

THE REASONS FOR POOR PERFORMANCE IN  
ORAL ENGLISH AMONG SSIII STUDENTS

A CASE STUDY OF  
SOME SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
IN MINNA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

BY

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DEPT. OF ENGLISH HAUSA

NIGER STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION MINNA

AUGUST 2001

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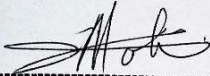


DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH/HAUSA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION MINNA

2001 AUGUST

**APPROVAL SHEET**

This project has been read and approved as meeting the requirement for the Award of a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) by the Niger State College of Education, Minna.



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## DEDICATION

I dedicated this work to my lovely parents Alh Abdullahi Galadima Kuta and Malama Mairo Mohammad.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, all thanks and gratitude be to Almighty Allah, for His uncountable mercies upon me. I also acknowledge with thanks the assistance given to me by my dearest wife, parents, friends, brothers, and sisters.

My sincere thanks is due to my project supervisor Malam Muhammad Sani Idris who had painstakingly read through this project, criticised, corrected and suggested where necessary, which enabled me to re-write and make my work more acceptable. May Allah shower his blessings upon him and his family.

My appreciation also goes to my Colleagues and well wishers who have directly to the success of this work. May Allah bless them.

Lastly, I am grateful to Malam Garba Abdullahi F.U.T. Minna, and all my lectures for their tireless efforts in training me to become more useful to the society.

Alhamdulillah.



## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the reasons for poor performance in oral English amongst form six (S>S III) students with a view to finding the degree to which these reasons do affect their performance.

The study was conducted in Minna, Niger State with students of Day Secondary School, Minna in Minna Local Government Area, and the student of Day Secondary Scholl Maitumbi, Minna, also in Minna Local Government Area, Eighty (80) students were used in the sampling. Methods used in analysing the data were by questionnaire, observation and interview. Form the result obtained from the experimental group and controlled group the research found that type of error listed contributed to poor performance in oral English among S.S III students.

During the investigation the responses proved that many reasons were responsible for S.S III students performance in oral English. Finally, the study will show that there is a need to improve performance of students in oral English, to enable them become good speakers of English, and make them see oral English as enjoyable activity now and in the future.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

As a student of English language I come to realise that English is one of the major languages used in most part of Africa. It is so widespread in its usage that it has become essential in everyday life in many countries including Nigeria, it is the language of communication, the language of administration, of the law, the national press and commerce and most importantly the language of interactions.

Indeed, without English there could present be little education above elementary level. English is needed for communication at both the national and international levels. So if the speaker is to understand and be understood, he must keep within generally accepted norms of language from the point of view of prosecution and grammatical usage unless we bear this in mind when teaching English in schools and colleges, we may defeat the very purpose for which English is taught as a means of communication.

As a student of English language performances of students in English language. Not even me but, even some teachers of English feel the same as confirmed by the head of English Department in Day Secondary School Minna in the course of discussion I had with him.

But, much of what has to be said applies to English language in secondary schools. However, it applies particularly to the teaching and learning of oral English. The focus would be on the socio-cultural unfavorable effect on the desire out come of the S.S III oral as a subject in the Day Secondary School Minna, Maitunbin, Old Airport Minna and Ahmadu Bahago all in Minna Niger State.

The subsequent establishment of oral English standard to get a clue on oral English standard. The study will explore the questions of the different varieties of secondary schools English intelligibly, acceptance, throw and variants.

Here is a close assessment of variables, which operate in students poor performance in oral English. Most students unconsciously rely on their mother tongue (M.T) models for the teachers, they find it difficult to teach, partly because they are not sure whether their own speeches reflect the pronunciation norms of standard English which they are supposed to be teaching the education who are to have some superiority in the language fail to offer solution over the obvious problems in our secondary schools. Similarly, we have the policy maker, linguistics, the researchers e.t.c. Who find themselves in the environment where all these problems persist yet fail to proffer solutions and also refuse to play the major roles they are supposed to play.

### 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For quite sometime now, the issue of poor performance in oral English has been my major greatest concern since many students in the secondary schools cannot be said to be fluent in speaking English language. As a student of English I am often disappointed by this, that is why I picked on this topic. REASONS FOR POOR PERFORMANCE IN ORAL ENGLISH BY S.S II STUDENTS.

### 1.2 THE NEED FOR SUCH A STUDY

When we talk of "Oral English" it simply means correct English pronunciation, written and spoken English are obviously very different skills. Writing consist of marks on paper which make no noise and taken by the eye, while, speech is organised sound listening by ear. Do marks on paper help anyone to make their English sound better? The answer to this is that it cannot by itself.

Language starts through hearing by ear that's when a baby starts to talk he does thus by hearing the sounds his mother makes and imitates her. This gift of imitation, which gives us the gift of speech, last for a number of years. It is well known that a child of ten years old or less than ten years can learn any language very well if he is brought up surrounded by speakers of that language, no matter where he was born or who his parents were. However, after this age the ability to imitate. Perfectly dismisses we all know too well that's an adult has much differently in mastering the pronunciation of another language. But in some cases some people are more talented than others in that view, they find speaking others languages as simple skills while other people who are not talented find it difficult to comprehend another language but one question is this, why should this gift that we all have as children disappear in later life? Why cant grown up people pick up the characterises sound at foreign languages such as (ENGLISH) as a child can do?

The answer to this question is that because our native language causes some intemperance. By the time we are grown up. The habits of our own languages are so strong that they are very difficult to be broken. In our own languages we hare fanly small number of sound units which we put together in many difficult compunctions to form the words and sentences we use every day.

Unfortunately, it is never easy to establish good habits. The purpose of this research is to make S.S III students improve on their oral English even, if they have no great talent for language. The target is not to speak like the native English speakers but, at least to get as close to it as possible the research will also identify such problems that lead to poor pronunciation and find ways of solving the problems. Such suggestion shall improve oral English competence.

similarities, products of our post primary schools will perform better in their examination. And for future usage,

### 1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY (Aims)

Relative to the utter neglect of the area of pronunciation in our various secondary schools today; recent investigation in our various school today proves that S.S III students always perform very low in oral English. And this is attribute to their failure in English language it is the effect that the researcher wants to find out the reasons behind the poor performance and proffer a number of solutions to the cases of these problems. Such attempt will provide some clues for ensuring that subject materials and teaching techniques are relevant to goals that are specific and clear to the participants and cognisant of the operative variable in the teaching.

### 1.4 HYPOTHESES

These are some basic assumptions drawn from the literature review for this study of poor performance in oral English amongst S.S III students is because:-

- i. Students unconsciously rely on their mother tongue (M.T) model.
- ii. Unqualified teachers is on of this factors that contributes to the poor performance by students to oral English.
- iii. Poor expression contributes to our poor performance in oral English?
- iv. The poor method of teaching oral English also contributes.
- v. The educationists failure to offer in our secondary schools.
- vi. Teachers find it difficult to teach the student according to the syllabus.
- vii. The status of English as a second language without adequate early training contributes to the poor performance of students in oral English in secondary schools.

viii. The neglect of teaching oral English, aspect in the teaching of English language also contributes to the poor performance.

ix. Lack of motivation by the teacher also lead to poor performance in oral English.

### 1.5 SOME BASIC QUESTIONS

In a study of this nature, certain questions come up to mind which are imposed on the works explored.

1. What is the attitude of scholars towards spoken English in Nigeria?
2. Can lack of qualified teachers in our secondary schools affect our students spoken English standard?
3. Can interference deviation and creativity affect English standard?
4. Can teachers difficulty in oral English teaching affect the learning of the students?
5. Will considering oral English as a separate course help the students to speak better English?
6. Can the production of quality teachers by the universities and colleges of education's facilitate quick learning by our students?
7. Lastly, how viable is an oral English standard?

### 1.6 METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted by the exploration of all available materials in relation to the English pronunciation the materials used include text books, Hand outs seminar presentations paper presented at workshops and conferences. Magazines, journals and newspapers. The research also was based on interview and personal observation of the research.

## 1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Definition need to be made before the main explanation of things in details thus giving the definition of terms as follows.

### a. PERFORMANCE

This term according to chomsky's definition in the essential of grammatical theory. "The use of competence to produce a message" The behaviour governed by the rules but not only it is a matter of chance which particular message is sent also in ultrances that do occur may be in a pretty, poor shape, affected by "MEMORY" limitations, distributions shifts of attention and interest and errors:-

### Bi. ORAL ENGLISH

This simply means perfect English pronunciation. It is always an organised sound, taken in by the ear. In this case it does not simply entails complete over howling of the world standard but ensuring that greater pronounce will be given to pronunciation because. Oral English is neglected in the teaching of English language most English language teachers find it difficult to teach oral English because of their own speeches reflect the pronunciation norms of standard English in the case of (Received pronunciation) which they are supposed to be teaching with the altitude, students and teachers alike therefore, they tend to ignore the oral English section of the course book. So in this case oral English courses should be made obligated to student of secondary schools with the order as a course and it should be separated from the general English language in order to correct a long standing in balance in English course favour of literary studies.

Bii Another measure is the production by the universities and college of education of highly qualified teachers of oral English for the secondary schools level. Because, the low or lack of

qualification in English by teachers of English should be rightly considered by many educationist to be a national super periovily.

Biii Finally, the ideally standard oral English for examination purpose should be internationally be of West Africa English. This is not a suggesting the survival of only oral English but of the English language students as a where in the S.S schools curriculum. However, it should be more of individual practice in other words pronunciation proficiency is not just a by protect of more induction. The OVERT manifestation is of course, performance productively And receptively. Mere explanation will be given on "Oral English as its analysis in our overall context is the crux of this work.

### 1.8 SCOPE

Since there are many reasons responsible for poor performance in Oral English in senior secondary schools. This study was limited to the major reasons responsible for the poor performance amongst form six (S.S III) students in Day Secondary School Minna, Day Secondary School Maitumbi Minna, Ahmadu Babago Senior Secondary School Minna and Government Girls Secondary School, Old Airport Minna, all in Minna Local Government Area.

### 1.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is not without it's limitation thèse includes the fact that both financial and time constraints make it impossible for the researcher to involve all the schools in Minna Local Government Area for the sampling of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review is designed to explore various relevant articles with the intent to locate what project findings in different places have established as the factors effecting the Teaching/Learning of oral English among senior secondary schools (S.S III) and their suggested remedies on the issue.

Accordingly to Henry of Huntington (1951) in A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. It is necessary to assume that the literally educated man should know smething of the structure of his language. In addition to this; It is not only the structure of a language that is supposed to be known but, also the phonological aspect of a language in the sense that a man cannot be assumed to be educated unless he is seen through his speech competence.

Therefore, one of the major problems of learning spoken English is that users do not seem to agree on what should be the standard English (SE). Fortunately for the learners, all the different accents of English have a great deal in common. If a good speaker of English language speaks; No matter the type of accents he/she has it must be comprehended by the listener. These general factors which we find in practically all varieties is what is referred to as the "Common core".

As learners of English, students are supposed to have model pronunciation, which they have to constantly refer to. This is going to be taught by the teacher. According to J.O Abolade etal (1971) in oral English for West Africa. Most teachers have recognised that intelligible spoken English is not "Caught but has to be "Taught".

Our model which is received pronunciation (R.P) is that type of English used by educated natives in Southern English. It is commonly heard in Oxford, from those that have university



education. It is well known and been used by the British Broadcasting Corporation (B.B.C). Also, it is known that R.P is not a particular dialect of only one region.

According to A.C Gimson (1989) in An Introduction to the pronunciation of English. It is the accepted social standard of pronunciation. It's particular virtue is that, it is the easiest to understand by the widest circle of speakers of English.

Before, oral English was involved in the secondary schools curriculum, the curriculum planners had some aims at the back of their mind which will help the student in and outside the school if being taught in the school. Those aims were as follows:-

1. To enable the students to be easily understood when they speaks. That is to say their ability to communicate effectively with other people.
2. To make the students to understand with ease the type of English spoken by education native speakers and other education users of English language.

In this case, in other to make an effective communication, the students should be able to:-

- a. Distinguish between significant English sounds and produce them in appropriate situation.
- b. Understand the values of stress and innovation in English and use the appropriate ones themselves.
- c. To speak in natural manner that does not irritate or bore their listeners.

A.C Gimson (1989) also added that. "The prime medium of English language is speech" with these, a leaner is not expected to deal with English in its written form only for there is no escape from the acquisition of at least the rudimentary elements of English pronunciation. Such conclusion implies that in any course of English a realistic amount of time should be devoted to

practice of the spoken English. As it has been observed that S.S student after graduation from the secondary school can not construct a single good sentence in English.

Another one is, the now national curriculum in English language for Nigeria secondary schools in the 1980s gave a welcomed fresh emphasis to developing proficiency in spoken English which was hitherto neglected. Due to the inclusion of oral English in the secondary schools curriculum, the planners made it a kind of compulsory for oral English to be taught at that level. The course will be taken also a separate subject in the WAEC, G.C.E, JAMB, NECO E.T.C. with this approach students will be given solid background.

While, DONALD LILOYED T. (1965) viewed that "a youngster coming to school with highly developed language of a kind that is not acceptable in the school culture suffer from another form of verbal inadequacy" with this view. One will see that in most cases this type of child finds it difficult to communicate in the class. To that effect, he is likely to find it difficult in other social communication. Many situations arise where the teacher and the students never make contact in terms of direct communications. This is the greatest mistake teachers make in the present system of education. In other words they attempt to teach a second language as if it were an ordinary school subject like government, agricultural science, history, Biology and physics. They forget that students ability is influenced by classroom interaction and the vital part of this interaction is languages.

In this note, one ought to know that oral English is the essential aspect of English language, which is involved, in one's everyday life. And DUSTEM (1969) is of the same view that, "Ideally the standard of oral English for examination purpose should be international intelligible West African English.

Another review by DEGAH O. (1981) in his write up laid emphasis on the learning and the learning difficulties of English language. He is of the view that language interference a times is one of the causes of learning difficulties. It is due to the fact that some students now already internalized their mother Tongue (MT). In accordance with this, there are many differences, which may bring these difficulties to the students that is between their first language (L1) and second language (L2).

While another difference is some phonological aspects of English which are inherently difficult for certain linguistic groups in Nigeria that is some vowels and consonants which are acquired by our students from the parent manner of pronunciation. For example, Iiv native speaker of English in Nigeria find it difficult to distinguish between (L) and (R). If this should be part of their language interference their children are bound to emulate them in the course of communication.

Similarly, other linguistic groups do exhibit such weaknesses. Hausa speaker of English too find it difficult to distinguish between (F) and (P). While, the Yoruba's fail in distinguishing between the (Z) and (S). Also the Igbo speaker confuse (d) with (t) sounds.

According to Jibrin, M (1982) most Hausa speakers of English confuse the phonemes (F) with (P). That is to them though the two phonemes are perceived as two distinct sounds but produced as one and the same. However, the generalization of this view is not widely accepted because it is not all Hausa speakers of English that have such weaknesses. Some of them do not confuse the two phonemes (F) and (P) but have a clear distinctive pronunciation of both sounds. Meanwhile, with all these I concluded that the reason for poor performance in oral English among S.S III students, is due to the fact that the principles and techniques of oral English should be emphasized on the guidelines of the oral English syllabus and the essentials of



Oral English lessons are not well taken care of by the teachers. This problem is compounded by students who have second language problem, which is as result of interference by the various first language. Another problem is method of teaching English language particularly, oral English by some teachers their method is not good enough for an effective learning. This is because most of our English teachers do not have good method of teaching most especially, in the cause of pronunciation of words in their correct pronunciation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### PROJECT METHODOLOGY

#### 1.1 THE POPULATION SAMPLE

In this research, four (4) schools in Minna municipality are selected for the study. The schools were selected because they have more population than other schools in the local government area.

The researcher decided to choose this schools because, they enjoy equal benefits with other secondary schools. Such as, provision of materials implementation of syllabus and supervision and availability of qualified teaching staff. The selection also, takes care of the socio-cultural and socio-economic background of the students.

The schools in the population sampling includes. Day Secondary School Minna D.S.S Maitumbi Minna, G.S.S Minna, and G.G.S.S Old airport Also in Minna Local Government area.

Thus the random sampling:-

#### 1.2 TABLE

SHOWING NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS UNDER STUDY

Names of School Under Experiment	Number of Students
G. S. S Minna	20
D. S. S Minna	20
D. S. S. Minna	20
G. G. S. S Old Airport Minna	20

### 1.3 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

This project employed three (3) major techniques in the data students out of which 75 Questionnaires were returned 4 out of 73 is not answered. Below is the table showing the distribution of the questionnaires.

S/No	School	No of Quest. Distributed	No of Quest. Returned Responded	No of Quest. Returned Responded	No of Quest not Returned
1	Day Sec. School. Minna	20	19	1	-
2	Day Sec. School Maitumbi Minna	20	18	1	1
3	Govt. Sec School Minna	20	20	-	-
4	Govt. girl Sec Old Airport Minna	20	16	2	2
TOTAL		80	73	4	3

### 1.4 OBSERVATION

The researcher used this technique because of its directness, for the researcher does not need to ask questions on the respondent "behaviour" and actions but will only watch and see for himself. And draw his own conclusions.

The reason why the researcher used observation techniques is because it helps the generation of the first hand data. This first hand data brings out the observed phenomena as they are in their natural settings.

Furthermore, observation will demand less active report for the fact that the relationship between a person and his/her environment is often best maintained in observational studies. This method can be used in many places it can be used to collect supplementary data that may interpret or qualify finding obtained by other methods and also might be used as the primary method of data collection in descriptive studies.

In fact, the method of observation can take place in many forms such as the casual experience and the most sophisticated laboratory device. These many forms of it make it a suitable method for a variety of project purpose.

This method, can take many forms however as far as this research is concerned. It will only take place in natural setting. This observational method procedure may range from complete flexibility guided only by a general problem to the use of specialized instrument prepared in accordance. In this case, the most important thing to be observed should be pronunciation of words, response by the students when answering questions or during conversation.

### 1.5 INTERVIEW

This can be simply, means the face to interaction, this is one of the methods of collecting data which the researcher make use of for the fact that not all phenomena are accessible through observation method that is why the researcher will collect data by asking people, students, teachers who have experienced these phenomena questions based on their everyday life experience with the obtained response constituting the data, the project hypothesis will then be examined.

The researcher use this method because it is a situation whereby the researcher ask the respondents questions and they answered them orally. It is through this method that first hand information will be collected on the respondents knowledge, values, preferences, experiences, beliefs and attitudes. This interview method could be in two forms viz.

#### a. STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

This is a type of interview that is rigidly standardized and formal. It is a situation whereby questions are presented to various respondents who choose their respect from a list of

alternative responses provided by the interview. This interview is always more scientific than the others.

b. **UNSTRUCTURAL INTERVIEW**

It is another method of interview which is flexible in this case the respondents are encouraged to express their feeling freely and the order of the questions could be attend at their will to suit the respondent. This is also possible to exceed initial questions following unanticipated clues. In this research the researcher intends to use the unstructured interview to enable him have unrestricted access to varieties of data.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULT

#### 4.1 RESULT OF INTERVIEW CONDUCTED

The research posed some questions to the participants in order to arouse their interest before giving them the passage to read. Only forty-five (45%) percent of them could express themselves in answering the questions. The result shows that majority of the students lacked the flair for English language.

Participants were also asked to read a passage, but only forty percent (40%) of the total number of the students under this study could read the passage correctly. They were also asked questions on their extra moral activities, equally they were asked whether they had been used to doing many domestic chores before and after school hours. Seventy percent (70%) of them answered on the positive, especially the girls among the participants.

The students were also asked by the researcher the type of activities they do occupy themselves with at home. Their response hinted on the fact some do engage themselves in domestic work like taking care of their younger ones, cooking, laundering work, others said they do engage themselves with hawking and other activities.

The researcher also asked the participant who can express himself in English how others do feel about them while interacting? Five percent (5%) response was that they do admire and feel like speaking like him. Other responses were that they do not even like to interact with them. Because of their non-chalant attitude over spoken English (S.E). It is therefore, an evidence that their fellow students do scorn or at times make jest of them whenever they speak. Consequently, this posture discourages them.

The participants were asked whether English language is used as a medium of communication in and outside the classroom their answers were on the negative. They complained that nobody cared about the importance of English language in their lives.

In this regard, it is their local languages they use for communication, however, there are extreme case when they speak with their fellow students who do not understand the local language employed. Even then they merely code switch from their local languages into pidgin English. This is bound to affect their performance in oral English.

The students were also asked whether there was any penalty for student found speaking vernacular within the school premises. Their responses were on the negative. This is made about ninety percent (90%) of the student grammatically handicapped. This is also another reason for their poor performance in oral English.

Furthermore, the researcher asked the student on whether they had specific time for the learning of oral English. Their answers were on the negative. However, they complained that much time is not allowed for it on the time table.

They were also asked if they had available textbooks on oral English. It was explained that they had not seen one of such books in their schools. They only confined that the only available material for oral English is English reader, where some oral English drills are treated.

The researcher was also made to know some literary clubs. They were only known for their existence not for the required impact on the curriculum. They do not involve themselves in any inter school debate, quiz and drama. He was made to known that these literary activities do not extend beyond Minna township.

For that, the students complained that the school does/not invite experts in English language. When asked by the researcher their responses were also that they do depend solemnly

on their school lessons in other words, the impact of resource personnel had not been felt by the students.

In fact, the researcher asked the participants if at all they do involves themselves in the newspapers reading, listening to radio programmes and watching of television may be the educative programme and network news: Thirty percent (30%) response were on the positive while seventy percent (70%) responded negatively. Thus the essential aspect of current affairs that develops language flairs is not maximally exploited.

In addition, it is not a known fact that reading newspaper, watching of television and listening to radio programme will greatly enhance the speech proficiency of these students in fact, most of them that responded negatively come from the homes that do not have access to all these media.

Most of the students have shown that eighty percent (80%) of them come from illiterates homes. Therefore, they do not have ample opportunity to communicate in English language especially in their homes. That everybody around them communicate in the native language (NL). This affects their language competence while twenty percent (20%) come from literates homes it is mostly of these group that were able to express themselves freely in English language.

The student were asked if they had laboratory where speech work is practiced Ninety Five percent (95%) of then were composed because they had not heard of a language laboratory in the school. While five percent (5%) that had some idea heard that from their literate parents. The absence of language laboratory in the school and the students non-participation in speech do affect them greatly.

The researcher from his question found out that only forty five percent (45%) had the recommended textbooks this shown that majority of the students had not English textbook. The research analysis has shown that lack of textbooks among these students could really impede their academic progress especially in field of English language.

#### 4.2 ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF THEIR OBSERVATION RESULTS

The researcher observed that only very few students used English as a medium of communication in their classes and on the playing ground. Most of them communicate in their language competence. Another observation is that even some teachers do communicate with the students in their MT especially in times on errand.

The researcher also observed that the school does not have well equipped library and language laboratory. The importance of these cannot be over emphasized in the educational development of the students. The availability of language laboratory will enhance the performance of students and teachers alike in their oral English proficiency.

Also an observation was made that oral English syllabus was not available in the school. The recent findings have shown that the absence of syllabus on oral English had made majority of the students failed Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (S.S.C.E.) especially English language.

Another observation is that the school does not see it deem necessary to invite experts in English language in order to enlighten students on the subject. In fact, the importance of the resource personnel in English cannot be over emphasized.

It has also been observed that alternation is not always paid to oral English teaching the method which the teacher use during English periods showed that most teacher use translation

method which is not effective. Such techniques affect by this oral competence and the students vocabulary development.

Also, in my observation it was also reveals that the students had vague ideas about segmental. They could not differentiate between sound or phonemes. These are abstract set of sounds in a language which allow us to differentiate meaning in the actual sound we say and hear.

In this regard, there are many consonants that are problematic to the students. e.g In Hausa group seventeen participant out of twenty participants were pronouncing consonants (F) as (P) for instance in course of pronouncing "Fanta" they pronounced it as "Panta". Similarly to the Yoruba group eighteen of them also misplaced the consonant (Z) as (S) which is in the course of pronouncing of "Zaria" they pronounced it as "Saria". Like wise, in the group of the Ibo's Sixteen participants out of twenty participants confused (L) for (r) this could be in term of pronouncing "Rice" they said "Lice".

The researcher finally observed the students difficulties in supra-segmentals which involved the use of stress, rhythm and intonation for instance forty (40%) student out of eight (80) participants were unable to get a clear system of stressed and unstressed syllable. In word. Twenty-five (25) do not have a clear system on sentence stress while fifteen (15) were having problem with the emphatic stress.

Similarly, the student also found it difficult in intonation pattern for the fact that English would sound monotonous with out the variation provided by the rhythm, the importance of intonation should not be over emphasized in the teaching of English language. For instance, the students found it difficult to use the falling tone, which is referred to as tone (1) and the rising

tune that is referred to as tune (II) This made them unable to make use of the right intonation for a particular word. It resulted into the problem of lack of pitch or rhythm.

More so, the researcher also observed that the general attainment of the candidates of the school in S.S.C.E is very poor. This is obvious in the English language result as shown below. And also the summary of the analysis of the data presented in the chapter.

#### TABLE

#### 4.3 SUMMARY OF S.S.C.E RESULT FOR ELEVEN YEARS

Year	No of Students	No with Distinction	No with Credit	Pass	Failure	Absentees	With held
1990	383	-	1	21	356	1	4
1991	313	-	2	10	295	1	5
1992	367	1	3	33	222	2	7
1993	399	2	16	50	232	1	7
1994	357	4	9	4	333	-	-
1995	305	1	7	33	262	-	-
1996	478	2	14	44	362	2	48
1997	600	1	16	55	528	-	-
1998	605	5	12	78	513	-	-
1999	701	5	19	106	568	2	1
2000	720	18	38	300	362	1	1

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PROBLEMS, RECOMMENDATION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study has the purpose of enumerating those factors that could be responsible for the poor performance in oral English among S.S III students. The problems have been identified in chapter four based on the results obtained from the observation and interview conducted. The researcher's intention here is to discuss these problems which will be followed by the recommendation, summary and conclusion.

#### 5.1 IDENTIFIED FACTORS

- (1) Lack of qualified teachers.
- (2) The non-availability of the recommendation syllabus and the problem of syllabus implementation in the schools.
- (3) Poor teaching method of oral English.
- (4) Imparting errors by teachers on students.
- (5) Teachers avoidance of oral English aspect of English language in their teaching.
- (6) Teachers not attaching much importance to spoken English as a medium of communication.
- (7) The speech problem among the students.
- (8) The students poor foundation of English language.
- (9) Frequent transfer of teaching staff.
- (10) Lack of proficiency in usage of English language among students.
- (11) Graduates from other fields of education using teaching as a stepping stone.

## 5.2 GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THE PROBLEMS

- (1) **LACK OF QUALIFIED TEACHERS:** The low education attainment of large number of secondary school teachers means that English is introduced to students by those teachers who are least capable to do it. Many a times teachers do not have sufficient command of the language for effective teaching. They greatly depend on the textbooks and pay little attention to oral English.
- (2) **THE AVAILABILITY OF RECOMMENDED SYLLABUS AND THE PROBLEM OF SYLLABUS IMPLEMENTATION IN THE SCHOOL:** In the school observed, they do not have a recommended syllabus by the federal ministry of education for clear-cut guidelines. The problem of non-availability and non-implementation of the recommended syllabus is a clear signal to students poor performance in oral English.
- (3) **POOR TEACHING METHOD OF ORAL ENGLISH:** Most teachers a times find it difficult to teach, partly because they are not sure wheither their own speeches reflect the pronunciation norms of standard English (S.E) which they are supposed to be teaching. This makes them adopt wrong teaching method in this case misleading the students.
- (4) **IMPARING ERROS BY TEACHERS TO STUDENTS:** The researcher's observation soon revealed that most teachers are incompetent in the profession due to poor training. With such weakness they become poor performers in the language and can be hardly expected to be capable of imparing required knowledge to the students.
- (5) **TEACHERS AVOIDAMCE OF ORAL ENGLISH ASPECTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THEIR TEACHING:** This is another observation by the researcher which revealed that most teachers do avoid the teaching of oral English aspect of English language. They depart from the ideal situation that involves practical activities for the



children (students) such as oral drills. This could be as a result of the teachers laziness or lack of knowledge of the area obviously, this will lead to the poor performance in oral English by the students.

- (6) TEACHERS NOT ATTACHING MUCH IMPORTANCE TO SPOKEN ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION: The fact that English is needed for communication at both the national and international level, it has significant implications for teaching. If the speaker (learner) is to understand and be understood he must keep within the generally accepted norms of English, from the point of view of pronunciation and grammatical usage. The idea in this is that the teacher should make the student feel that he is a person to be valued by the teacher and peer group alike. English teaching should become more students centred.

- (7) THE SPEECH PROBLEMS AMONG STUDENTS: The researcher observation also revealed that speech problems are always faced by students. Some students find it difficult in pulling their thoughts into words and with this finding it difficult to speak out what is on their minds. This made them always reluctant to use speech, but a time they prefer polar questions.

- (8) THE POOR FOUNDATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: The crux of this problem as it relates to the teaching of English always lies in the primary school curriculum. It is there that the training of English language began and the foundations are laid. However, these foundations are often inadequate and the primary school children (students) are always exposed to the poor, non-standard English of many teachers. The pupils often fail to acquire the skills necessary to use English as the language of learning.

(9) **FREQUENT TRANSFER AMONG TEACHING STAFF:** This observation revealed that this is another problem facing the proper teaching of oral English in our secondary schools. That is, constant transfer of teaching staff drastically affects students performance in spoken English. In other words, the stability of staff contributes in no small measure in the maintenance of acceptable standards.

(10) **LACK OF FLAIR OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AMONG STUDENTS:** It has been observed that most of our secondary schools students cannot construct a simple sentence in English. This is always due to poor teaching method or poor family background. In the classroom where students speak several (MIS) the teaching of a second language become complicated. The problem of multilingualism places serious constraints on language teaching. The problem is compounded when one considers the fact that to many students, English is not a second language, but a third or even fourth language. In that view, individuals problems are caused by interference from different MIS. Teaching cannot be done on the basis of one -one constants of MIS target language features. Learning problems are caused not only by differences between the MIS and the target language but also comes from differences in between the culture, which constitute the roots of the languages. In this case realism in classroom approaches has to do with role of the teachers. There is a trend in language teaching, which would have the teacher abandon his role like "helper" or "informant".

(11) **GRADUATES FROM OTHER FIELDS OF EDUCATION USING TEACHING AS A STEPPING STONE:** My observation has also revealed that most of the graduates from different fields of education went into teaching profession, just as a stepping stone to more prestigious post. This lack of continuity among teachers who use teaching as a

stepping stone contributes adversely to low quality of teaching and learning English language.

### 5.3 SUGGESTION

The importance of teaching oral English cannot be over emphasised. That is why the researcher decided to pick it as an area of study. There is the need to turn out our students as good speakers of English language. They should be capable of speaking proficiently, understand and be understood. They should also be able to adhere to the generally accepted norms of English from the point of view of pronunciation and grammatical usage.

The study has shown that many factors are responsible to students poor performance in oral English from the light of the above. However, many strategies on the part of every one concerned are very necessary for the realization of this objective for this the following suggestion are made:-

1. There should be more periods for English lessons on the school time - table. A minimum of two periods of oral English lessons per week is hereby suggested.
2. School library and language laboratories should be made available in all secondary schools. These fountains of knowledge will enable students have access to more books and knowledge. They should be adequately equipped with relevant facilities which will inturn improve their speaking abilities.
3. Oral English should be taught as a separate subject in the curriculum.
4. Government should motivate teachers by increasing their salary so that they will discharge their duties effectively.
5. The secondary schools board should make it a sort of compulsion that spoken English be the order of the day both in side and out side the classroom by students and teachers.

6. Teachers should motivate their student when they are trying in terms, of spoken English by encouraging them with correct pronunciation.
7. There should be provision of oral English textbooks for the students usage by the Government.
8. The school authority should make it compulsory for every student to be bonafied and active participant of at least one of the literary clubs in the school. Especially the debate and drama club.
9. The teachers should spell out penalties for and student found speaking any vernacular within the school premises. Except English language.
10. The school authority should cultivate the tradition of inviting experts in English language at least six (6) times in a term in order to refresh the students memories on the importance of English language, world over.
11. Curriculum planners, teachers, students and the school authorities should put into consideration the different reasons mentioned which affect general performance in oral English by the students. Finally, if some or all the suggestions made in this project are implemented, such problem shall be reduced to the barest minimum.

#### 5.4 RECOMMENDATION

This project recommended that we must proceed in stages from simple to complex. This is for the fact that students cannot be expected to learn at once all that obtains in oral English. Until the suggestion made above are putting into practices

#### 5.5 SUMMARY

The researcher has used this opportunity to show the reasons or factors that militates against the general performances in oral English. The research was meant to get the clue on oral

English standard. It also explores the questions of the different varieties of secondary school English intelligibility, errors and variant. The project applies particularly to the teaching and learning of oral English. It covers almost all the factors that are responsible for the poor performance of oral English among S.S III students.

## 5.6 CONCLUSION

This research work has treated some of the problems affecting the students performance in oral English and has proffered some solutions to the problems. This research work will help the Government teachers, curriculum planners, students and parents to identify the reasons for poor performance in oral English and to make use of the recommended solutions listed in the work in order to improve students performances in oral English.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class of Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Instruction: In attempt to answer the questions tick the appropriate box below the question e.g. Are you a Nigerian? If yes tick the box

Yes  No

1. Do you have available text in oral English? Yes  No
2. How many oral English lessons do you have in a week?  
Once  Twice  Thrice  Others
3. Is there any penalty for speaking vernacular in class? Yes  No
4. How often do you listen to the English services of the B.B.C & V.O.A?  
Rarely  Sometimes  Often
5. Do you have a language laboratory in your School? Yes  No
6. Are your parent's literate? Yes  No
7. If yes for (6), what is your father's qualification?  
Grade II/WASC  NCE/OND  Degree  Others   
1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup>
8. Do you like oral English? Yes  No
9. When did you start oral English Classes?  
Primary  Higher Primary  Junior Sec. Sch.  Senior Sec. Sch.

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