

# The Sociolinguistics of English and Nigerian Languages

*Dele Adeyanju (ed.)*

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Printed in E.C.  
Printed on chlorine-free paper

Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP Cataloguing-in-Publication-Data

A catalogue record for this publication is available from Die Deutsche Bibliothek (<http://www.ddb.de>)

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## PEDAGOGICAL CONSTRAINTS IN NEGOTIATING ORAL ENGLISH THROUGH YORUBA: A LINGUIST'S EXPLORATION

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### **Introduction**

English Language occupies a central position in Nigeria. This significant position is underscored by the fact that apart from being a compulsory subject at all levels of education from nursery to the university level, it is the language of instruction for all the other subjects, except the indigenous languages.

Ogunsiji (2001) asserts that:

The place of English in our educational system cannot be overemphasized. As stipulated in the National policy on Education (1981), English is the medium of instruction right from the upper primary school. To derive maximum benefits from our educational system, one should acquire a reasonable level of communicative competence in the language.

In his opinion, failure in English Language almost amounts to failure in education in the country. With this in mind, the teaching of every aspect or component of the subject should be taken very seriously and done thoroughly, especially at the secondary school level by the teachers who are expected to be good models. Over the years, the teaching of *Oral English* at the secondary school level has always posed a serious problem. This is because many of the teachers teaching the subject have little or no training at all in it. As a result of this, most of them try as much as possible to avoid it. Those that are compelled to teach this important subject rush over it without any iota of thoroughness.

To compound this problem, Oral English is reserved for the final year-SS3 in some schools. For instance, some years ago, the researcher assumed duty as English Language teacher in a secondary school, in one of the states in Nigeria. He was asked to teach SS1 students. He received a Verbal query' from his Head of Department when he incorporated Oral English into his teaching in SS1. She stated categorically that *Oral English is reserved exclusively for the*



*final year* (meaning SS3). He was highly embarrassed! Eventually he was able to prevail upon the HOD that Oral English should be taught right from JSI.

When we consider the fact that each year, it carries fifty marks out of 220 marks in the senior school certificate Examination (SSCE) and it is a separate paper (English Language Paper 3), we have no choice than to accept the obvious fact that Oral English is very significant. Amayo (1980), commenting on the use of English in Nigeria, observed that learners have more problems with English phonetics and phonology than they do with syntax and lexis. Weinreich (1981) commented on the problems second language learners usually encounter.

She is of the opinion that:

The learner has already selected from the repertoire he was capable at birth, those sound patterns he requires for his L1 (first language). To retrieve from the discarded patterns, those he requires for the second language is a monumental task requiring strong motivation and suitable and available model.

### **Statement of Problem**

The present study has the major aim of investigating and highlighting the problems encountered by teachers handling Oral English at the secondary school level.

### **Research Questions**

1. How effective is the teaching of Oral English in our secondary schools in terms of number of periods allocated to it on the time tables, the training of teachers and the use of teaching aids?
2. How adequate are teaching materials for Oral English in our secondary schools?
3. What is the level of preparation of teachers before teaching?
4. How can we rate the performance of our students in Oral English?
5. To what extent does L1 affect L2?
6. What can we do to proffer a concrete solution to this problem?
7. What attitudes do teachers as well as students manifest towards Oral English and how do these affect students' performances?

### **Significance of the study**

This work is aimed at assisting teachers to tackle the problems associated with the teaching of Oral English in our secondary schools and strive at effectiveness and efficiency in their teaching. Students on the other hand, would be helped to enjoy the class and eventually

pass their examination in flying colours. The work has the following objectives:

1. To determine the effectiveness of the teaching of Oral English at the secondary school level with regard to the number of periods allotted to it on the time tables, the training of teachers and the use of teaching aids.
2. To determine the adequacy of teaching materials used for the teaching of Oral English in our secondary schools.
3. To ascertain the level of preparation of teachers before teaching the subject.
4. To evaluate teachers' rating of the performance of their students in Oral English.
5. To determine the effect of students' L1 (Yoruba) on their L2 (English)
6. To proffer a concrete solution to the problem encountered by teachers in teaching Oral English at the secondary school level.
7. To relate students' performance in Oral English to teachers' attitude towards the teaching of the subject.

### **Population and Sample**

The study was carried out in Osun State, Nigeria. Three local governments were used in the study.

These are:

- (i) Osogbo Local Government
- (ii) Olorunda Local Government
- (iii) Ayedaade Local Government

### **Sampling Technique**

In each local government, three schools were randomly selected, thus bringing the total number of schools covered to nine. In each school, three English Language teachers helped in filling the questionnaire.

### **Instrumentation**

The research instrument for this work was a questionnaire. English teachers provided answers to the questions. The questionnaire has five parts. The first part of the questionnaire focused on the personal data of the teachers, such as qualification, teaching experience, sex, etc.

The second part contains questions on the number of periods allotted to the teaching of Oral English, whether the respondents as English teachers teach Oral English or not and lastly teachers rating of their students' performances in Oral English.



Part five has items on teachers' views about the causes of poor performance of students in Oral English, the kind of textbooks used by teachers to teach and lastly, their recommendations on how the teaching of Oral English could be improved and how students could be helped to overcome this problem.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Each teacher was given a questionnaire to complete. This questionnaire contains eighteen (18) questions. Teachers' answers to the questions formed the basis for analysis. Apart from the use of questionnaire, the researcher conducted oral interviews with the teachers to elicit more data from them.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to have an on-the-field situation report on the assumptions that secondary school students, especially those in the senior classes find certain consonants of English difficult to pronounce, a field sample of classroom teachers was carried out. The field sample involved the use of partly structured and partly free response questionnaire for teachers. Teachers' response are analysed statistically and descriptively from pg. 9.

### **Scope of the Work**

The main focus of this research is to identify the so-called problematic consonants of English as well as to recognize the factors that make them problematic. Also, it is an attempt to make recommendations especially for teachers who are expected to be models, so as to help students who are preparing to write SSCE or NECO, especially, the SS3 students. As far as this work is concerned, the consonants that pose problems to teachers and students alike are the following ones:

(a) Those consonants that are foreign to the phonetics of some of our indigenous languages in Nigeria. Some of them are:

i) voiceless and Voiced Dental Fricatives / θ / and / ð /

(ii) voiced alveolar fricative / z /

(iii) voiced Palato-alveolar fricative- / ʒ /

(iv) voiceless bilabial plosive- / p /

(v) voiced Labio-dental fricative / v /

(vi) voiceless and Voiced Palato-alveolar Affricate- / tʃ / and / dʒ /

(vii) velar nasal / ŋ /

(b) Consonants that have orthographic representations but are not pronounced, that is, they are 'silent. Examples are:

(i) 'b' in words like lamb, comb, womb, tomb, climb, subtle, dumb, etc.

(ii) 'p' in psychology, psyche, pneumonia, etc.

(iii) 'h' in honest, honour, honourable, heir, hour, etc.

Ignorance of the fact that 'h' is silent in the above words and others also results in Mechanical Accuracy errors in essay writing. For example:

An honourable man → \* a honourable man  
an honest gentleman → \* a honest gentleman, etc.

- (iv) 't' in words like castle, bustle, whistle, etc-
  - (v) 'k' in words like knight, know, knell, kneel, knowledge, etc -
  - (vi) 'g' in gnaw, gnash, gnome, gnat and gnu, etc.
  - (vii) 'w' in write, wrong, wrist, gnat and gnu, etc.
  - (viii) 'n' in hymn, autumn, etc.
- (c) The plural morpheme '-s/es' which is realized as [z] in the environments of vowels and voiced consonants e.g.
- bags /bægz/, carbs /ka:bz/, boys /boiz/, etc.
- (d) Past tense morpheme '-d/ed' in certain environments, especially where the last sound of the verb in question is a voiceless consonant e.g.
- |        |   |         |
|--------|---|---------|
| Locked | → | [lɒkt]  |
| Passed | → | [pa:st] |
| Cashed | → | [kæʃt]  |
- (e) Consonants that are susceptible to dropping. For example /h/ is particularly problematic to an average Yoruba speaker. He has a high tendency to drop /h/ wherever it occurs, especially at the word initial position. Examples are words like hero, how, him, who, horse, etc.

A close look at past questions in Oral English at the SSCE level would reveal that the consonants highlighted above are targets of examination questions each year. Hence, this calls for special attention by the teacher.

### The Teacher as a Model

Spencer (1963) Chinwe, (1990) Eibun Clark (1975), Ayodele (1988) etc have all emphasized unequivocally, the role of the teacher as a model. Carroll (1963), stated as follows:

It hardly needs research demonstration that the competence of the teacher in the teaching of the foreign language will have an important bearing on the success of the instruction.



In the same vein, Eburn Clark (1975) opined:

If we can understand that a teacher with a high standard of the language can indirectly improve the standard of his pupils, we would go a long way in solving the problems of spoken English.

Ayodele (1988) in his faculty lecture stated in clear terms that:

... very few Nigerians learn the language (English) from any other source apart from the classroom, so our search for the possible causes of poor performance should be focused on the classroom, and in particular on the classroom practitioner, that is the teacher.

The three scholars quoted above expressed clearly the fact that the success of students in English Language depends on the teacher who is regarded by students as the role model. This is a great challenge to them to rise to the task and perform their duty efficiently.

### Answering the Research Questions

The research questions were set to investigate the problems secondary school teachers encounter in the process of teaching Oral English.

#### Question 1

How effective is the teaching of Oral English in our secondary schools in terms of number of periods allocated to it on the time tables, the training of teachers and the use of teaching aids?

In trying to answer this question, we asked the following questions from the teachers contacted through the questionnaire,

- (i) How many periods do you have for English Language per week?
- (ii) How many periods do you have for Oral English per week?
- (iii) Do you have a specialist handling Oral English?
- (iv) Do you have teaching aids for the teaching of Oral English in your school?

Teachers' response to question (i) is summarized in table 4.1 below.

**Table 1:**

How many periods do you have for English language per week?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	14.0	14.8	14.8
15	5	18.5	19.5	33.3
18	1	3.7	3.7	37.0
20	11	40.7	40.7	77.8
24	1	3.7	3.7	81.5

25	3	11.1	11.1	92.6
28	1	3.7	3.7	96.3
30	1	3.7	3.7	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	

To question, (ii) teachers' response is presented in table 2 below.

**Table 2:** How many periods do you have for Oral English per week?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	11.1	11.1	11.1
2	2	7.4	7.4	18.5
3	6	22.2	22.2	40.7
4	2	7.4	7.4	48.1
5	12	44.4	44.4	92.6
10	1	3.7	3.7	96.3
20	1	3.7	3.7	100.0
Total	27	100.	100.0	

Considering the technicality of Oral English, one might be prompted to say that the number of periods allocated to Oral English per week is not adequate, but when we think of the other aspects of English Language, there is no room for allocating more periods to Oral English per week, otherwise, the other aspects which are equally important will be affected.

With regards to question (iii), teacher's response is again presented in table 3 below. All the teachers affirmed that they teach Oral English along with other aspects of English Language.

**Table 3:** Do you as the language teacher, take Oral English?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid yes	27	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 4:** Do you have a specialist handling Oral English

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Va	5	18.5	10.5	18.5
No	22	81.5	81.5	100.
To	27	100.	100.	

This means that, in most of the classes the same teachers who teach Oral English teach:

- (a) Summary
- (b) Essay/Letter Writing
- (c) Comprehension
- (d) Grammar

From this we can deduce that few of the teachers are specifically trained to handle Oral English. This should not be so. Each teacher should be allowed to handle the area of his specialization.

To question (iii), 24 teachers representing 88.9% of the total population responded 'no'. See Tables 4.5 and 4.0 below

**Table 4:** Do you have teaching aids for the teaching of Oral English in your school?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Yes	3	11.1	11.1	11.1
No	24	88.9	88.9	
Total	27	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 5:** Could you mention some of these materials?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid Drawings on card papers records	4	14.8	44.4	44.4
Tape	2	7.4	2	66.7
Others	3	11.1	3	100.0
Total	9	33.3	1	
Missing 9	18	66.7		
Total	27	100.0	100.0	



**Table 6:** Would you say they are adequate for you?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Yes	1	3.7	3.7	3.7
No	26	96.3	90.3	100.0
Total	27	100	100.	100.0

They all recommended that government should establish language laboratories equipped with teaching aids for Oral English. Until this is done, there would not be any improvement in the performance of students. When we consider the foregoing, we are prompted to conclude that the teaching of Oral English is neither effective nor efficient.

### Research Question 2

How adequate are teaching materials for Oral English in our secondary schools? This question has already been answered under the answer provided for research question 1. Our secondary schools lack adequate instructional materials. 88.9% of the total number of teachers relies on the use of textbooks. In some cases, the textbooks used are badly written. As a result of this, teachers find it difficult to teach effectively and this compounds the problem of students who are at the receiving end. Consequently, students' performance drops from bad to worse each year. If we expect those students to perform well, adequate instructional materials must be provided by the government and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) should complement the efforts of the government.

### Research Question 3

What is the level of preparation of teachers before teaching? From the responses given to the researcher by the teachers, it is obvious that teachers' preparation for the teaching of Oral English is inadequate. The teachers themselves confessed that most of the time, they go to classes to teach only what they have read in the textbooks they use, instead of teaching from both experience and textbooks. The students on the other hand *swallow* everything hook, line and sinker. When they write any external examination, their performance is bad because of the wrong information received from the teachers.

To effect any positive change, teachers who are specially trained to handle Oral English should be allowed to teach it. Such teachers on their own should prepare adequately and make effective use of instructional materials. If these are not provided, the teachers should improvise cheap instructional aids like drawing on cardboard papers. Furthermore, they should give daily exercises to students. In an

attempt to provide correct answers to the questions asked by teachers, students on their own should listen attentively in the class and they should work harder. This, in turn, would improve their performances

#### Research Question 4

How can we rate the performance of our students in Oral English? To provide an answer to this question, question eight (8) in the questionnaire was set. The question goes thus: How would you rate the performance of your students in Oral English? Teachers' response to this question is represented in Table 7.

**Table 7**

How would you rate the performance of your students In Oral English?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Good	7	25.9	25.9	25.9
Poor	17	63.0	63.0	88.9
Very poor	3	11.1	11.1	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	100.0

From table 7 above, 7 which constitute 25.9% of the population rated the performance of their students in Oral English as good.

Seventeen (17) which constitutes 63.0% of the population rated the performance of their students as poor.

Three (3) which constitutes 11.1% rated their students' performance as *very* poor. None of the set of students was rated to be very good. This portends that over 70% of the students perform below average. This is lamentable indeed.

This confirms that our assertion earlier in this work that students' performance in Oral English is poor is correct.

#### Research Question 5

To what extent does L1 affect L2? Our postulation above that students' inability to pronounce the consonants in question originates from the fact that these consonants are foreign to the consonants chart of Yoruba. That is, they simply do not exist in Yoruba. As a result of this, what students do is to substitute each of the problematic consonants with the ones that they are familiar with.

For example, see the transcription below:

1. /ð/ → /d/ as in /mɔdə/ instead of /m<sup>h</sup>ðə/ 'mother'

2. /θ/ → /t/ as in /feit/ instead of /feiθ/ 'faith'
3. /v/ → /f/ as in /fæɪn/ instead of /væɪn/ 'van'
4. /z/ → /s/ as in /su:/ instead of /zu:/ 'zoo'
5. /ʃ/ → /s/ as in /saut/ instead of /ʃaut/ 'shout'
6. /ʒ/ → /s/ as in /telivɪzən/ instead of /telivɪʒən/ 'television'
7. /h/ → /a/ as in /au/ instead of /hau/ 'how'

The teachers were asked whether they were aware of the fact that their students find the above consonants difficult to pronounce. See their response below in Table 8.

**Table 8:** Are you aware that your students have problems with some consonants?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	24	88.9	88.9	88.9
No	3	11.1	11.1	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	

The consensus response of teachers to the question relating to the origin of the problem is that it could be traced to what obtains in the sound system of Yoruba. They believe that if these consonants are in Yoruba phonetic chart, students would not have had any problem with them. The teachers are of the opinion that one can trace the origin of these problems to the combination of mother tongue influence and home background as reflected on question 16 of the questionnaire. Their response is summarized in Table 9.

**Table 9:** What would you say is responsible for these problems?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Home background	1	3.7	3.7	3.7
Mother tongue influence	7	25.9	25.9	29.6
Combination of both	19	70.4	70.4	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	



As Regards the Problematic Consonants. Table 10-16 below summarizes teachers' comments.

**Table 10:** My students find it difficult pronouncing (1) /ð /

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	9	33.	33.	33.
Yes	18	66.	66	100.
Total	27	100.	100.0	

**Table 11:** My Students find It difficult pronouncing (2) /θ/

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	9	29.6	29.6	29.6
Yes	18	70.4	70.4	70.4
Total	27	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 12:** My students find it difficult pronouncing (δ)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	20	74.1	74.1	74.1
Yes	7	25.9	25.9	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	

**Table 13:** My students find it difficult pronouncing (4) /z/

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	21	77.8	77.8	77.8
Yes	6	22.2	22.2	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	

**Table 14** My students find it difficult pronouncing (5) /ʃ/

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	11	40.7	40.7	40.7
Yes	16	59.3	59.3	100.0
Total	27	100.0	100.0	

**Table 15** My students find It difficult pronouncing (6) /ʒ/

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	8	29.6	29.6	29.6
Yes	19	70.4	70.4	
Total	27	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 16** My students find It difficult pronouncing (7)/h/

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	16	59.3	40.7	100.0
Yes	11		59.3	40.7
Total	27		100.0	100.0

**Research Question 6**

What can we do to proffer a concrete solution to this problem?

To obtain an appropriate answer to this question, teachers were asked to make recommendations in number 18 of the questionnaire.

Their response to this could be summarized as follows:

- (i) Language laboratories equipped with sophisticated instructional materials for Oral English should be established in all the secondary schools.
- (ii) Teachers should be deliberately trained through in-service-training which includes the organization of seminar/workshop.
- (iii) Only competent and experienced teachers who have been specifically trained should be allowed to teach Oral English.

- (iv) Students should be encouraged to listen to foreign news such as BBC and CNN. As for the question on when the teaching of Oral English should be introduced, some responded that it should be introduced in JS I, while some recommended SS 1. One of the respondents recommended that Oral English should be taught right from nursery/primary school.

All these recommendations provide an answer to research question 6.

### Research Question 7

Does the teachers' attitude have any effect on students' performance?

The first question we need to answer is: 'What is the attitude of teachers to the teaching of Oral English? The researcher had a session of oral interview with the teachers who provided answers to the questionnaire. Only three teachers out of 27 indicated that they enjoy teaching Oral English. This number constitutes only 11.1%. The remaining 24 teachers responded that they are teaching Oral English because they do not have any choice to make. This means they are being compelled to teach Oral English. This implies that 88.8% of teachers teaching Oral English in those schools have a negative attitude towards the teaching of this aspect of English.

The consequence of this is that their teaching is not effective. It is not surprising therefore that students' performance is rated to be very poor. Therefore, the answer to research question 7 is an emphatic 'Yes'. Teachers' attitude has a negative effect on students' performance.

In addition to the research questions, is the question of home background. All the respondents agree that home background combined with the influence of mother tongue could be held responsible for this problem. This is reflected on their response to question sixteen (16) of the questionnaire. The question is framed as follows:

16. What would you say is responsible for this problem?

- (a) Home background (b) Mother tongue influence  
(c) Combination of both (d) None of the above.

Over 70% of the respondents ticked 'c' combination of both; as their answer to the question. This has been demonstrated in table 9 above. This agrees perfectly with our postulation in chapter two of this work. What we mean by home background is the kind of homes students hail from. We stated emphatically those students who have rich parents have high tendency to perform better than those whose parents are poor. The reason for this is not far-fetched. Rich parents have the money to send their children to good schools, from nursery school to the university level, whereas poor parents can hardly afford to send their children to any school at all.



Another issue along this line is the level of education of the parents. Parents who are highly educated prefer to communicate with their children at home in English. The variety of English spoken by such parents according to Banjo (1970) is very close to native speakers' speech. Their children acquire this from them without any difficulty. By the time such children go to school, they find it relatively easier to perform well in spoken English. What the teacher does in this case is to complement the efforts of the parents. In fact, teachers who are not adequately trained will easily be detected by such children. All our findings reported above are presented in form of descriptive statistics below Tables.

**Table 17: Descriptive statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.
How many periods do you have for English Language ?	27	5	30	18.15	6.769
How many periods do you have for Oral English per week	27	1	20	4.56	3.598
Valid N	27				

**Table 18: Crosstab**

				Do you have teaching aids for the teaching of Oral English in your school		Total
				Yes	No	
How would you rate the performance of your students in Oral English?	Good	Count	2	5	7	
		% of Total	7.4%	18.5%	25.9%	
	Poor	Count	1	16	17	
		% of Total	3.7%	59.3%	63.0%	
	Very poor	Count		3	3	
		% of Total		11.1%	11.1%	
Total	Count	3	24	27		
	% of Total	11.1%	88.9%	100.0%		

**Table 19: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.006	2	.222
Likelihood Ratio	2.855	2	.240
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.837	1	.092
N of Valid Cases	27		

	Value	df	Asymp. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.000	4	.199
Likelihood Ratio	8.005	4	.091
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.792	1	.181
N of Valid Cases	9		

a. 9 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .22.

**Table 20**

			Would you say they are adequate for you?		Total
			Yes	No	
How would you rate the performance of your students in Oral English?	Good	Count	1	6	7
		% of Total	3.7%	22.2%	25.9%
	Poor	Count		17	17
		% of Total		63.0%	63.0%
	Very poor	Count		3	3
		% of Total		11.1%	11.1%
Total	Count	1	26	27	
	% of Total	3.7%	96.3%	100.0%	

**Table 21: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.000 <sup>a</sup>	4	.199
Likelihood Ratio	8.005	4	.091
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.792	1	.181
N of Valid Cases	9		

a. 9 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .22.

**Table 22: Crosstab**

		Would you say they are adequate for you?		Total	
		Yes	No		
How would you rate the performance of your students in Oral English?	Good	Count % of Total	1 3.7%	6 22.2%	7 25.9%
	Poor	Count % of Total		17 63.0%	17 63.0%
	Very poor	Count % of Total		3 11.1%	3 11.1%
Total	Count % of Total	1 3.7%	26 96.3%	27 100.0%	27 100.0%



**Table 23: Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. 2-
Pearson Chi-	2.967 <sup>a</sup>	2	.227
Likelihood	2.813	2	.245
Linear-by-Association	2.582	1	.108
N of Valid	27		

a. 4 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than minimum expected count is to conclude this part, the recommendation that students should be exposed to Oral English from the nursery/primary school level is supported. This would give them adequate time to master the subject effectively.

This work is indeed an eye-opener to the question of poor performance of students in Oral English. The cause of the problem from the discovery of this research is tri-dimensional. First, is the fact that majority of the teachers teaching Oral English in our Secondary Schools are compelled to do so. They are neither well trained nor adequately prepared to teach the subject. The result of this is poor teaching which leads to poor performance of students.

Secondly, our public schools are poorly equipped. As stated earlier, none of the nine schools visited has a language laboratory. This is because of the wrong conception that only science subjects like Physics, Chemistry and Biology need laboratories. From the consensus recommendation, of the teachers contacted, Oral English needs a laboratory that is sufficiently equipped.

Majority of our students lack conducive environment which facilitates easy learning and good performance, especially at home. There is no motivation whatsoever for such students. The parents lack the wherewithal to send them to good schools; they are not encouraged to speak English at home. The resultant effect of this is that they develop negative attitude to Oral English and eventually their performance is very poor. To prevent this kind of situation, recommendations are made below.

### **Recommendations**

The researcher is of the opinion that if all the recommendations made by teachers as shown in earlier this work are carried out, students' performance in Oral English will improve. These recommendations are summarized here.

1. The three tiers of government—federal, state and local governments should invest more in education by establishing phonetic

laboratories in the secondary schools. In fact, this should not be limited to the secondary schools? Tertiary institutions where the teachers are trained need sophisticated and modern instructional materials. This will ensure that the teachers themselves are trained to train others.

2. Periodical in-service-training should be organized for Oral English teachers. This will help the teachers to update their knowledge and expose them to current developments in their field.
3. Teachers who are specially trained to teach Oral English should be allowed to teach the subject in our secondary schools. Such teachers should be innovative and competent. They should be familiar with how to teach effectively with the aid of good instructional materials. They should make use of pictures showing the articulators. Such pictures can be designed on cardboard papers
4. Parents should create the necessary conducive environment at home for students to develop interest in phonetics. They can do this by purchasing good textbooks for them and encouraging them to listen to news on radio and television. They can also do this by it setting good examples. For instance, educated parents should communicate regularly with their children in both English and the mother tongue. As they are doing this, they should try to pronounce each word they utter correctly.
5. Students on their own part, should aim at acquiring the Received Pronunciation (RP). They should work hard on their own through self-drilling in past questions on Oral English. If they encounter any question they cannot handle, they should not hesitate to ask such questions from their teachers. They should also be very attentive in the class.

If all these recommendations are meticulously followed, we believe there will be tremendous improvement in students' performance in Oral English.

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This book addresses issues bordering on the long-standing co-existence of English and Nigerian languages. For about two centuries, English and Nigerian languages have co-existed and played complementary roles in meeting the communicative and pragmatic needs of the people.

The co-existence of English and Nigerian languages offers a prolific field of enquiry especially in matters relating to pedagogy, language attitude, language shift, language endangerment etc. The eighteen-chapter book therefore, carefully handles topics such as, the English language in the outer circle, the problem of language and implications for national integration, the English language and the colonization of African languages, language attitude, globalization and the survival of Nigerian heritage, the nativization of English in Nigeria, the English Language in Nigerian Universities etc.

The authors generally treat the implications of the co-existence of English and Nigerian languages. As pointed out in the work, English in Nigeria could be said to be a blessing as it opens up the country to the gains of globalization. On the other hand, the overwhelming positive attitude to English in Nigeria is a serious threat to the survival and growth of indigenous languages and the Nigerian cultural heritage.

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