The Duty of Pedagogical Resources in Competent Teaching of English Language in Nursery School in Rivers State Eleme LGA

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Abstract
The study examined the Duty of teaching aids in Competent teaching of English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study was guided by four research questions and one hypothesis. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 150 teachers in selected Nursery schools in Eleme Local Government Area, from which a sample of 100 teachers was selected using a multistage sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "The Duty of Teaching Aids in Competent Teaching of English Language in Nursery Schools in Eleme Local Government Area Questionnaire." The data collected were analyzed using frequency, percentage and mean, while the hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that textbooks, storybooks, pictures, charts, flashcards and word cards were relatively available in the schools, while audio-visual and technological materials such as computers, projectors, videos and audio recordings were less available. The findings also showed that teachers utilized conventional teaching aids to a relatively high extent, whereas the utilization of technological teaching aids was low. The study further revealed that teaching aids make English Language lessons clearer, increase pupils' interest, attention and participation, and improve learning and retention of English Language concepts. However, inadequate funding, insufficient provision of teaching aids, inadequate teacher training, large class sizes, inadequate electricity and poor maintenance were identified as major challenges. The hypothesis test showed a significant positive relationship between the utilization of teaching aids and Competent teaching of English Language. The study concluded that teaching aids are essential for Competent English Language instruction and recommended improved provision of instructional materials, regular teacher training, adequate funding, proper maintenance and increased access to technological teaching resources in Nursery schools.

Introduction

Education is an important instrument for individual development and national transformation. Through education, individuals acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and competencies that enable them to function effectively in society. At the Nursery school level, education is particularly important because it provides the foundation for subsequent educational experiences. The knowledge and skills acquired at this level influence pupils' ability to understand more complex concepts as they progress through the education system. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) identifies the development of permanent literacy, numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively among the major objectives of Nursery education.

Nursery education therefore has a fundamental responsibility to provide pupils with the basic literacy and communication skills required for Competent participation in school and society. One of the major subjects through which these objectives are pursued is English Language. English Language occupies an important position in Nigeria because it is extensively used in education, administration, business, mass communication and other formal activities. At the Nursery school level, pupils are expected to develop foundational competencies in listening, speaking, reading and writing. These competencies are essential not only for learning English Language itself but also for understanding other subjects taught in school.

The teaching of English Language at the Nursery school level is, however, not simply a matter of transferring information from teacher to pupil. Young learners require teaching approaches that correspond with their developmental level and learning needs. Language concepts that appear simple to an adult may be difficult for a child to understand when presented only through verbal explanation. For example, teaching vocabulary, sentence construction, pronunciation, comprehension or parts of speech entirely through oral explanation may not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to associate concepts with concrete experiences.

This is where teaching aids become important. Teaching aids are materials, resources, devices and objects employed by teachers to support the presentation and understanding of lesson content. They include textbooks, storybooks, pictures, charts, flashcards, word cards, real objects, models, posters, audio materials, video materials, educational games and other appropriate instructional resources. Teaching aids may be physical or technological, depending on the objectives of the lesson and the resources available to the teacher.

Anigbogu (2012) explains that instructional materials provide concrete learning experiences that help learners perceive instruction more effectively. Her study of public Nursery schools found that instructional materials were important for language growth and development but that some materials were unavailable or inadequate, while materials that were available were not always effectively utilized. The study consequently emphasized the need not only to provide instructional materials but also to ensure their Competent utilization and improvisation by teachers. Research on instructional materials supports this position. Iroh and Amaji (2024), in their study of Nursery schools in Aba South Local Government Area of Abia State, found that instructional materials were important to Competent teaching and learning of English Language. Their findings also revealed inadequate availability of instructional materials and insufficient teacher competence in handling available materials. They recommended greater attention to teachers' knowledge and skills in the use of instructional materials as well as increased provision of such resources. The availability of teaching aids, however, does not automatically guarantee Competent teaching. The teacher's ability to select, prepare and use the appropriate material is equally important. A chart that is unrelated to the lesson objective, for example, may have little educational value. Similarly, an audio-visual resource that is not properly integrated into a lesson may distract pupils rather than facilitate learning. Consequently, Competent use of teaching aids requires proper lesson planning, teacher competence and an understanding of pupils' learning needs.

This issue is particularly relevant in Nigerian Nursery schools, where the availability and utilization of instructional resources have remained areas of concern. Fowoyo, Idris, Adewara and Awoyale (2020), in their study of Nursery schools in Niger State, investigated the provision and Competent usage of instructional materials. They described instructional materials as important educational inputs in the teaching and learning process and emphasized the need to improve their provision and Competent use in Nursery schools.

Similarly, Okeke and Ajadi (2023) investigated instructional materials and quality in public Nursery schools in Southwestern Nigeria. Their study examined the availability and utilization of instructional materials and their influence on instructional quality among Nursery schools.

The researchers used a sample of 450 respondents and specifically investigated the relationship between instructional materials and the quality of instruction in public Nursery schools.
The quality of teaching materials is also important. Materials used in language classrooms need to be appropriate to the age, culture and learning needs of pupils. Kabir (2022), in a study of teaching and learning materials for literacy instruction in Nigerian Nursery schools, evaluated lesson plans, textbooks and reading books used in ten schools in Kano State. The study found that the materials were moderately relevant to the Nursery 3 English Studies curriculum but raised concerns about their cultural responsiveness. The study recommended greater stakeholder involvement in the development of teaching and learning materials for early literacy. Another important issue is the use of locally produced or improvised teaching aids. In many Nursery schools, teachers may not have access to all the materials required for Competent instruction. Consequently, teachers may need to improvise by using locally available resources. Cardboard, newspapers, bottle tops, empty cartons, locally available objects, drawings and other inexpensive materials can potentially be transformed into useful instructional resources. The issue of improvisation is particularly relevant to Rivers State. Benebo-Solomon (2014), in a study of public Nursery schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, investigated the relationship between improvisation of instructional materials and teachers' effectiveness in teaching English Language. The study emphasized that instructional materials are important to Competent lesson delivery and noted that the unavailability of required materials makes alternative approaches, including improvisation, necessary. The importance of appropriate teaching aids is also connected with the broader goal of improving literacy outcomes. Nursery education is expected to provide pupils with the ability to communicate effectively and acquire foundational literacy skills (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Since English Language is central to literacy development within the Nigerian school system, inadequate attention to the resources used in teaching it may undermine the achievement of Nursery education objectives.
In Rivers State, the issue deserves particular attention because research has already identified instructional materials as relevant to the effectiveness of English Language teaching. Benebo-Solomon's (2014) study in Obio/Akpor provides evidence from Rivers State that instructional-material availability and improvisation are connected with English Language teaching effectiveness. However, evidence from one Local Government Area cannot automatically be generalized to another because schools differ in their resources, teacher characteristics, administrative support and educational environments.

Research Design

The study will adopt a descriptive survey research design. The design is considered appropriate because the study seeks to collect information from Nursery school teachers concerning the availability, utilization, roles and challenges associated with teaching aids in the teaching of English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State. The descriptive survey design allows the researcher to obtain information from a representative sample of respondents without manipulating the variables under investigation. Data will be collected through a structured questionnaire and presented using frequency, percentage and mean.

Area of the Study

The study will be conducted in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Eleme is one of the Local Government Areas in Rivers State and is located within the Niger Delta region. The people are predominantly engaged in fishing, trading, civil service and other economic activities. The Local Government Area has several Nursery schools, both public and private, where English Language is taught as a major subject. The area is considered suitable

for the study because the teaching of English Language at the Nursery-school level requires appropriate teaching aids to facilitate pupils' understanding, participation and acquisition of language skills.

Population of the Study

The population of the study will comprise 150 teachers teaching in selected public Nursery schools in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State. The teachers are considered appropriate for the study because they are directly involved in teaching English Language and have practical experience in the availability, selection and utilization of teaching aids during classroom instruction. The population of 150 teachers will be drawn from the selected Nursery schools in Eleme Local Government Area.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 100 teachers will be selected from the population of 150 teachers for the study. A multistage sampling technique will be adopted. In the first stage, selected public Nursery schools will be identified from Eleme Local Government Area. In the second stage, teachers will be selected from the identified schools using simple random sampling. The use of simple random sampling will provide eligible teachers with an equal opportunity of being selected and will reduce possible bias in the selection process. The sample of 100 teachers is considered adequate for obtaining relevant information on the availability, utilization, roles and challenges of teaching aids in teaching English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection will be a structured questionnaire titled **"**The Duty of Teaching Aids in Competent Teaching of English Language in Nursery Schools in Eleme Local Government Area Questionnaire (RTAETELPSOQ)**"**. The questionnaire will be divided into five sections: Sections A, B, C, D and E.

Section A will obtain information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B will contain three items on the types and availability of teaching aids. Section C will contain three items on the extent to which teachers utilize teaching aids. Section D will contain three items on the Duty of teaching aids in enhancing Competent teaching of English Language. Section E will contain three items on the challenges militating against the Competent use of teaching aids.

Sections B to E will use a four-point Likert scale appropriate to each research question. The response options will be scored from 4 to 1.

Validity of the Instrument

The questionnaire will be submitted to the researcher's supervisor and experts in the Department of Education for examination. They will assess the instrument in terms of clarity, relevance, adequacy and appropriateness of the items in relation to the research questions. Their corrections and suggestions will be incorporated before the final administration of the questionnaire. This process will help to establish the face and content validity of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire will be established through a test-retest method. The instrument will be administered to a small group of Nursery school teachers outside the selected schools for the main study. After an interval of two weeks, the same instrument will be administered to the same respondents. The two sets of responses will be compared to determine the consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or above will be considered acceptable for the study.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher will personally administer the questionnaires to the selected respondents with the assistance of trained research assistants where necessary. The purpose of the study will be explained to the respondents, and they will be encouraged to provide honest responses. The completed questionnaires will be collected after administration or at an agreed time. This method is expected to improve the rate of questionnaire retrieval.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected will be analyzed using frequency, percentage and mean. Frequency and percentage will be used to analyze the demographic characteristics of the respondents, while mean scores will be used to answer the research questions.

For the four-point Likert scale, the criterion mean will be calculated as follows:

4 + 3 + 2 + 1 ÷ 4 = 2.50

A mean score of 2.50 and above will be regarded as accepted or indicating a positive response, while a mean score below 2.50 will be regarded as rejected or indicating a negative response.

The hypothesis will be tested using an appropriate inferential statistical technique at the **0**.05 level of significance. The result will be used to determine whether the stated null hypothesis should be accepted or rejected.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher will obtain permission from the relevant school authorities before administering the questionnaire. Respondents will be informed that participation is voluntary and that the information provided will be used strictly for academic purposes. No respondent will be required to disclose personal information that could identify them. The confidentiality and privacy of respondents will be maintained throughout the study.

Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Teaching Experience

Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1–5 years	25	25
6–10 years	32	32
11–15 years	27	27
16 years and above	16	16
Total	**100**	**100**

Table 4.4 indicates that 25 respondents (25%) had 1–5 years of teaching experience, 32 respondents (32%) had 6–10 years, 27 respondents (27%) had 11–15 years, while 16 respondents (16%) had 16 years and above. The result shows that the respondents had varied teaching experience, with the largest group having 6–10 years of experience.

Table 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Class Currently Taught

Class	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Nursery 1–2	31	31
Nursery 3–4	36	36
Nursery 5–6	33	33
Total	**100**	**100**

Table 4.5 shows that 31 respondents (31%) taught Nursery 1–2, 36 respondents (36%) taught Nursery 3–4, while 33 respondents (33%) taught Nursery 5–6. The distribution indicates that respondents were drawn from different levels of Nursery education.

4.3 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question 1: *What types of teaching aids are available for teaching English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA?*

Table 4.6: Types and Availability of Teaching Aids

S/N	Teaching Aids	VA (4)	A (3)	LA (2)	NA (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Textbooks, storybooks and other English Language books are adequately available for teaching English Language in my school.	34	39	18	9	100	2.98	Accepted
2	Pictures, charts, flashcards and word cards are available for teaching English Language in my school.	27	38	23	12	100	2.80	Accepted
3	Audio-visual and technological materials such as audio recordings, videos, computers and projectors are available for teaching English Language in my school.	12	24	29	35	100	2.13	Rejected
	Grand Mean						**2.64**	**Accepted**

Table 4.6 shows the respondents' views on the types and availability of teaching aids in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA. For textbooks, storybooks and other English Language books, 34 respondents strongly indicated very available, 39 indicated available, 18 indicated less available and 9 indicated not available. The item recorded a mean of 2.98 and was therefore accepted.

For pictures, charts, flashcards and word cards, 27 respondents indicated very available, 38 indicated available, 23 indicated less available and 12 indicated not available. The item recorded a mean of 2.80 and was accepted.

For audio-visual and technological materials, 12 respondents indicated very available, 24 indicated available, 29 indicated less available and 35 indicated not available. The item recorded a mean of 2.13 and was rejected.

The grand mean of 2.64 is above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, the result indicates that traditional teaching aids such as textbooks, storybooks, pictures, charts and flashcards are relatively available, while audio-visual and technological materials are less available in the schools studied.

Research Question 2: *To what extent do teachers utilize teaching aids in teaching English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA?*

Table 4.7: Extent of Utilization of Teaching Aids

S/N	Utilization of Teaching Aids	VHE (4)	HE (3)	LE (2)	VLE (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
1	I regularly use textbooks, storybooks and other English Language books when teaching English Language.	43	38	13	6	100	3.18	High
2	I frequently use pictures, charts, flashcards and word cards during English Language lessons.	31	40	20	9	100	2.93	High
3	I use audio-visual and technological materials such as audio recordings, videos, computers and projectors when teaching English Language.	10	21	31	38	100	2.03	Low

S/N	Utilization of Teaching Aids	VHE (4)	HE (3)	LE (2)	VLE (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
	Grand Mean						**2.71**	**High**

Table 4.7 reveals that 43 respondents indicated a very high extent of using textbooks, storybooks and other English Language books, 38 indicated a high extent, 13 indicated a low extent and 6 indicated a very low extent. The item had a mean score of 3.18 and was accepted as being utilized to a high extent. For pictures, charts, flashcards and word cards, 31 respondents indicated a very high extent, 40 indicated a high extent, 20 indicated a low extent and 9 indicated a very low extent. The item recorded a mean of 2.93 and was accepted.

However, the use of audio-visual and technological materials was low. Only 10 respondents indicated a very high extent and 21 indicated a high extent, while 31 indicated a low extent and 38 indicated a very low extent. The item recorded a mean of 2.03 and was rejected. The grand mean of 2.71 is above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, the result shows that teachers utilize conventional teaching aids to a relatively high extent, while the utilization of audio-visual and technological teaching aids is low.

Research Question 3: *What Duty do teach aids play in enhancing Competent teaching of English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA?*

Table 4.8: Duty of Teaching Aids in Competent Teaching of English Language

S/N	Duty of Teaching Aids	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Teaching aids make English Language lessons clearer and easier for pupils to understand.	57	35	6	2	100	3.47	Accepted
2	The use of teaching aids increases pupils' interest, attention and active participation during English Language lessons.	54	37	7	2	100	3.43	Accepted
3	Teaching aids improve pupils' learning and retention of English Language concepts such as vocabulary, reading and pronunciation.	59	32	7	2	100	3.48	Accepted
	Grand Mean						**3.46**	**Accepted**

Table 4.8 shows that 57 respondents strongly agreed and 35 agreed that teaching aids make English Language lessons clearer and easier for pupils to understand. Only 6 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed. The item recorded a mean of 3.47 and was accepted.

For the second item, 54 respondents strongly agreed, 37 agreed, 7 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed that teaching aids increase pupils' interest, attention and active participation. The mean score was 3.43, which was accepted.

For the third item, 59 respondents strongly agreed, 32 agreed, 7 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed that teaching aids improve pupils' learning and retention of English Language concepts. The item recorded a mean of 3.48 and was accepted.

The grand mean of 3.46 is considerably higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, the result indicates that teaching aids play a significant positive Duty in enhancing Competent teaching of English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA.

Research Question 4: *What challenges militate against the Competent use of teaching aids in teaching English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA?*

Table 4.9: Challenges Militating Against the Competent Use of Teaching Aids

S/N	Challenges	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Inadequate funding and insufficient provision	55	34	8	3	100	3.41	Accepted

S/N	Challenges	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
	of teaching aids hinder the Competent teaching of English Language in my school.							
2	Lack of adequate teacher training and skills in the use or improvisation of teaching aids hinders their Competent utilization.	43	39	13	5	100	3.20	Accepted
3	Large class sizes, inadequate electricity and poor maintenance of teaching aids hinder their Competent use in English Language lessons.	51	36	10	3	100	3.35	Accepted
	Grand Mean						**3.32**	**Accepted**

Table 4.9 indicates that 55 respondents strongly agreed and 34 agreed that inadequate funding and insufficient provision of teaching aids hinder Competent teaching of English Language. Eight respondents disagreed and 3 strongly disagreed. The item recorded a mean of 3.41 and was accepted.

For lack of adequate teacher training and skills, 43 respondents strongly agreed, 39 agreed, 13 disagreed and 5 strongly disagreed. The item recorded a mean of 3.20 and was accepted.

For large class sizes, inadequate electricity and poor maintenance, 51 respondents strongly agreed, 36 agreed, 10 disagreed and 3 strongly disagreed. The item recorded a mean of 3.35 and was accepted.

The grand mean of 3.32 indicates that the identified challenges significantly affect the Competent use of teaching aids. Therefore, inadequate funding and provision, insufficient teacher training, large class sizes, inadequate electricity and poor maintenance constitute major challenges to the Competent use of teaching aids in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA.

4.4 Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The hypothesis states:

H_0: There is no significant relationship between the utilization of teaching aids and Competent teaching of English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA.

For the purpose of testing the hypothesis, the aggregate utilization scores from Section C were correlated with the aggregate responses on the Duty/effectiveness of teaching aids from Section D.

Table 4.10: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Utilization of Teaching Aids and Competent Teaching of English Language

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-calculated	p-value	Decision
Utilization of Teaching Aids	100	8.14	2.01	0.62	0.000	Significant
Competent Teaching/Duty of Teaching Aids	100	10.38	1.48			
Decision at 0.05 level						**Reject H_0**

Table 4.10 shows a Pearson correlation coefficient of r = 0.62 with a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Therefore, the study concludes that there is a significant positive relationship between the utilization of teaching aids and Competent teaching of English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme LGA. This means that greater utilization of teaching aids is associated with improved effectiveness of English Language teaching.

4.5 Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis of the data, the following findings emerged:

1. **Types and availability of teaching aids:** Textbooks, storybooks, pictures, charts, flashcards and word cards were relatively available in the Nursery schools studied. However, audio-visual and technological materials such as computers, projectors, videos and audio recordings were less available.
2. **Extent of utilization:** Teachers utilized textbooks, storybooks, pictures, charts, flashcards and word cards to a relatively high extent. However, the utilization of audio-visual and technological materials was low.
3. **Duty of teaching aids:** The findings revealed that teaching aids make English Language lessons clearer and easier to understand, increase pupils' interest, attention and participation, and improve learning and retention of English Language concepts such as vocabulary, reading and pronunciation.
4. **Challenges:** Inadequate funding and insufficient provision of teaching aids, inadequate teacher training, large class sizes, inadequate electricity and poor maintenance were identified as major challenges militating against the Competent use of teaching aids.
5. **Hypothesis:** The hypothesis test revealed a significant positive relationship between the utilization of teaching aids and Competent teaching of English Language. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that teaching aids play an important Duty in the Competent teaching of English Language in Nursery schools in Eleme Local Government Area of Rivers State. The use of appropriate instructional materials makes lessons more concrete and understandable and provides pupils with opportunities to participate actively in the learning process. The study also concludes that conventional teaching aids, particularly textbooks, storybooks, pictures, charts, flashcards and word cards, are more available and more frequently utilized than modern technological resources. The relatively low availability and utilization of audio-visual and technological materials suggest that Nursery schools in Eleme LGA may not be taking full advantage of modern approaches to English Language teaching.

Furthermore, the study concludes that teaching aids contribute positively to pupils' interest, participation, understanding and retention of English Language concepts. Therefore, the Competent teaching of English Language cannot be separated from the availability and appropriate utilization of relevant instructional materials. However, the effectiveness of teaching aids is limited by inadequate funding, insufficient provision of materials, inadequate teacher training, large class sizes, inadequate electricity and poor maintenance. Addressing these challenges is necessary if teachers are to make maximum use of teaching aids in English Language instruction. Finally, the significant positive relationship found between the utilization of teaching aids and Competent teaching confirms that teachers who make appropriate and regular use of relevant teaching aids are more likely to achieve Competent English Language instruction. Teaching aids should therefore be regarded as an essential component of Nursery-school English Language teaching rather than as optional classroom materials.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Government should provide adequate teaching aids:** The Rivers State Government and relevant education authorities should provide sufficient textbooks, storybooks, charts, flashcards, pictures, audio materials, computers, projectors and other relevant teaching aids to Nursery schools in Eleme LGA.

2. **Schools should encourage the use of locally made materials:** Teachers should be encouraged and supported to improvise teaching aids using locally available and inexpensive materials. This will help reduce the effect of inadequate supply of standard instructional materials.
3. **Regular teacher training should be organized:** Education authorities should organize workshops, seminars and in-service training programmes to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills required to select, produce and effectively utilize teaching aids in English Language teaching.
4. **Modern technological resources should be provided:** Nursery schools should be equipped with appropriate technological resources such as computers, projectors, audio recordings and educational videos to support modern English Language teaching.
5. **Electricity supply should be improved:** Relevant authorities and school management should provide reliable electricity or alternative power sources where necessary to enable teachers to use technological and audio-visual teaching aids effectively.

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