

**Assessment of Language Laboratory and Teaching and Learning of English Language Pronunciation among Undergraduate Students in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions**

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***Abstract:** The study made an assessment of language laboratory and teaching and learning of English language pronunciation among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. In order to carry out this study, specified research objective was developed from which and used for the study. The research design for this study is an Expost Facto design. The population of this study consisted of all HND II students in Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua, Ikot Ekpene in 2019/2020 academic session. The sample size for the study is 302 respondents, representing 10% of the student population. The Multi-stage sampling was used to select the respondents. The instrument was validated by two research experts. Data from the completed questionnaires was subjected to percentage analysis. The findings showed and concluded that there is significant effect of language laboratory and teaching and learning of English language pronunciation among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The study recommended that, Since lecturers quality was significantly related to students' achievement in English Language pronunciation, lecturers should possess the requisite qualifications before being recruited to teach. Furthermore, the English language lecturers should adopt better teaching strategies during the teaching-learning process.*

***Keywords:** Language; Laboratory; Teaching; Learning; Pronunciation; Students etc.*

### 1. Introduction

The primary purpose of teaching at any level of education is to bring a fundamental change in the learner in terms of literacy, numeracy and skills attainments (Tebabal & Kahssay, 2011). To facilitate the process of knowledge transmission, teachers and lecturers should adopt appropriate teaching methods that are capable of bringing about the attainment of specific teaching and learning objectives. In the traditional era, many teaching practitioners widely applied. Studies have revealed that, regular poor academic performance by the majority students is fundamentally linked to application of ineffective teaching methods by lecturers to impact knowledge to learners (Hightower, 2011). Substantial research on the effectiveness of teaching methods indicates that the quality of teaching is often reflected by the achievements of learners.

According to the oxford advanced learners dictionary, Language Laboratory is a room in a school or college that contains special equipments to help students learn foreign languages by listening to tapes, CDs, watching of videos or DVDs recording themselves etc. Language laboratories according to David Wilson and Thayalan (2007) provides a facility which allows students to listen to model pronunciations, repeat and record the sounds, listen to their performance and compare with the model and do self assessment. It is a room equipped with audio and visual equipment to aid people learning a foreign language. A modern language laboratory consists of various elements that form a multifunctional environment that uses the latest technology for education. Language laboratories should have furniture that is capable of securely holding all the elements that are part of the laboratory. Computers are important too. A language laboratory has a specific technology that enables the interconnection, interaction and communication between the different positions that make up the lab.

The language laboratory gives every learner the freedom to learn at their own pace. It does not require the teacher's presence at all times. Teachers can however, assistance to students individually or collectively. In fact, the language laboratory is a very helping tool for practicing and assessing one's speech in a language. Language laboratory is used learning pronunciation and all other aspect of the phonetics of a language. The significance of a language laboratory con not be overemphasized in the domain of communication. The language laboratory, exist to help one use technology effectively to communicate. According to Richards (2001) to acquire the sensibility of the sounds and rhythm of a language, one has to hear the best samples of all spoken language. This declaration was further corroborated by David Wilson and Thayalan (2007) who opined that language laboratory is required by any language learner to have a good command of the language for communication purposes, with clarity and accuracy being vital for effective and efficient communication.

### 2. Theoretical Framework

#### **Cognitive Theory of Learning of Edward Tolman**

In the 1930s, Edward Tolman proposed a theory of learning called cognition. He did not accept the behaviourist theory, which states that, "Behaviour was an automatic response to an event". Tolman's theory proposed that there are paths, which we can follow, and tools that we can use to achieve our goals. Among Tolman's ideas was that one acts as if a particular type of behavior will lead to a certain goal. Tolman's theory was somehow based the belief that we expect specific outcomes to elicit specific behaviour (Resnick and Klepfer, 1989). What distinguishes Tolman's theory of cognition from other theory is that, it states that learning can occur without reinforcement. It is said that motivation in the context of

cognitive theory has two purposes;

- (1) To allow internal tension to create a demand for the goal, and
- (2) To establish the events that one will concentrate on.

Tolman's theory gained wide acceptance in the 1960s, and several researchers began expanding upon his work, including Julian Rotter. In cognitive theory, it is believed that when one encounters new experiences, the past experience will guide one's action. For instance, one who has a serious headache goes to the hospital to consult the physician and learn that he is having migraine and medical treatment for migraine is taking of Panadol 2 tablets thrice a day and Analgin 2 tablets twice a day. From this, one is able to imbibe the knowledge on how to treat such a medical problem.

Under cognitive learning theory, it is believed that learning occurs when a learner processes information indepthly and appropriately in a class room setting for a corresponding learning outcomes. The cognitive theory of learning is relevant to this study in that the study was on teachers teaching strategies and students' academic outcomes in social studies. The theory was related to this study in that students the academic outcomes focuses on the mind and attempt to model how information is received, assimilated, stored and recalled. For instance, if a learner attends school, pays attention to a teacher and study, then the anticipated result is a good grade. That is, one can learn from past experience, but if one is motivated enough to turn motivation to behaviour.

### 3. Research Purpose

This study guided by:

To examine the effect of language laboratory and teaching and learning of English language pronunciation among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions

### 4. Research Questions

This study would answer the question:

What is the effect of language laboratory and teaching and learning of English language pronunciation among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions?

## 5. RESEARCH METHOD

### Design of the study

The researcher employed Ex-post-facto design to conduct the study. Ex-post-facto design is also referred to as Causal Comparative Design. It is a non-experimental design in which the researcher examines the effect of independent variables that cannot be manipulated on the dependent variables.

### Area of the Study

The area of the study of this research is Akwa Ibom State

### Population of the study

The population of this study consisted of all HND II students in Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua, Ikot Ekepen in 2019/2020 academic session.

### Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for the study is 302 respondents, representing 10% of the student population. The Multi-stage sampling was used for the study; Firstly, A 10% of the total population of students in the faculties was selected. Secondly faculties were clustered into departments. Thirdly, a simple random selection through "Hat" and "Draw" method was used in selecting three (3) departments from each of the faculty. Finally, proportionate sampling technique was used to select the sample size for each of the sampled department.

### Instrumentation

The research instrument used for the study was questionnaire. The instruments elicited information on the independent and dependent variables. Information on the pupils' performance was also elicited. Likert (1932) modified scale of measurement was used in the study. The research instrument was made up of three sections; A, B, and C. Section A, focused on the personal data of the respondents. Section B measured the constructs of the independent and dependent variables using five items each making up 20 items.

### Validity of the Instrument

The questionnaire was face validated by submitting it to the supervisor who went through and point out the poorly worded items and gave suggested additions and modifications to the items.

### Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered to the sampled GNS students after obtaining permission from the HODs on presentation of a letter of introduction. All the questions on the questionnaire were read to the students to avoid any misunderstanding. On the spot method was used to administer the questionnaire. This method adopted by the researcher to ensure that time was judiciously utilized and to avoid missing copies of the questionnaire. At the end, all the copies distributed were collected for subsequent analysis

#### 6. Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical technique such as descriptive statistics for research questions

#### 7. Results and Discussion

**Table 1: Analysis of Usage of language laboratories helps students perform better in speaking skill.**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	88	29.13
Agree	75	24.83
Neutral	46	15.23
Disagree	42	13.90
Strongly Disagree	51	16.88
Total	302	100

The above table shows the analysis of 88 respondent representing 29.13 who strongly agree that using language laboratories helps students perform better in speaking skill, followed by 75 respondent representing 24.83 Agree, 46 respondent representing 15.23 were Neutral, 42 respondent representing 13.90 Disagree while 51 respondent representing 16.88 Strongly Disagree

**Table 2: Analysis of Language laboratories motivate students towards speaking skill.**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	46	15.23
Agree	51	16.88
Neutral	88	29.13
Disagree	75	24.83
Strongly Disagree	42	13.90
Total	302	100.0%

The above table shows the analysis of 46 respondent representing 15.23 who strongly agree that Language laboratories motivate students towards speaking skill, followed by 51 respondent representing 16.88 Agree, 88 respondent representing 29.13 were Neutral, 75 respondent representing 24.83 Disagree while 42 respondent representing 13.90 Strongly Disagree

**Table 3: Analysis of Students benefits when using language laboratories.**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	79	6.125
Agree	91	30.13
Neutral	77	25.49
Disagree	36	11.92
Strongly Disagree	19	6.29
Total	302	100.0%

The above table shows the analysis of 79 respondent representing 6.125 who strongly agree that Students get different benefits when using language laboratories, followed by 91 respondent representing 30.13 Agree, 77 respondent representing 25.49 were Neutral, 36 respondent representing 11.92 Disagree while 19 respondent representing 6.29 Strongly Disagree

**Table 4: Analysis of whether Language laboratories provide native speaker's environments for practicing speaking skill**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	77	25.49
Agree	91	30.13
Neutral	79	26.15
Disagree	19	6.29
Strongly Disagree	36	11.92
Total	302	100.0%

The above table shows the analysis of 77 respondent representing 25.49 who strongly agree that Language laboratories provide native speaker's environments for practicing speaking skill., followed by 91 respondent representing 30.13 opted for Agree, 79 respondent representing 26.15 were Neutral, 19 respondent representing 6.29 Disagree while 36 respondent representing 11.92 Strongly Disagree

**Table 5: Analysis of whether Students enjoy listening activities in laboratories**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	76	25.16
Agree	89	29.47
Neutral	49	16.22
Disagree	55	18.21
Strongly Disagree	33	10.92
Total	302	100.0%

The above table shows the analysis of 76 respondent representing 25.16 who strongly agree that Students enjoy listening activities in laboratories, followed by 89 respondent representing 29.47 Agree, 49 respondent representing 16.22 were Neutral, 55 respondent representing 18.21 Disagree while 33 respondent representing 10.92 Strongly Disagree

**Table 6: Analysis of whether Language laboratories develop students' pronunciation.**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	89	29.47
Agree	55	18.21
Neutral	76	25.16
Disagree	33	10.92
Strongly Disagree	49	16.22
Total	302	100.0%

The above table shows the analysis of 89 respondent representing 29.47 who strongly agree that Students get different benefits when using language laboratories, followed by 55 respondent representing 18.21 Agree, 76 respondent representing 25.16 were Neutral, 33 respondent representing 11.92 Disagree while 19 respondent representing 6.29 Strongly Disagree

**Table 8: Analysis of response whether Language laboratories provide more interactive activities for speaking skill.**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	88	29.13
Agree	75	24.83
Neutral	46	15.23
Disagree	42	13.90
Strongly Disagree	51	16.88
Total	302	100.0%

The above table shows the analysis of 88 respondent representing 29.13 who strongly agree that Language laboratories provide more interactive activities for speaking skill, followed by 75 respondent representing 24.83 Agree, 46 respondent representing 15.23 were Neutral, 42 respondent representing 13.90 Disagree while 51 respondent representing 16.88 Strongly Disagree

**Table 9: Analysis of responses whether Language laboratories help students practice the features of connected speech (stress and intonation).**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	92	30.46358
Agree	83	27.48344
Neutral	49	16.22517
Disagree	58	19.2053
Strongly Disagree	20	6.622517
Total	302	100.0%

The above table shows the analysis of 92 respondent representing 30.46 who strongly agree that Language laboratories help students practice the features of connected speech, followed by 83 respondent representing 27.48 Agree, 49 respondent representing 16.22 were Neutral, 58 respondent representing 19.20 Disagree while 20 respondent representing 6.62 Strongly Disagree

**Table 10: Analysis of response whether Learners of English language face difficulties in pronouncing the segmental features of English sounds (vowels and consonants).**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	58	19.20
Agree	83	27.48
Neutral	20	6.62
Disagree	92	30.46
Strongly Disagree	49	16.22
Total	302	100.0%

The above table shows the analysis of 58 respondent representing 19.20 who strongly agree that Learners of English language face difficulties in pronouncing the segmental features of English sounds, followed by 83 respondent representing 27.48 Agree, 20 respondent representing 6.62 were Neutral, 92 respondent representing 30.46 Disagree while 49 respondent representing 16.22 Strongly Disagree

#### 8. Recommendations

Considering the findings and discussions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

Since lecturers quality was significantly related to students' achievement in English Language pronunciation, lecturers should possess the requisite qualifications before being recruited to teach. Furthermore, the English language lecturers

should adopt better teaching strategies during the teaching-learning process. That the search light of blame on poor performance in English Language should be re-focused on areas such as poor language laboratory classes, home-task given and preparation/utility teaching aids by the English Language lecturers. Instruction resource should be provided in school by the government since instructional materials make teaching real and facilitate learners understanding. Government should provide enough textbook for each discipline. Government should provide a conducive and classroom environment to the universities. Government should always assist in provision of laboratory, library and health service to enhance the academic achievement in English Language.

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