



Use of Instructional Resources for Effective Language Learning In Nigerian Secondary Schools: A Technical Review

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviewed relevant literature on the significance of Instructional resources in the effective teaching/learning of English language in Nigerian Schools. It also attempted to shed more light on the way teaching & learning of English should be made to benefit from the modern technological advancement at all levels of educational institutions. The paper revealed that teaching & learning with instructional resources is not a new phenomenon. It also showed that, Instructional technology or instructional media is introduced in to Nigerian Educational system with a view to promoting effective teaching & learning. It recommended that, English language teachers need to select or improvise suitable Instructional resources or aids to facilitate teaching & learning and motivate their students. It finally offers some suggestions on how to make good use of Instructional resources for a better teaching & learning of English language in Nigerian Schools.

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of Instructional Resources in any teaching & learning process cannot be over emphasized. This is for the fact that such materials enhance, facilitate and make teaching & learning easy, lively and concrete. Basic education's goals include, among others; the provision of the child with diverse basic knowledge and skills entrepreneurship, wealth generation and educational advancement; and the provision of opportunities for the child to develop manipulative skills that will enable him or her function effectively in the society. (Tukur 2012). The goals also demand the use of an effective programme of language instruction for their realization. In Nigerian case, it is the English language, which is the main instrument of instruction. In English instruction, there is need for the classroom to be enriched with materials to aid its teaching and learning for effective language learning experience in Nigerian secondary schools. This calls for effective provision and utilization of instructional materials.

THE CONCEPT OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Instructional Materials as the name suggests, are materials of visual, audio and audio - visual category that helps to make abstracts concepts and ideas concrete in the teaching/learning process. They are also materials which the teacher uses in supplementing his teachings. Instructional

Materials include materials used to facilitate learning for better results. Likewise, it is the use of the chalkboard, charts, models, overhead projectors, films, television and computers in teaching process. Hence, it is not just the ' use of tools of technology alone but a systematic, integrated organization of machines hardware and software and man, teachers etc. to the solution of problems in education. In order to ensure an effective teaching learning process, it is important for the teacher to be thoroughly acquainted with the teaching resources and services available to him. The components of instructional materials available to teachers and students are in large numbers and also vary according to the functions of each of them. Pictures (motion and still) graphics, maps, radio - recording and play back and the equipments used to get some of these utilized can be regarded as the components of Audio Visual Aids, or Instructional Aids. Examples of instructional materials are charts, maps, diagrams, comics, models, globes, slides, film strips, television, radio cassettes, video, recorders, cinema, public address system, laboratories and museums, flash Cards, flannel boards, card boards, Calendar, Computers, etc.

Importance of Instructional materials

Teachers at all levels utilize a variety of instructional materials such as textbooks, presentations and handouts to enhance the quality

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of their lessons. The quality of those materials directly impacts the quality of teaching. Knowing how to find the best instructional materials is a valuable skill for a teacher to have the importance of Instructional Materials or Educational resources is to improve students' knowledge, abilities, and skills, to monitor their assimilation of information, and to contribute to their overall development and upbringing. It also clarifies important concepts to

arouse and sustain student's interests, give all students in a class the opportunity to share experiences necessary for new learning, help make learning more permanent.

Classification of Instructional Materials

Tukur (2012) gives classification of the instructional materials in a table shown below:

Table 1: Types and Example of Instructional Materials

S/N	TYPES	EXAMPLES
1.	Print	Books, newspapers, journals, magazines, pamphlets, handout,
2.	Audio	Radio, Cassette, Player and Recorder
3.	Visuals	Charts, realia (real objects) photographs, slides, etc.
4.	Audiovisuals	Slides, tapes, films, filmstrips, television, video, multimedia
5.	Static/Display board, etc. Electronic	Chalkboard, felt-board, flannel-graph, flipcharts, magnetic Radio, computers, e-mail, multimedia, etc.

In effect, the type of instructional materials used depends on what you want to demonstrate. Here are a few examples of marching your objectives

or reasons for using specific medium or media and the appropriate medium or media to choose

Table 2: Reasons and Examples of Instructional Materials to employ in Teaching

<u>Reason for Using medium or media</u>	<u>Examples of medium or media</u>
To create clear idea of concept	Real objects, models, etc.
To give visual access to something which may be inaccessible	Models, Picture, photograph postal etc.
To clarify abstract information which may be difficult to communicate verbally	Diagram
To condense large qualities of information	Diagram, handout etc.
To promote mental activities of pupils	Handout, textbooks, films, pictures, etc.
To teach language pronunciation etc.	Audio tapes
To support the work of teachers	Sound, recordings, etc.
To allow learner touch, feel, manipulate objects	Real objects, models

Source: Tukur, A. K. (2012)

The Instructional Materials could best be classified in to three forms: audio, visual and audiovisual aids. The audio (deal with sound only) the visual (as in sight) and audio-visual (a combination of audio and visual i.e. sound and vision) for instance:

AUDIO: These include such things as Radio, Record players cassettes gramophone etc. These aid teaching through the sense of hearing. They can be used in teaching of language pronunciation, and other sound or recording based materials can be expertly presented via them.



VISUAL: The category of this consist of maps, Film steps, specimen, pictures, charts, Blackboard, posters etc. This category appeals to the pupils through the sense of sight, the saying that 'seeing is believing' applies to some extent in this context. Until facts are presented in form of visual aid, pupils may not readily grasp the meaning of ideas, concepts and facts.

AUDIO-VISUAL: As have said already, this group consists of a combination of both audio and visual materials. They are therefore things like Television films and projector etc, the use of these aids learning greatly.

The Significance of Instructional Materials

Many educationists agree that instructional materials bring about improvement in the teaching/learning process as well as permit teachers and students to interact as human beings in a climate where people control their environment for their own best purposes. Also, most educators generally and equally agree that the creative use of variety of instructional materials will increase the probability that student would learn more, retain better and bring about the skills they are expected to perform. Apart from their ability to process meaningful sources of information, Instructional materials help the teacher with the means for extending his horizon of experience as well as providing the teacher with rich sources of procuring communicative materials which could be produced jointly by the teacher and the students. Furthermore, several studies have been conducted to test the value of Instructional materials and other sensory devices. These researches have proved that Instructional materials when properly used in teaching learning situations can accomplish a lot of complex tasks. The instructional materials also offer real experiences in giving the teacher basis for thinking and understanding. They supply concrete basis for conceptual thinking and therefore reduce meaningless responses of students. At the same time, they overcome the limitations of time, space and size by helping the students to understand things that are too small or too big, or too slow or too fast 10. Therefore instructional materials can provide members of a group with a common or joint experience. They also break language barriers and ease difficulties and in the end make the lesson more meaningful. They save time and thus enable students grasp ideals more effectively and faster.

Likewise, they help to simplify and emphasize facts and clarify difficulties.

They reinforce other teaching methods and materials. They improve the efficiency of other method and effectiveness of teaching process. However, before a teacher selects his Instructional Materials, he should consider the following which will serve as his criteria for selection.

(a) **Reliability:** As much as possible, teachers should make sure that the Instructional Materials so selected can be used to achieve the objective of the particular lesson. It is wrong for a teacher teaching pilgrimage to come into the class with an apparatus required to teach ablution. In this case, the Instructional Materials cannot be relied upon to achieve the objective of the lesson.

(b) **Relevance:** Care must be taken to ensure that only Instructional Materials that relate to the topic are used while teaching.

(c) **Cost:** The Instructional Materials should be within the reach of the teacher or the school. The cost of the Instructional Materials will determine whether it can be bought and used or not; otherwise the teacher selects only that Instructional Materials that costs less. In an event of the inability of the school and Age limit. It is wrong to bring into the class Instructional Materials that cannot be easily used to convey meaning of facts, ideas and concept to the pupils because of the limit of the pupils. A primary one school child may not be interested in a lesson in which telescope is used to present facts. This means teaching Instructional Materials are not just selected on the basis of their attractiveness but on the basis of certain criteria that will ensure their effectiveness in the teaching and learning processes.

FACTORS GUIDING THE SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The teacher who wants to use instructional materials should consider the following variables to guide him in the selection of the types to be used in the teaching learning exercise.

Availability: The teacher should ensure that the instructional materials to be used are easily available for use before the date of use. It means that the materials should be in store and the teacher should look at it and test it before the day of the lesson. If the teacher has to prepare it himself, he should do so at least a day before the lesson. No instructional materials that are not available or not easy to prepare should be noted by the teacher in his lesson plan.

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Accessibility: It is the duty of the teacher to ensure that the materials to be used as instructional materials are not only available but also accessible to him. If they are already made materials they should be within reach of the teacher on the date and time of use. There should be no excuse that the materials are readily available but locked up in the store because the store-keeper is nowhere to be found or the keys to the store have been misplaced.

Affordability: The instructional materials to be used should not be expensive the cost should be such that either the teacher or the school can afford. It is no use to say that something is available but not affordable due to high cost. There should be a budget for instructional materials and when this is done the cost should not be outrageous it should be within the budget of the school.

Suitability: The teacher using the instructional materials should ensure the appropriateness of the materials for his intended learners. The materials should be suitable for their age, experience and intelligence. The legal, safety and ethical aspects of the materials to be used should equally be considered. The materials should not portray any anti-social attitude. They should also be free from any bias, distortion or prejudice. If the materials would need electric power then an alternative should be sought to avoid disappointment from Electricity.

Simplicity: The instructional materials to be used should be simple to operate or manipulate. The teacher should test the materials and ensure their workability before the actual date of use. There should not be any technical problem and where electricity is to be used provision should be made for an alternative power. No teacher should use electric failure as an excuse for non-performance. In a situation where an instrument demands the hands of a technician, he (the technician) should be on hand and the teacher should have an insight into the operation of the instructional materials.

Qualitative: The instructional materials selected for teaching by the teacher should be of good quality. Teachers should avoid the idea of "managing" with poor quality materials because he might not achieve the desired aim.

Recency: The instructional materials should be the best or nearest to the best it should not be out of date. The instructional materials should reflect current and original thought.

PROBLEMS FACING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

In spite of the advantages of instructional materials, there are problems confronting their selection by English language teachers of secondary schools in Nigeria. Among these problems are;

1. **Lack of Fund:** There is no adequate support or patronage from the government and school administrators to encourage teachers of English in preparing instructional materials/resources. Some of the materials are very expensive to provide by teachers. For example, projector, electronic mass media and media that are retaining permanent knowledge to the students;
2. **Teacher's Attitude:** Many of the school teachers are ignorant of using, those instructional materials and induction course, lecture: and seminars are not organized in teaching profession as they are organized in the civil services to up-grade knowledge and to facilitate the use of sophisticated instructional materials. Teachers also do not make maximum use of the few instructional materials at their disposal, because many of them do not have the knowledge of operating them.
3. **Learner's Attitude:** Many learners are not interested in English language despite it being a core subject at secondary school level hence; they are ashamed and feel unconcern in supporting the teachers in the necessary training on the use and preparation of instructional materials. Also, the stealing of those instructional materials and problem of the students mishandling those instructional materials while teachers are not in the classroom, there is the problem of not leaving the instructional materials in the classroom, so that student can make use of them at their leisure and convenient time.
4. **Lack of facilities:** Like resource room, and library. Many schools have no good building to store materials' for safety.

THE RELEVANCE OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Teaching is a total package; it is true that teacher is the best instructional material because teacher is the one who manage the classroom. As the saying goes "you are the captain of your mind and the master of your soul" teacher is the captain of the classroom because of molding the minds of the students to become competent and independent individuals when it comes to excellence. He is the

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master of the classroom because of proving good feedback and developing the potential of the students through nurturing their minds for the possibilities in life. Using strategies or techniques that are varied to make teaching effective and meaningful is also a big factor for the students so that they can build confidence and have mastery of the subject matter.

Most recent thinking has divided language ability into four separate skill areas; listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Listening and reading are known as the receptive skills; while speaking and writing are known as the productive skills. According to SIL International, (1999), the four basic skills are related to each other by two parameters: the mode of communication: oral or written, the direction of communication: receiving or producing the message SIL's webpage further represents the skills using the chart reproduced below:

	Oral	Written
Receptive	Listening	Reading
Productive	Speaking	Writing

Most teachers try to incorporate all four skill areas into their planning, though some classes may focus more on one set of skills or the other, due to the course and learner objectives (Oxford, 2001). When learning new language material, the order of acquisition is generally this, for both second language learners and children learning their first language: Listening: The learner hears a new item (sound, word, grammar feature, etc.) Speaking: The learner tries to repeat the new item. Reading: The learner sees the new item in written form. Writing: The learner reproduces the written form of the item.

When you are planning to present a new teaching item (sound, grammar point, vocabulary word, etc.,) keep the order of acquisition in mind. It is best to expose the learners to the item in that same order, so that they are exposed to it as a listener before they are called on to use it as a speaker, and that they hear it before they see it in text. In this way, the order of learning a second language is similar to the way a child learns his or her first language. He/she will be able to understand the new item for quite a while before he/she is able to produce it and use it in communication (Laubach Literacy Action, 1996)

APPLYING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN TEACHING LANGUAGE SKILLS

Despite of all the challenges facing the teacher with regards to selection and provision of

instructional materials, and with regards to the relevance of the instructional materials to the teaching and learning of English language in our secondary schools in Nigeria, the teacher can use simple materials or modify them for the purpose of teaching the four language skills.

Teaching Listening and Speaking:

He can teach the skills of oral, listening and speaking through, charts, recorded cassette, etc. Here modeling is indispensable in teaching and learning of listening and speaking. Therefore, you should endeavor to pronounce sounds correctly for your pupils to imitate. This may require recording of speech sounds and word environments where they occur. For the purpose of recording you need the following; a good tape recorder, an unused cassette, an external microphone, a resource person (model).

Procedure: The teacher or anybody considered a good model of spoken English should pronounce the vowels and consonants to be recorded on cassette. After each sound there should be a pause for pupils to repeat before proceeding to the next sound. When individual sounds have been recorded, words in which the sounds appear should also be recorded. The same should be done at sentence and beyond sentence levels. Similarly, the supra-segmental, like tone, as they affect questions, commands, exclamations and tags should be recorded. Teacher should also record radio and television broadcasts and play them in the class for pupils to listen. Also efforts should be recorded and played for error analysis. Poems and songs can also be recorded on cassettes and played back in class.

Mirror in Class: In describing sounds production, the teacher should encourage pupils to the shape of the lips and position of the tongue in relation to other speech organs as individual sounds are realized. Video recording and playback of pupils' pronunciation efforts will be helpful, but in the absence of this sophisticated equipment we can bring the mirrors to class. The pupils should hold up the mirrors during pronunciation practice and after the realization of each sound, they should be asked to describe the shape of the lips, and explain which organs of speech are in contact with each other in the process.

Sentence Strips: Sentence strips are suitable in teaching stress and intonation patterns. They could be written on the board or cut and paste instructional materials, for example the teacher can the words as shown below, cut it and paste on the board.

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Which among them is not a witch?

Materials: Cardboard, Scissors, Ruler, Gum and Markers of different colours

Procedure: In good handwriting the teacher should write different sentences indicating stress and intonation patterns. He can also cut suitable sentences from newspapers, magazines, posters, etc. and indicate the stress patterns.

TEACHING READING AND WRITING

Due to poor quality of intakes in our secondary schools, as teacher of English at the JSS level, one should have relevant materials at disposal, mainly through improvisation, to enable him achieve teaching of reading and writing among his students in English class. Handwriting: the mechanics of good handwriting involves training the hand for muscles flexibility. This can be done through practice in different strokes, semi-circles, and circles in different directions. Materials for teaching reading and writing will definitely include among other things: Flash cards, Flannel graphs, Charts of rhymes and songs, Collection of excerpts and cuttings from magazines, journals, newspapers and textbooks.

The flannel graph is one way of pasting materials like words on flash cards, sentence strips, short passages, excerpts from magazine, newspapers, content area course books, etc. how to go about it is to:

1. Write words, sentences, passages on flash cards, strips of paper and cardboard.
2. Read these aloud a number of times, while pupils listen attentively
3. Drill pupils individually and collectively.
4. You should also paste other sources materials like newspaper cutting on the graph to drill the students to get accustomed to different aspects of reading.
5. Place the flannel board at a strategic position so that each pupil can see it.
6. Information on the board can be alternated as frequently as required
7. As you progress with your class you can also collect pupils' stories, short folktales, etc. which you paste on the pages of exercise books and make these accessible to pupils.
8. Most essentially you need to create time for leisure reading in which improvised materials are used.

USING THE READING CORNER

Experience has shown that no teacher, whatever his experience or expertise, can give pupils

all the skills they need to be good readers as well as users of English. Rather, it is important that pupils are allowed to independently read diverse materials outside English lessons. The teacher should create the reading corner, known as worthwhile device, to ease off on himself as he guides pupils to develop the culture of reading as well as become good English users. The reading corner requires; a. spacious corner in the classroom; b. assorted novels or simple readers, e.g. elementary science, technology, social studies, moral instructions, drama, and poetry books; magazines, newspapers, collection of excerpts, from different sources; write-ups collected through pupils effort; Dictionaries; at least two periods a week should be dedicated to the reading exercise. The materials for the corner can be sourced through; appealing to the PTA of the school to donate such materials; asking pupils to buy at least one novel a term to add to the collection; and appealing to philanthropic bodies or individuals to contribute to the venture.

Teaching Handwriting Skills: chalkboard/cardboard, ruler, duster/eraser, and one 20 leaves exercise book for each student or work sheets of 2D exercise book to for practice, are what may be required as materials for teaching hand writing skills. **The procedure:** the teacher should be a model in handwriting to guide students correctly; he could emphasize writing across content areas; ensure students do not cross their book but write appropriately along the lines, a handwriting alignment card will be useful; write word and sentences strips on cardboard and paste on them on the wall; drill the students adequately on muscles flexibility as you progress; implore model essays, story excerpts, feature articles on contemporary issues; present materials to the students and guide them to write out main and supporting ideas; guide students to arrange materials they have written; guide students to identify appropriate introduction and conclusion for selected themes; accompany these by sentences and short passages where students are expected to fill in the gaps with appropriate words based on pictures in controlled writing; and use audio and visual materials to stimulate ideas.

Teaching Grammatical Accuracy: here you can use the materials to teach grammatical structures, verbs, adjectives, interjections, conjunctions, and prepositions. An interactive, collaborative and participatory technique to teaching verbs to known as total physical response (TPR) technique can be



applied here; and the use of grammar bank or magic box to teach nouns, adjectives, and conjunctions and prepositions.

Teaching Literature in English: literature is another aspect of language teaching which the students should be helped to understand very well. It is divided into three segments, prose, poetry and drama at the secondary school level. In order to teach **Prose**, the teacher needs: story books, supplementary readers, recorded folktales, myths and legends, cassette and tape recorders, and excerpts from novels and books. The procedure is to put together oral stories by pupils, type and bind these in different volumes; make these materials available to pupils during lessons, guide them to read them followed by questions to test comprehension, allow them to ask questions on character, theme, plot etc; record stories on tapes and play them to the class to arouse students interest. In the case of teaching **Poetry**, the teacher can use materials such as: excerpts from books on poetry and other anthologies; recorded songs; students' self-composed poems; albums; and cassette and tape recorder. The procedure is to: cut out excerpts from poems and paste them in albums; collect pupils' self-composed poems, type, bind and make them available to pupils during lesson; record some of the poems on cassettes. Also get the students to some local songs which you can record on cassettes; play these for students to listen to, imitate, and appreciate. Lastly, in teaching Drama you can select plays from texts; topics from content areas e.g. marriage or family in social studies; costumes and traditional attire. The aim of teaching Literature in English is to arouse students' interest to appreciate what others write and possibly develop interest in writing. Tukur, (2012).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The major discussions in this study have prompted the researcher to make the following recommendations so as to facilitate further improvement in the effective utilization of instructional materials in the teaching/learning of English language in our secondary schools.

- i. Workshops and seminars should be organized from time to time for teachers where they would be taught not only how to produce instructional material but also how to use them effectively for the achievement of educational goals.

- ii. Resources centers should be established at strategic locations and be well equipped with instructional materials from where teachers could loan from. To this end, the resource centers should be brought near teachers, suffice is to say the centers should be developed in all the Schools.
- iii. The availability of reference texts and instructional materials are very vital to high academic performance, while, teachers should make efforts to improvise some of these materials, the educational authority should play their own role by making these materials available in schools if the set objective of the new educational system is to be achieved.
- iv. Government should provide assistance in the area of book publishing so that cheaper and more qualitative useful text books can be produced by English language teachers.
- v. Storage is an important factor that influences positive or negative use of instructional materials. Storage facilities should be provided were they could be stored for use at a later date, especially the libraries and stores.
- vi. Parents should be enlightened on the significance of the study of English language in schools as a core subject, through the medium of the Parent Teachers Association (P.T.A) in order to provide material for them to benefit fully from the new education system.

CONCLUSION

This paper revealed that teaching/learning with instructional aids is not a new phenomenon. It also discovered that, Instructional technology or instructional media is introduced in to Nigerian Educational system with a view of promoting effective teaching/learning. The study therefore recommended that, English language teachers need to select or improvise suitable Instructional materials or aids to facilitate teaching/learning and motivate their students. It finally offers some suggestions on how to make good use of Instructional materials for a better teaching/learning of English language in Nigerian Schools.



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