

## **Utilization of Instructional Materials and Effective Teaching and Learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools**

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### **Abstract**

This study looked at how using instructional materials affected the way English was taught and learned in early childhood schools in Uyo Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated to guide the investigation. A descriptive survey research design was used in the study. A basic random selection procedure was used to pick a sample size of 300 kindergarten three (KG, 3) students. Data was gathered using the "Utilization of Instructional Materials and Effective Teaching and Learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools Questionnaire (UIMETLELECSQ)." The tool underwent face validation. Using Cronbach Alpha, the instrument's dependability coefficient was found to be 0.86. The study issues were addressed using the mean and standard deviation, and the hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance using the Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) test. The study's conclusions showed that the successful teaching and learning of English in early childhood schools was greatly impacted by visual, audio, and audio-visual resources. In order to improve the efficacy of English language teachers, it was suggested, among other things, that private persons and professional organizations work to supplement government efforts in supplying Early Childhood Schools with the essential teaching resources.

Keywords: Instructional materials, Early childhood education, English language teaching, Effective teaching, Preschools

### **INTRODUCTION**

All Nigerian educational institutions use English as the medium of instruction and for learning other topics. It is a significant language that is used at all educational levels in Nigeria. It is the first official language, and its significance cannot be undermined especially in early childhood education through which the foundation of other levels of learning is laid. It is therefore not an overstatement that any learner who wishes to pursue his education to the tertiary level needs to avail himself of the opportunity for good mastery of the English language which the early childhood education curriculum provides basic foundation for other levels of education to build on. This therefore covers the four language skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing-necessary for English Language acquisition among young children (Mba, 2019). English language plays an important role towards offering diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles.

Only with the support of the required educational resources to enhance instruction can English language teaching and learning be relevant and successful (Fabian, 2022). To increase learning and enhance the efficacy of training, materials that appeal to all senses of perception must be used extensively. These resources could be seen as powerful instruments that could be used to enhance learners' educational experiences while successfully communicating

English language topics. Instructional resources are tools and supplies that the instructor can utilize to support the accomplishment of instructional goals (Maduabum, 2021). According to Odewumi et al. (2023), instructional materials, also known as teaching/learning materials (TLM), are any set of resources that a teacher may utilize in classroom settings to support the achievement of specific learning goals. These materials may include both human and non-human resources as well as animate and inanimate objects. By helping students concretize a learning experience, instructional materials can make learning more engaging, dynamic, and exciting. They are instruments used in educational activities, such as assessment and active learning. The phrase refers to all the resources and tangible tools that a teacher may employ to carry out lessons and help students meet learning goals.

According to Amajuoyi (2021), instructional materials are everything that can transmit knowledge, values, procedures, experiences, and methods that can be applied to actively include students in the learning process. The term "instructional materials" refers to a range of tools and resources that teachers utilize for teaching and learning in order to encourage students' self-activity. Visuals, audio, and audio-visual equipment are all considered instructional materials. Materials that are visible are referred to as visual equipment. Flashcards, posters, charts, textbooks, actual items, models, chalkboards, and so forth are some examples of these. Materials that appeal to the ear are known as audio equipment, whereas materials that stimulate both the visual (seeing) and auditory (hearing) senses are known as audio-visual materials. Adewale (2015) divided instructional materials into three categories: visual, audio-visual, and audio-media. According to the author, audio media are educational tools that primarily use the sense of hearing. Public address systems, tape recorders, and talking drums are a few examples. He claims that visual media, which can be further classified into projected and non-projected visuals, are teaching and learning tools that primarily appeal to the sense of seeing alone. Projected visuals include movie slides, while non-projected visuals include postures, regalia, globes, and photos. The author made reference to educational resources that give students the chance to view and study at the same time as audio-visual. Educational movies, TV shows, and videos are a few examples.

According to Umo (2015), educational resources fall into the following categories: Visual resources are those that solely appeal to the sense of sight; examples include diagrams, images, flannel boards, chalkboards, buildings, graphs, and charts created by the instructor. Materials that appeal to the sense of hearing are referred to as audio-materials; examples include tape recorders, cassette cartridges, radios, dice, language labs, and similar devices. Materials that appeal to the senses of hearing and seeing are known as audio-visual materials.

Both music and images are produced by them. Televisions, sound-accompanied movies, and slide and film strip projectors are a few examples. Materials that appeal to the sense of sight are called visual materials. Photographs, pictures, charts, and other relevant resources are used in the teaching and learning process as visual materials. In classroom settings, visual elements can be utilized to draw students' attention by focusing their attention on the subject matter. According to Igiri (2021), visual aids can convey concepts that may be challenging, if not impossible, to explain in words and can be more succinct than words. They are often used in classrooms, particularly in underdeveloped nations like Nigeria where there is a limited supply of energy, to explain, illustrate, clarify, and reinforce certain instructional points.

Materials that appeal to the sense of hearing are known as audio-materials. Tape recorders, cassette cartridges, radios, and dice are a few examples. These tools offer standards or models that educators and students can follow. According to Debuse et al. (2019), effective use of audio instructional media as teaching tools improves learning objectives. As a result, they give learning substance, allow for conceptual thinking, and give learning significance. Adam and Mowers (2017) claim that digital audio players are the simplest way for students to listen to a range of speakers on a range of topics in a variety of genres, dialogues, interviews, and lectures for the development of receptive skills, while audiotape is the most readily available voice recording device for productive skills.

In educational institutions, audio-visual is being utilized more and more as a tool for effective teaching and learning. When audio-visuals are employed, information can be conveyed more effectively and utilized as a teaching tool. Instructional media are a variety of techniques and resources that can be used to support or improve teachers' efforts to guarantee that pupils are learning effectively. Since it is recognized that traditional media technologies are no longer able to meet the demands of the teaching and learning processes, audio-visual technologies are taking their place. This technology provides a self-paced, learner-controlled, and personalized learning environment, according to Idris et al. (2018). Therefore, when pupils are exposed to these instructional resources, it is feasible that the English language will be taught and learned effectively. Although research evidence is necessary before solid statements are made, the purpose of this study was to examine the usage of instructional materials and successful English language teaching and learning in early childhood schools in Uyo Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The main aim of this study was to examine utilization of instructional materials and effective teaching and learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools in Uyo Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to examine the:

1. The impact of visual aids on efficient English language instruction in early childhood schools.
2. The impact of audio resources on English language instruction in early childhood schools.
3. The impact of audiovisual resources on efficient English language instruction in early childhood schools.

## **METHOD**

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. In order to study a group of people, this design gathers and examines data from a small number of individuals who are thought to be typical of the group as a whole, then extrapolates the results to the full group. In order to precisely and impartially characterize current events, this research design makes use of instruments such as surveys for data collecting. This design was chosen because it allowed for a thorough analysis of the topic and was appropriate for characterizing people's attitudes, opinions, and behavioral patterns.

The 2,256 kindergarten three (KG.3) students from the 14 public early childhood schools in Akwa Ibom State's Uyo Local Government Area made up the study's population (Source: State Universal Basic Education Board, SUBEB, 2023). Using a basic random selection technique, 300 kindergarten three (KG.3) students were chosen as the sample size. Six of the 14 public early childhood schools in the research area were chosen at random using the hat and draw method of simple random sampling. Before sketching, 50 pieces of paper with "Yes" and "No" alternatives were folded and jumbled up in a basket from each of the six schools. Students were asked to select the papers, and only those who selected "Yes" were used in the study. This resulted in 300 students, and as a result, every kindergarten three (KG.3) student in every school had an equal chance of being chosen for the study.

Data was gathered using the "Utilization of Instructional Materials and Effective Teaching and Learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools Questionnaire (UIMETLELECSQ)," a tool created by the researcher. There was just one area on the questionnaire. Fifteen items on a four-point rating scale—strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and strongly Disagree (SD)—were included in the questionnaire.

The tool underwent face validation. This was accomplished by presenting draft versions of the "Utilization of Instructional Materials and Effective Teaching and Learning of English

Language in Early Childhood Schools Questionnaire (UIMETLELECSQ)" to two specialist lecturers in the University in Nigeria from Early Childhood Education Department and one lecturer in the English Language Department for validation. In order to determine the items' adequacy for assessing the study's variables as well as their relevance to the variables under investigation, the experts separately evaluated each item in the instrument. The researcher was suitably led in the creation of the final version of the instrument based on the feedback and helpful adjustments. This allowed the instrument to achieve face validity.

The inter-item correlation approach was used to assess the instrument's dependability. Thirty students who were chosen from the study population but excluded from the main investigation were given the questionnaire. Cronbach alpha statistics were used to analyze their responses, and the instrument's coefficient was found to be .86. The information gathered for this investigation was quantitative. The study's main method of gathering data was the questionnaire. Initially, the researcher went to the schools to get permission from the administrators to conduct the study. The English language instructors at these schools worked as research assistants after the principals gave their approval. With the assistance of the research assistants, the researcher then gave the copies of the instrument to the respondents. Following the instrument's administration, the respondents' administered copies were gathered. The responders were given 300 copies of the instruments, all of which were correctly completed and returned.

The mean and standard deviation were used to address the study's problems, and the Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) test was used to assess the hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. When the mean value was below the 2.50 cutoff limit, it was assumed that there was no influence on the research issue. Additionally, it was considered that impact existed whenever the mean value was equal to or higher than the 2.50 cutoff point. Regarding the hypotheses, the null hypothesis was maintained when the estimated Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) was less than the critical Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) and rejected when it was more than the critical Chi-square ( $X^2$ ).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **What is the influence of visual materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools?**

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of the influence of visual materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools (n= 300)

S/N	Influence of Visual Materials on Effective Teaching and Learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1	I understand English Language concepts easily when my teacher present lessons to us using charts	3.18	0.84	Agreed
2	Learning of English Language becomes fun when my teacher utilize flannel boards while delivering lessons.	2.59	0.62	Agreed
3	English Language lessons become captivating when our teachers explain concepts with visual instructional materials	3.54	0.75	Agreed
4	My English teacher uses visual instructional materials to enhance concentration of pupils in the class	2.67	0.70	Agreed
5	My English teacher sometimes use pictures to explain difficult concepts to the pupils	2.59	0.65	Agreed
	Cluster Mean	2.91	0.71	Agreed

The mean range of student responses about the effect of visual resources on the effective teaching and learning of English in early childhood schools is shown in Table 1. Items 1 through 5 are all higher above the threshold of 2.50. Table 1 also showed the respondents' standard deviation scores, which ranged from 0.62 to 0.84. The fact that the results were not too dissimilar suggests that the respondents held similar views regarding the items. Furthermore, the cluster mean of 2.91 for all the items indicates that visual aids affect how well English is taught and learned in early childhood schools in the Uyo Local Government Area.

### **What is the influence of audio materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in second Early Childhood Schools?**

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of the influence of audio materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in early childhood schools (n = 300)

S/N	Influence of Audio Materials on Effective Teaching and Learning of English Language in early childhood Schools	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
6	The use of tape recorders reinforces classroom learning	3.05	0.88	Agreed
7	The use of radio in teaching English Language makes learning more meaningful to the pupils	3.09	0.90	Agreed
8	The use of digital audio player in teaching English Language enhances pupils listening skills	3.33	0.96	Agreed
9	The use of audio instructional materials can enhance pupils' individualized learning skills	3.09	0.82	Agreed
10	My teacher uses audio recordings to make learners participate fully in the actual learning process	2.57	0.61	Agreed
	Cluster Mean	3.03	0.83	Agreed

The mean range of students' answers about the effect of audio resources on the effective teaching and learning of English in early childhood schools is shown in Table 2. The 2.50

cutoff point is exceeded by items 6 through 10. The respondents' standard deviation scores, which ranged from 0.61 to 0.96, were also shown in Table 2. The fact that the values were not too dissimilar suggests that the respondents' perceptions of the items were similar. Furthermore, the cluster mean of 3.03 for each item indicates that audio resources influence the effective teaching and learning of English in early childhood education..

**What is the influence of audio-visual materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools?**

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of the influence of audio-visual materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in early childhood schools (n = 300)

	Influence of Audio-Visual Materials on Effective Teaching and Learning of English Language in early childhood Schools	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
11	English Language lessons become captivating when my teacher explain concepts with computer	3.42	0.89	Agreed
12	The use of videotapes makes pupils to understand English Language concepts easily	2.73	0.71	Agreed
13	The use of projector makes learning of English Language interesting	3.08	0.70	Agreed
14	The use of audio-visual instructional materials stimulates students interest towards the teaching and learning	3.33	0.81	Agreed
15	The use of audio-visuals promotes better understanding of English Language	3.16	0.90	Agreed
	Cluster Mean	3.14	0.80	Agreed

The mean range of the students' responses about the impact of audio-visual materials on the efficient teaching and learning of English in early childhood schools is displayed in Table 3. Items 11 through 15 are all above the 2.50 cutoff point. The results in Table 3 also displayed the respondents' standard deviation scores, which varied from 0.70 to 0.90. The fact that the values were not too far apart indicates that the respondents had comparable opinions about the items. Additionally, the cluster mean of 3.14 for all the items shows that audio-visual materials have an impact on the efficient teaching and learning of English in Uyo Local Government Area early childhood schools.

**There is no significant influence of visual materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools.**

Table 4. Chi-Square Test ( $X^2$ ) of the influence of visual materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in early childhood schools (n=300)

	ITEMS	OPTIONS				Total	Cal X <sup>2</sup>	Df	Crit X <sup>2</sup>	
		SA	A	D	SD					
ROW	1	Count	198	47	29	26	300	51.53	12	21.03
		Expected Count	205.2	52.0	20.8	22.0	300			
	2	Count	219	46	19	16	300			
		Expected Count	205.2	52.0	20.8	22.0	300			
	3	Count	221	37	21	21	300			
		Expected Count	205.2	52.0	20.8	22.0	300			
	4	Count	175	66	22	37	300			
		Expected Count	205.2	52.0	20.8	22.0	300			
	5	Count	213	64	13	10	300			
		Expected Count	205.2	52.0	20.8	22.0	300			
Total	Count	1026	260	104	110	1500				
	Expected Count	1026.0	260.0	104.0	110.0	1500				

Table 4 shows that the computed Chi-square (X<sup>2</sup>) value of 51.53 is greater than the critical Chi-square (X<sup>2</sup>) value of 21.03 at the.05 alpha level and at 12 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis was refuted. This shows that the quality of English instruction and learning in early childhood schools in the Uyo Local Government Area is significantly impacted by visual aids.

**There is no significant influence of audio materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools.**

Table 5. Chi-Square Test (X<sup>2</sup>) of the influence of audio materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language early childhood schools (n=300)

	ITEMS	OPTIONS				Total	Cal X <sup>2</sup>	Df	Crit X <sup>2</sup>	
		SA	A	D	SD					
ROW	6	Count	216	56	15	13	300	88.29	12	21.03
		Expected Count	189.2	70.2	19.2	21.4	300			
	7	Count	188	63	16	33	300			
		Expected Count	189.2	70.2	19.2	21.4	300			
	8	Count	182	50	25	43	300			
		Expected Count	189.2	70.2	19.2	21.4	300			
	9	Count	193	84	17	6	300			
		Expected Count	189.2	70.2	19.2	21.4	300			
	10	Count	167	98	23	12	300			
		Expected Count	189.2	70.2	19.2	21.4	300			
Total	Count	946	351	96	107	1500				
	Expected Count	946.0	351.0	96.0	107.0	1500				

The computed Chi-square (X<sup>2</sup>) value of 88.29 is higher than the crucial Chi-square (X<sup>2</sup>) value of 21.03 at the.05 alpha level and at 12 degrees of freedom, according to Table 5. As a result, the null hypothesis was disproved. This suggests that audio resources have a big impact

on how well English is taught and learned in early childhood schools in the Uyo Local Government Area.

**There is no significant influence of audio-visual materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in Early Childhood Schools.**

Table 6: Chi-square test ( $X^2$ ) of the influence of audio-visual materials on effective teaching and learning of English Language in early childhood schools (n=300)

ITEMS	OPTIONS				Total	Cal $X^2$	Df	Crit $X^2$
	SA	A	D	SD				
11	Count	219	53	17	11	300		
	Expected Count	192.2	67.2	23.2	17.4	300		
12	Count	188	63	16	33	300	94.17	12
	Expected Count	192.2	67.2	23.2	17.4	300		
13	Count	184	48	21	47	300		
	Expected Count	192.2	67.2	23.2	17.4	300		
14	Count	190	87	12	11	300		
	Expected Count	192.2	67.2	23.2	17.4	300		
15	Count	168	96	25	11	300		
	Expected Count	192.2	67.2	23.2	17.4	300		
Total	Count	949	347	91	113	1500		
	Expected Count	961.0	336.0	116.0	87.0	1500		

Table 6 shows that the calculated Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) value of 94.17 is greater than the critical Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) value of 21.03 at the .05 alpha level and at 12 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis was refuted. This implies that the quality of English instruction and learning in early childhood schools in the Uyo Local Government Area is significantly influenced by audio-visual resources.

Visual resources have a significant impact on the effective teaching and learning of English in early childhood schools in the Uyo Local Government Area, according to an analysis of the data collected from these institutions. The results are consistent with those of Isah (2016), who discovered that children who were taught social studies using visual aids fared better academically than their counterparts.

The findings align with those of Amajuoyi (2021), who discovered that the usage of visual aids by teachers significantly affects English language instruction in specific schools. The findings corroborate Makinde's (2021) conclusions that visual resources significantly affect secondary school students' academic achievement in English. The findings corroborate Zion's (2019) conclusions that the usage of visual aids by teachers has a significant impact on English instruction in elementary schools.

The results of the analysis of the impact of audio materials on the efficient teaching and learning of English in early childhood schools in the Uyo Local Government Area showed that audio materials have a major impact on this process. The results are consistent with those of Kutigi et al. (2011), who discovered that students exposed to digital audio instructional packages performed better than those subjected to traditional classroom training. The results are consistent with those of Adelodun et al. (2015), who found a substantial correlation between high-achieving students' English language proficiency and their utilization of audio, visual, and audiovisual materials. The results further support the findings of Makinde (2021), who discovered that audio resources have a major impact on students' academic achievement in English language classes in early childhood education. The results support Zion's (2019) findings that instructors' use of visual instructional tools significantly affects English language education in basic schools.

The examination of how audio-visual resources affect the effective teaching and learning of English in early childhood schools in the Uyo Local Government Area revealed that these resources had a significant influence. The findings corroborate those of Gabi (2015), who found that students who were taught social studies using audio-visual aids (a video show) showed higher comprehension than those who were taught using a chalk-and-talk approach. The results are consistent with those of Amajuoyi (2021), who found that English education in some schools is greatly impacted by instructors' use of audio-visual teaching tools. The results support those of Igiri (2021), who discovered that teachers' use of audio-visual instructional tools significantly affects teaching and learning English in a subset of early childhood institutions. The results support Abolade's (2019) insight that, like other courses, English may be taught successfully using a variety of audio-visual aids that appeal to the senses of sight, touch, and hearing.

## **CONCLUSION**

The results of this study offer convincing empirical evidence that the use of instructional materials, particularly visual, audio, and audio-visual materials, significantly improves the successful teaching and learning of the English language in early childhood schools both within the research context and through generalizability to other contexts. The findings reveal that pupils who were exposed to these instructional resources demonstrated improved understanding of English language concepts, greater engagement, enhanced listening and speaking skills, and increased motivation to participate actively in classroom activities. The research also clearly indicates that when teachers strategically incorporate appropriate instructional resources, they transform abstract language ideations into concrete

dimensions, multisensory experiences that align with the developmental needs and learning styles of young children in their formative years.

This underpins the theoretical position that effective early childhood education, particularly in language acquisition, thrives when instruction moves beyond traditional “chalk and talk” methods to interactive, learner-centred approaches. Visual materials such as charts, pictures, and flannel boards helped pupils visualize and retain vocabulary and grammatical structures more easily. Audio materials, including tape recorders and radio, strengthened listening comprehension and pronunciation skills, while audio-visual resources combined both senses to create richer, more memorable learning episodes. Collectively, these materials not only facilitated better academic performance but also fostered enjoyment, confidence, and active participation among KG3 pupils — critical foundations for lifelong language proficiency and overall academic success. In essence, the effective utilization of instructional materials is not merely an instructional enhancement but a pedagogical necessity for achieving quality English language outcomes in early childhood education.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

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

1. Seminars, workshops and conferences on the use of instructional materials should be organized by government to train early childhood teachers so as to enhance effective teaching and learning of English Language.
2. Professional bodies and private individuals should strive to complement government efforts in providing necessary instructional materials in early childhood schools so as to enhance teaching effectiveness of teachers.
3. Head of departments should mentor teachers on how to effectively use instructional materials to facilitate teaching and learning.
4. Pre-Service teachers should be trained by tertiary institutions on how to improvise instructional materials to enhance the teaching and learning process in early child childhood schools.

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