects

Subject	Number of students' Failure			
	2010	2011	2012	2013
English	1212 (43%)	1206 (41%)	1237 (37%)	1007 (30%)
Mathematics	1288 (46%)	1627 (59%)	832 (25%)	952 (28%)
Science	908 (32%)	1076 (37%)	1045 (31%)	725 (22%)
Social Studies	712 (25%)	665 (23%)	706 (21%)	588 (18%)

(Suru, 2014)

The statistics in Table 1.3 showed that in 2010, out of 2830 candidates, 43%; in 2011, out of 2915 candidates 41%, in 2012 out of 3346 candidates; 37% and in 2013, out of 3346 candidates, 30% failed in English. These results indicates that most of the candidates failed in English and Mathematics and English subject is having the highest number of students among these four years.

There are several factors that cause students to fail in English. These factors include problems like lack of proper evaluation of students, the inadequacy of resources, lack of adequate teacher development, class size and use of mother tongue as the means of instruction in the classroom (Ajibola, 2010). Other issues in teaching and learning of English in Nigeria includes old traditional method of teaching, inefficient supervision, inadequate infrastructure and teachers qualification (Adelabu & Matthias, 2013; Akujobi & Chukwu, 2012; UBEC, 2011; Udosen, 2011). These issues resulted in learners not having the skills they are expected to have and causes of a poor result in the English language in West African Examination Council.

Moreover, other studies have shown that there are problems in the reading, speaking and writing skills of Nigerian primary school students. This leads to failures and poor performances in their examinations (Adeniji & Omale, 2010; Egwuogu, 2012; Okotie, 2010; Olaniran, 2009; Usman & Mustafa, 2014). To reduce the rate of poor performances of students, several methods were applied in different countries that have similar problems.

For example in Pakistan, an attempt has been made to improve learner's achievement through communicative language teaching. Two groups of students participated in the study. The control group were taught using grammar translation method while the experiment group were taught using the communicative language teaching method. A post test was administered at the end of the experiment and result

of the test reveals that the experimental group performed better than the control group (Ahmad & Rao, 2013). Similarly in Malaysia, Samuel & Bakar (2008) applied Virtual English Language Tools (VELT) to improve students' language proficiency skills. Virtual English Language Tools (VELT) are web-based applications that teachers use in teaching beginning English language students. The study reveals that students in the experimental group performed significantly higher in the post-test when compared to their pre-test.

Furthermore, in Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia (Alshumaimeri & Almasri, 2012; Mustafa *et al.*, 2012; Talebi & Teimoury, 2013) used Active learning techniques, Computer-assisted language learning and Web-Quests to improve reading and pronunciation skills of students. The outcome of all the studies showed that these methods have significantly improved academic achievement. The students that participated in the experimental recorded better progress compared to their performance before the experiment.

Similarly in Nigeria, when new methods were used in teaching English, the students had a significant achievement in English. Agbatogun (2014), Andzayi & Ikwen (2014), Dennis (2014), Ezeokoli & Ezenandu (2013) and Muodumogu & Unwaha (2013) in their efforts to improve performances of students in reading, writing and speaking used a process approach, mini lesson strategy, preferred text genres, communicative approach and technology. Despite the utilization of these methods in a particular part of the country, the problem still lies in another part of the country with students still having difficulties in reading, writing and speaking. The location selected for this study faces low proficiency problems. The result in Table 1.3 clearly shows poor performance in the English language students through the years.

According to Asokhia (2009), the poor performance of learners in English is due to lack of the use of teaching aids in teaching. Teachers frequently use textbooks in their lessons and very few use teaching aids in their lessons. Moreover, they fails to utilize adequate educational materials. He emphasized on using teaching aids or improvising teaching aids when teaching English.

These are some of the factors that have contributed to the poor achievement of learners in English, but this research work will focus on teaching method. Inadequacy in achieving positive result through traditional methods have led to the development

of several language teaching methods. These new teaching approaches have proven to be more significant than the traditional approaches. Researchers have proved that that learners studying under traditional teaching methods have lower mean scores compared to their peers who were taught using a new approach (Mustafa *et al.*, 2012; Sharma, 2013; Trivedi, 2013).

Similarly Zharkahyel & Gabriel (2012) found out that method of teaching employed by English teachers is among the factors that hinders the learning of English language in Borno, Nigeria. Therefore, as a matter of urgency, a new approach of teaching English language that meet the needs of Nigerian students is required. It will act as remedy to the problems faced by the students due to the poor methods of teaching.

Three different effective methods of language teaching were combined in respect of proposing a new approach in this study namely; (1) Computer Assisted Language Learning, (2) Task-Based Language Teaching and (3) Process Genre. These three methods were integrated to form a new approach called Technology Task-Based Approach (TTBA).

These methods were selected because they were found to be consistent with improving reading, writing and speaking skills of students in most of the studies reviewed. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is one of the new method suggested by researchers to solve the problem of poor achievement in English. It is a process of engaging students in active learning by assigning a task to students who will use the target language in solving that task (Hashemi *et al.*, 2012). This method have been widely used in improving speaking skills, by engaging the students in different activities. This method help them to communicate in English language as shown in several studies. Deepa (2012), Kirkgoz (2011), Murad & Smadi (2009) and Rahman (2010) identified that using TBLT approach in teaching improves the speaking skills of the participants. These skills were enhanced through tasks, activities and role plays. TBLT is proven to be more efficient than the traditional methods and found to have positive effects on the attitudes of students towards English.

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is another useful teaching approach to improve student's achievement. According to Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman



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