



INTEGRATING INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

Adeyemi, B. B.

General and Entrepreneurial Studies Unit, Ondo State University of Science and Technology (OSUSTECH), Okitipupa
Corresponding author email: adeyemibeatrice163@yahoo.com

Abstract

The rapid development in science and technology has created avenues for language teachers to explore means of disseminating knowledge with technological-based devices. ICT is regarded as significant in transforming the nation and inculcating in learners long lasting skills. Technology can be utilized in teaching all kinds of learning activities in English. These tasks could include: oral presentation, comprehension, semantics, vocabulary, essay and letter writing. With technology, learners are exposed to face-to-face interactions with native speakers through all these technological tools and this gives them the chances of practising the English language. Teachers of language have access to use various electronic devices to support teaching and this assists in determining students' achievement in English. Most of the time, language teachers are left to work on their own devices because of non- provision or inadequate supply of these online tools. Language is best understood when opportunities are provided for students to use the given language in different situations. This study identified the various technological tools for the teaching and learning of English and concluded that effective teaching and learning of English required integrating information technology to enhance learners' level of proficiency and independency. The recommendation posited is that the government and the university management should provide technological know-how and sophisticated equipment in teaching English language. This is because what makes learners master key concepts in English is predominantly the level of training and facilities for teaching and learning.

Keywords: Integrating, Information Communication Technology (ICT), English Language, Higher Institutions

Introduction

Technological advancement has placed language learning in a position where various ICT facilities can be used in teaching it. Learning English has been a herculean task for learners because of the dynamic nature of the language. According to Bedi (2016), English is not static. The dialect is constantly changing and adjusting to new things in the world, with new words added to the English lexicon. To expand the scope of learners' vocabulary and skilful use of the language for

interaction, academic progress, researches and other functions, the lecturers need to utilize various technological devices to teach. The dexterity at which some students manipulate the computer indicates that incorporating ICT in teaching English course contents will provide a great forum for learning new ideas. However, there are other learners who have problems in accessing the internet and other telecommunication technologies for academic purposes. This inhibits their participating effectively in academic and

social activities. Ogbologo, et al (2014) opine that there are speculations that the products of our higher institutions are not competitive at the global level. This assertion was justified in the ranking profiles of Nigerian universities.

In Nigeria and even globally, the purpose of the universities is to engage the academic staff in teaching and learning, academic and research, administration and community engagement. The university academic as an examiner and a teacher is in a position to design courses to be taught based on the NUC benchmark as well as identify suitable means of curriculum delivery. Learners are engaged in different activities such as tutorials, lectures, seminars, presentation, debate, public speaking to make teaching activities interactive. Ehindero (2006) in a bid to explore the significant impact of teaching on learners states that it is a normative interactive human process involving complex decision making on different aspects of classroom interaction. The role of teachers remarkably put great responsibilities on them. The performance or negligence of these tasks would, to a large extent, bring out the quality of education given and, invariably the quality of output realised in the learners.

When English language lecturers sufficiently recognize and reinforce students' communicative skills through using ICT to support teaching activities, their interest and creative capabilities will be enhanced and sustained. Buntolo and Priyanto (2019) point out in their research that through self-recording video project, students are motivated to speak English without hesitation. They further reveal that the use of ICT facilitates the acquisition of basic skills. English language is used for information dissemination in most teaching and learning programmes and learners' ability to develop meaningful skills will determine their good standing within and outside the scope of the academic environment. ICT is a term which

encompasses any communication tool like radio, computer, cellular phones, television, network hardware and software, satellite systems, as well as video conferencing and distance learning (Buntolo et al. 2019). Realistically, most of these ICT devices for language teaching are not available for use in most science-oriented universities where English language is viewed as a routine course. This may not necessarily be the case in tertiary institutions where English is specified as a major course of study. The onus is on the government and the university management to look into the issue and provide adequately for functional English language teaching and learning for optimum efficiency.

This indicates that there should be practical provision of technological devices that could assist the English language lecturers to help students acquire impetus towards learning and for maximum performance in all areas. ICT has practically become inseparable from man's activities in the recent times. It has improved interaction and information dissemination in all sectors where it is adopted including the Education sector. It is a medium of instruction for most of the courses which makes it imperative for the students to master the basic skills of the subject. This study, therefore examines the importance of incorporating ICT (computers, the internet, electronic dictionary, CD Rom and others) in teaching English language. It explores the technological devices that could be used to aid English language teaching. It further looks into the challenges related to the utilization of ICT in English language teaching and identifies the advantages of integrating ICT in English classes.

Theoretical Framework

This study utilizes the theoretical framework of Vygotsky and Bandura. Vygotsky (1896-1934) was a Russian psychologist who proposed the Social Development Theory. His theory is one

of the fundamentals of Constructivism. He states the significant part social interaction plays in the development of cognition. He indicates that every function in the child's cultural development exist both in the social and individual level. The utilization of ICTs in teaching creates means by which various English concepts can be taught in an interactive social context to facilitate learning. The teacher and the students are active participants in thinking creatively, acquiring new ideas and solving challenges emanating from the world during the teaching-learning process. The impact of the interaction that occurs between them determines the mastery of required skills. Vygotsky's theory is also based on the potential for cognitive development that hinges on the "Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which depicts the difference between actual level of development as determined by independent problem solving under guidance or collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978). As students engage in different learning tasks that they cannot handle, they interact during the English classes with the help of technological devices where they acquire more collaborative skills that will assist their independent proficiency and performance. Verenikina (2010) posits that Vygotsky psychology and Activity Theory explain the way the computer connects into the user's real life activities thereby assisting to improve their performance. The role of computer and other technologies in teaching and learning cannot be overemphasised. The skills learners acquired with teachers' supervision and collaboration with peers with the utilization of ICT-devices in English Language lessons supersede working alone. Cole and Wertsch (2001, in Hall (2007) opine that sociocultural theories place the social

environment at the very centre of learning and without which, the development of the mind is impossible. According to Vygotsky (1978), experts use tools to mediate learning. Incorporating these tools in teaching English language will provide avenues for learners to interact meaningfully with their peers and the learning tasks. The English language teachers should improve their teaching skills through acquiring innovative technological knowledge that can help learners perform tasks that they are unable to complete on their own, adjusting where necessary as the level of learners' performance increases.

Bandura (1977) propounded the Social Learning Theory. He points out that people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modelling. He believes that humans are active information processors. The teacher through adequate preparation takes cognizance of the diverse background of the students and provides ICT tools that will effectively assist them to learn various activities relating to health, banks, government and all spheres of life. English Language is encompassing and using ICT devices in teaching it enables the students to observe, learn, imitate and create their own learning environment. Through this, they have a wide knowledge of ideas and resources that transcend their current domain. Virtual classroom presentation through video and audio assists in the retention of linguistic structure. Moreover, Bandura's self-efficacy concept according to Hatlevic and Hatlevic (2018) states the capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. For lecturers to impact learners significantly in English Language teaching, technology devices must be integrated. Social cognitive theory has been a widely accepted

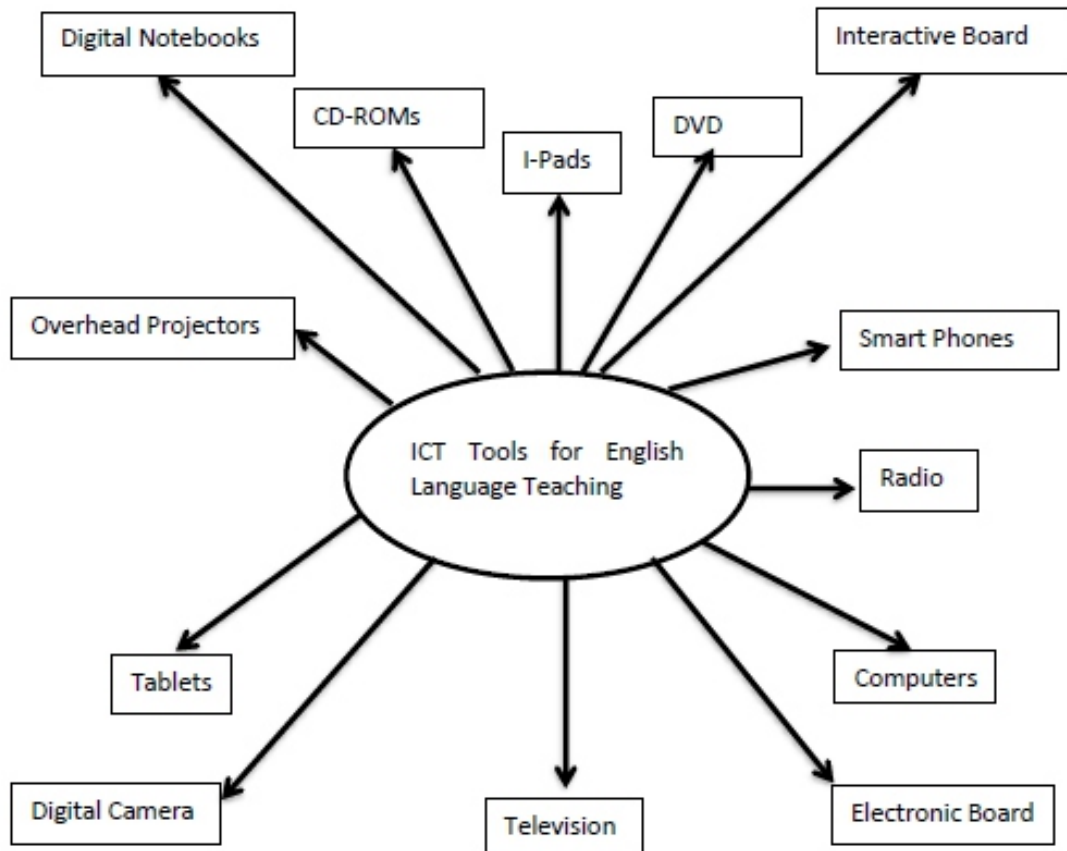
model for understanding and predicting human behaviour and identifying the method in which behaviour can be changed (Chen, et al., 2013).

Review of Literature

Many studies such as Solomon (1993), Wertsch (1991), Buntolo et al. (2019) have been conducted to explore the importance of ICT for language learning. Hall (2007) depicts that the cognitive opportunities of ICT when integrated with planning, enacting and assessment of both teaching and learning activities bring about a change of pedagogy. The utilization of technological tools affects teaching learning activities in this era of information explosion as learners acquire skills for independent reasoning and learning. Buntolo et al. (2019) explain that using ICT tools in teaching and learning actively through off-lined activities can assist learners in acquiring effective communicative competence in English lesson. These authors further maintain that ICT plays significant roles in education, but most lecturers are not really utilizing it in teaching. This indicates that the goal of using ICT in teaching English has not been adequately realised. In the view of Yang, et al., (1999), cited in Owodunni, et al., (2016), computer technology has the capacity to affect efficiency and productivity of education, thus educators must learn, through pre-service and in-service training activities, what the computer is and it can do. In Nigeria, there are a number of initiatives to create awareness for the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in teaching learning activities. These include National Policy on Computer Education, National Policy on Information Technology and the establishment of National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). This is with the aim of improving the resources use in teaching in the class as well as enhance teachers' skills to use ICTs to deliver curriculum content.

Cavus and Ibrahim (2008), cited in Chen et al., (2013) point out that with either synchronous or asynchronous communication through the internet, language learners can communicate and interact with other learners or native speakers of the target language throughout the world in a time-saving and cost-effective way. Appropriating the diverse benefits of ICT in teaching English will guide learners to proper processing and acquisition of knowledge. Learners will be able to discover new truth through the simulation of creative thinking.

There is no doubt that lack of skills in using ICTs by English language lecturers may affect the teaching of the subject. This was supported by the study carried out in 27 European countries by Empirica (2006) who came out with a report that teachers who do not use computers indicated lack of ICT skills as a constraining factor to teaching effectively. Similarly, Toprakci (2006) found out that low numbers of computers, oldness or slowness of ICT systems and scarcity of educational software in the school were obstacles to the successful ICT implementation in Turkish schools. In the same vein, Albirini (2006) conducted a research in Syrian schools and established the fact that insufficient computer resources were one of the major predicaments to the utilization of ICT in schools. From the above findings in various countries, it can be deduced that the major barriers impeding the use of ICT in English language classes in Nigeria cannot be totally divorced from their findings.



Source: Author (2019)

Cakici (2016) mentioned some of the ICT tools that can be used in teaching English such as computer assisted language learning (CALL) software, office applications (word, power point, drawing tools etc.), the inter websites and downloadable software, commercial course book CD-ROMs, DVD players, mobile phones, electronic dictionaries, digital cameras and videos, DAT recorders, document cameras, and data projectors. Livingstone (2012), cited in Cakici (2010) also states that ICT includes technologies specific to the school environment (e.g. interactive whiteboards) or applications used across formal or informal boundaries (e.g. education games) and networked technologies. Educational ICT tools have many advantages. They assist students to learn independently. In fact, they are

presented with numerous opportunities to improve in their acquisition of registers in different fields, word games, collocation and pictorial dictionary.

In selecting the technological tools to be used in the class, the ability of the learners and background should be put into consideration so as to choose the ones that will benefit them. There is no fixed procedure for teaching English language with ICT.

Harnessing ICT Multi-Purpose Function

Raider (2006) states that the most important things students can get out of their university experience is learning about real life and further developing the character. To make this assertion a reality, the learners' critical ability must be developed to generate ideas, through the integration of ICT in teaching. Various

learning activities should expose the students to using these devices. The increase in technological applications in the field of education particularly in the higher institution of learning cannot be jettisoned. Many new educational technologies are created almost daily to assist in teaching and in learning English. Information Technology tools have really changed the orientation of teachers of English language because they now have avalanche of opportunities to search for information and resources which were unavailable before.

Sharndama (2013) indicates that ICTs have made teaching and learning interactive and collaborative instead of the traditional teaching-talking and students listening approach. The availability of various social media has given students opportunities to contribute significantly during presentation, seminars and other teaching-learning activities. They have access to browse the internet on area of concentration before their presentation. The relevance of ICT devices is so encompassing in this technological age that English language lecturers need to incorporate them for effective teaching.

The lecturers should be conversant with the proper use of these social media. Ogbulogo et al (2014) opine that the importance of teaching and learning through this medium has the potential to promote any educational endeavours; assisting learners to use visual video, audio visual facilities, and software tool to collaborate on shared documents.

Technology has provided innumerable means by which students can access the internet, Facebook, e-dictionary, e-library to get information and materials to assist their studies and learning of English. Fotos and Browne (2014), cited in Chen et al (2013) pointed out that the integration of internet technology and language learning curriculum has shifted the focus from a teacher-centred classroom to a learner-centred environment which empower the

learner through control over lesson content and the learning process. Thus, to make the class atmosphere interactive and interesting during teaching activities, the teacher should endeavour to develop more interest in being versed in utilizing these tools in teaching English.

Challenges Associated with Utilization of ICT in English Language Teaching

The challenges of universities in Nigeria are many, beginning from lack of funding, no adequate communication gadgets, dearth of fund to procure computers and software, deterioration of physical facilities, paucity of updated computer, lack of language laboratory, unnecessary duplication of courses and programmes, no excursion because of large population of students and financial restrain as well as high ratio of students to lecturers. Lack or inadequate provision of basic ICT tools has resulted and affected teaching and learning English language. Also, there is the increasing cost of maintaining ICT applications. Erben et al (2009), cited in Andrade (2014) summarize the challenges in using technology in the English classes to be: technical difficulties, classroom management situations (that is, when a link on the website is affected, or when a server that hosts a website is temporarily down); security blocks place at some schools to prevent students from accessing questionable sites from school computers; quality and appropriateness of the technology or software or websites and classroom control. These challenges may slow down the completion of the course content for each semester, especially as the English lecturers have large students to teach.

Aside this, in using these technological tools, students may diversify and use the applications for other purposes which are not academics. Boella (2013), cited in Andrade (2014) states that the first drawback to using smart phones and tablets in the class is the potential for students to go off task and use their devices inappropriately, however Warner (2012) points out that students who are off-task do

not limit themselves, but they become disengaged and distract their peers. Students can overcome these challenges during English lectures if they are determined to gain maximally from discussions. Distractions will be minimized and profitable skills can be acquired.

Benefits of Integrating ICT in English Language Teaching

It is a reality that this modern time is the information age, the age of technology. At the heart of Information and Communication Technology is the internet. The internet makes all types of data transmissions faster. Therefore, the English language teachers should be versed in using most of these technological tools for teaching activities. Borges (2013) opines that when technological devices are combined with good teaching, engaging lessons, as well as a flexible approach that put into consideration the strengths and needs of students, they will culminate in rich and meaningful learning experiences. Utilizing the computers and other applications in the class provide great opportunities for learners. Language teachers should develop the positive attitudes of the benefits of using technology in lectures. Sabzian and Gilakjani (2013) mention that teachers should be convinced of the advantages derived from technology and learning.

Educational ICT tools present numerous classroom advantages. They assist students' autonomous learning and enable them to collect research information on topics in different areas. Through internet, there is access to interesting reading materials and suggestion for additional reading. Learners have ample opportunities to read newspapers, magazines and books. All these promote students learning ability. The benefit derived from incorporating technological tools to teach English language cannot be undermined. Language teachers can give assignments, classwork, group work that will enable the learners to make use of

technological tools. Language teachers can assist students to be creative in the different language skills by allowing them to use goggle drive, Facebook, screen casting, You-tube, and blogging in getting information and involving in interactive discussion.

According to Raiskinmwki (2017), technological devices bring new dimensions to the teaching of English. They benefit the teachers' work and provide the students with multiple new ways of doing exercises. Online encyclopaedias have provided avenues to tap into innumerable databases, libraries and reference books all around the world. In the past years, opportunities to getting access to information, books, references, e- learning, e- dictionary etc were limited or not even available; but currently there are many opportunities. The language teachers' should select the best technological tools that will make their teaching impactful and meaningful.

Conclusion

The relevance of the applications of ICT in teaching English language as a lingua franca has increased the scope of knowledge acquisition. Technological devices provide the students with a number of interactive opportunities and allow for independent learning. The sense of active participation that this can create is sufficient to catch the attention of the learners and keep them motivated throughout the period of the teaching activity. To this end, English language lecturers must be ICT literate so that they can incorporate ICT in teaching curriculum content. Learning in higher institution requires transmitting of knowledge and developing students' capability to use and test ideas and information. ICT significantly contribute to teachers' wealth of knowledge and their teaching effectiveness. Some of the various ICT tools that can enhance English language learning are blogging, video, database software, overhead projector, computer

and others. Through this, learners are exposed to ICT facilities, literary skills and resource sharing. However, the use of ICT is not to replace or reduce the teachers' efficacy, but to complement teaching and other means of disseminating knowledge. The lecturers will definitely participate actively in discussing the subject matter with the students; as a result, they will acquire the skills for sustainable development.

With the innumerable benefits that can be derived from incorporating ICT in teaching English language, it is therefore recommended that the Government should provide ICT tools and resources that would make the English Studies lecturers enjoy teaching activities. Language teaching must be planned in a way that the topics, learning activities and ICT devices selected should ensure that the objectives of the curriculum for English Studies are actualized. English language lecturers should continue to improve themselves in using ICT devices in teaching and for other academic endeavours. Language lecturers should be given opportunities to attend conferences where they can interact with other seasoned researchers and be exposed to new technological strategies in teaching for maximum efficiency.

References

Albirini, A. (2006). Teachers' attitudes toward information and communication technologies: The case of Syrian EFL teachers. *Computers & Education*, 47, 373 – 398.

Andrade, M.B L. (2014). Role of Technology in supporting English Language Learners in 70 days' classroom. *A research paper proposal submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Teaching, Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Ontario Institute of Studies in Education of the University of Toronto.*

Bandura, A. (1977). *Self-efficacy: The*

exercise of control. New York: W. H. Freeman.

Bedi, K. I. (2016). Dynamic nature of English language. *Imperial journal of Interdisciplinary Research (IJIR)*. 2(6) Retrieved online <http://www> on 5th July, 2019, pg. 14

Boella, L. (2013). Using Smart Phones and tablets in the classroom. *Croner Primary Education.*

Borges, D. (2013). Technology as part of the everyday classroom experience. SNOW. [Blog post]. Retrieved on June 17, 2019, from <http://snow.idrc.ocad.calnode1229>

Buntolo, P. J. & Priyanto S. (2019). The Use of ICT in English Practice at Mechanical Engineering Classes. *KnE Social Sciences* Volume 2019, 731 - 740 . Doi : 10.18502/kss.v3112.4145

Cakici, D. (2016). The Use of ICT in Teaching English as a foreign language. *Participatory Educational Research (PER)*, IV, pp. 73-77; Retrieved on Online at <http://wwwpartedres.com> on 11/7/2019

Cavus, N. & Ibrahim, D. (2008). m-Learning: An experiment in using SMS to support learning new English language words. *British Journal of Education Technology*: 40, 78-91

Chen, Y.C., Yeh, R. C., LOUIS. J., and Lin, Y.C., (2013). What drives a successful web-based Learning Environment? An empirical investigation of the critical factors influencing college students' learning satisfaction: *Procedia-social and Behavioural Sciences*, 103 pp. 1327- 1336.

Cole, M., & Wertsch, J. V. (2001). Behold the individual-social antimony in discussions of piaget and vygotsky. Retrieved on July 20, 2019 from <http://webpages.charter.net/schmolzel/vygotsky/colewertsch.htm/>

- Ehinderero, O. J (2006). *Professionalization: The Unfinished Business of Teacher Education*. In O. J. Ehinderero and F. O. Aladejana. Introduction to the Teaching Profession. Lagos: Literamid Publications Ltd.
- Empirica (2006). Benchmarking access and use of ICT in European schools 2006: Final report from Head Teacher and Classroom Teacher Surveys in 27 European countries. Germany: European Commission
- Erben, T., Ban. R. and Castaneda, M. E. (2009). *Teaching English Language Learners through Technology*. New York: Routledge.
- Ezeokoli F.O (2007). Method of Teaching Reading Comprehension. *A Paper Presented at the Skill Acquisition Workshop*. Osogbo, Osun State 7th Feb. 2007.
- Fotos, S. and Browne, C. (2014). *The development of CALL and current options*. In S. Fotos & C.M. Browne (eds). New perspective in CALL for second language classroom (pp. 3-14) Mahwah, NJ Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
- Hall, A. (2007). Vygotsky Goes online: Learning Design from a Socio-cultural Perspective, Learning and Socio-cultural Theory: Exploring Modern Vygotskian Perspectives. International Workshop 2007, (1). Available at: <http://rouow.edu.au//11rg/v011/iss1/6>
- Hatlevic, K. R. and Hatlevic, O. E. (2018). Examining the Relationship between Teachers' ICT Self-Efficacy for Educational Purposes, Collegial Collaboration, Lack of Facilitation and the Use of ICT in Teaching Practice. Online: doi.103389/fpsgg.2018-00935
- Kolawole, C. O. (2002). *Designing Content of the Curriculum. A guide to Practice*. Ibadan: MayBest Publications
- Livingstone, S. (2019). "Critical reflections Adeyemi, Coast, J. Fac. Sci. 1 (1): 65 - 74 on the benefits of ICT in Education," *Oxford Review of Education*, 38(1), 9-24.
- Ogbulogo, L. U., George, T.O., Olukanni D.O., (2014). Teaching Aids, Quality Delivery and Effective Learning Outcomes in a Nigerian Private University. *Proceedings of EDULEARN 14 conference*, Barcelona, Spain. Private University.
- Owodunni, C. S. Raymond, E. and Onatunde E. K., (2016). Computer Anxiety among Science and Technology Teachers. *Institute of Education* 28(2)
- Raider, T. (2006). Resources in Education. Available online at <http://www.freewebs.com/millienium>
- Raiskinmaki J. (2017). The Use of Technology Devices in English Teaching as Experienced by Teachers. Bachelor's thesis, Department of language and Communication Studies English. University of Jyväskylä
- Sabzian, F. & Gilakjani A. P. (2013). Teachers' attitudes about computer technology training, professional development, integration, experience, anxiety, and literacy in English language teaching and learning. *International Journal of Applied Science and Technology*. (3)1. 67-75
- Solomon G., (1993). *On the nature of pedagogic computer tools: the case of the writing partner* in Lajole S.P and Derry S.J. (eds). Computers as cognitive tools. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Association.
- Sharndama, E. C. (2013). Application of ICTs in Teaching and Learning (ELT) in Large Classes. *Journal of Arts and Humanities (JAH)*, 2(6): 34 – 39.
- Toprakci, E. (2006). Ostacles at integration of schools into information and communication technologies by taking into consideration the

- opinions of the teachers and principals of primary and secondary schools in Turkey. *Journal of Instructional Science and Technology* (e-JIST), 9(1), 1–16.
- Unoh S.O., (1995). *Studies on reading in English*. Nigeria. Lagos: Heinemann Educational books Plc pg.34- 52
- Verenikina, I. M. (2010). Vygotsky in Twenty-First-Century research papers (Archive), Research Online, Australia.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard: University Press, Cambridge MA.
- Warner, T. (2012). The Use of a SMART table on task behaviour. Retrieved on July 13, 2019 from <http://downloads01.smarttech.com/media/research/internationalresearch/usa/smarttableontaskpaper.pdf>
- Wertsch I.V. (1991). *Voices of the Mind: A Sociocultural Approach to Mediated Action*. New York: Simon and Schuster International Group.
- Yang, H. H., Mohamed D and Beyerbach B., (1999). An Investigation of Computer Anxiety among Vocational Technical Teachers. *Journal of Industrial Teacher Education*. 37(1)