

The Effects of Audio-Lingual Strategy on Secondary School Students' Achievement in Oral English in Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the effect of audio-lingual strategy on secondary school students' achievement in Oral English in Ogun State, Nigeria. Oral English is a vital aspect of English Language learning that enhances learners' listening and speaking skills. However, students' achievement in Oral English has remained unsatisfactory, partly due to the continued use of conventional lecture-based instructional approaches. The study therefore examined whether the audio-lingual strategy would improve students' achievement in Oral English. The study adopted a pretest-posttest non-randomized quasi-experimental design. The population comprised Junior Secondary School II students in public secondary schools in Ogun State. A total of 800 students participated in the study, with 400 students assigned to the experimental group and 400 to the control group. The Students' Oral English Achievement Test (SOEAT) with a reliability coefficient of 0.82 was used for data collection. Students in the experimental group were taught using the audio-lingual strategy, while those in the control group were taught using the lecture method. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that students taught using the audio-lingual strategy obtained a higher mean achievement score (Mean = 10.14, SD = 3.07) than those taught using the lecture method (Mean = 7.45, SD = 2.78). ANCOVA results further showed a significant main effect of treatment on students' achievement in Oral English ($F(1,795) = 54.160, p < .05$). The study concluded that the audio-lingual strategy was more effective than the lecture method in improving students' Oral English achievement. It was therefore recommended that English Language teachers should integrate audio-lingual activities such as dialogue practice, imitation, repetition drills, and listening exercises into Oral English instruction.

Keywords: Audio-lingual strategy, Direct method, Lecture method, Oral English, Achievement, Listening skills, Speaking skills.

Introduction

A method of teaching that gives prominence to listening and speaking before reading is referred to as the audio-lingual method. The rationale behind this method is to assist learners in developing accurate pronunciation skills and effective conversational competence, which will inevitably enhance their reading ability (Thomson & Derwing, 2015; Kamidi et al., 2025; Ash'ari & Ma'rifatulloh, 2025). This method encourages learners to hear the spoken language first before speaking it, without relying on the language of their immediate background. In other words, the method enables the teacher to introduce the language in a natural manner, similar to the way a native speaker uses language for communication (Park, 2015; Suwartono &

Rafli, 2015).]

Ahmad et al., (2017) opined that the audio-lingual method promotes effective speaking skills because it gives learners opportunities to practise sentence patterns repeatedly. He argues that constant oral drills and teacher modelling improve students' confidence, pronunciation accuracy, and oral communication skills. Based on the submissions by various researchers, the use of audio lingual method for teaching oral English is very important for building effective listening skills in learners, particularly learners of English language as the second language (ESL). This is because ability to hear the correct model of pronunciation will help them to master articulatory phonetics and their various patterns

of pronunciation such as stress, rhythm and intonation (Budiata, 2019). Corroborating this last statement is the remarks credited to Ismail and Aziz et al., (2020) , that giving priority to aural -oral (audio lingual) method of teaching before reading and writing would help learners' proficiency skills and make them better participants in classroom discussions and interaction, which are the foundation stone for effective communication competence.

The lecture method on the other hand, is one of the oldest and most widely used instructional approaches in classroom teaching. It is a teacher-centred method in which the teacher assumes the primary responsibility of presenting information, explaining concepts, and directing classroom activities, while learners play largely passive roles. The method relies heavily on narration, explanation, note-giving, and verbal presentation of facts with limited opportunities for learner participation and interaction.

According to Tshering (2024), the lecture method involves the systematic presentation of knowledge by the teacher to students, with learners expected to receive and internalise information transmitted during instruction. Similarly, Saira and Hafeez (2021) observed that the method places considerable emphasis on teacher's talk and allows minimal student involvement in the teaching-learning process.

Although the lecture method is useful for introducing concepts, organizing content, and managing large classes, its effectiveness in developing practical language skills such as listening, speaking, pronunciation, and oral communication is often limited. This is because learners are provided with fewer opportunities for active participation, oral practice, and communicative interaction. Consequently, many scholars advocate the use of learner-centred approaches such as the audio-lingual strategy for the teaching of Oral English. Therefore, the purpose of this academic discourse is to investigate the effect of audio -

lingual and lecture methods on the teaching and learning of oral English among Ogun State junior secondary school students.

Conceptual Review

To avoid incessant mother tongue interference while using the second language, teaching and learning using audio-lingual method with repetitive pronunciation drill is very germane. Audio-lingual method proponents believe that the use of dialogue, memorisation and pronunciation practices are likely to bring out the best in learners as they will become active participants as against mere passive recipient of knowledge (Yusuf & Bello, 2017). According to Abdulsalam and Yaad (2021), this method is good for developing oracy skills through repetitive use of different language segments - mimicry, drills and dialogue, which will on the long run, bring about inductive teaching of grammar rather than monotonous explicit explanation of grammatical items. The audio lingual method promotes children's speaking and listening skills by engaging them fully in constant interaction and practical listening, required for developing flawless and smooth pronunciation. Researchers such as Putra et al. (2022) opined that the Audio-Lingual Method helps to instil confidence in learners' ability to converse freely and effectively with their peers through continuous speaking practice and oral drills.

Investigation conducted by Ebrahimi and Elahifar (2021) confirmed the supremacy of audio lingual method over conventional lecture method of teaching by stressing that learners exposed to teaching and learning through audio-method outperformed their colleagues that were taught by conventional lecture method in listening and speaking skills.

Using Richard and Rodger (2014) parametre, the audio-lingual method emphasis is on habit formation using repetition, dialogue, memorisation and pattern drills. Based on these scholars' assertion, this should be the best techniques to stimulate oracy. They however cautioned that it has to be introduced systematically starting with listening and

speaking before introducing the other parts of communication skills, first, the reading and thereafter, writing. Expressing the same views albeit, differently, Umarkulova (2024) advocates a caution in the use of the method, stressing that it must be balanced with sufficient communicative activities, so that learners can use language meaningfully in real life situation.

Arising from the explanation thus far stressed, in this discourse, is that oral English teaching should be taught through communicative use of language rather than only isolated sounds. Not that the isolated sounds should not be taught at all, but this should be taught only when it matters most with attention on both the segmental (consonant and vowel sounds), and the supra-segmental (prosody features) segments of the language. The bottom line in the position just stressed is that oral English should be taught with emphasis on learners' functional curriculum aimed at bringing out communicative competence, interactive learner-centred approach that leads to oral proficiency and awareness of sound structure, as advocated by (Adegbite, 2005; Baker, Noordin & Rasali, 2019; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Inherent in our discussion so far, are a number of techniques that can be adopted to help learners become an adept in pronunciation skills. Some of these are:

- A) Imitation
- B) Explanation technique
- C) Comparing and contrasting
- D) Mimicry memorization

Imitation: This is useful for modeling learners to make correct pronunciation or sound out words or match letters with sounds accurately. This technique, also referred to as modeling style, is a style in which the teacher is looked up to by the learners as a role model. As the tutor pronounces the words with demonstration, the learners listen and observe with wrap attention, to imitate the teacher's pronunciation (Olagunju, 2018 & Okoye, 2015).

Explanation technique: This requires assistance or aid in any form to explain the process involved in speech -sound production

(Onuigbo, 2010 & Egbokhare, 2011) **Compare and contrast technique:** The students are usually presented with the phonological items of their native language (L1), as well as those of the second language (L2). The similarities and the differences inherent in these two language segments would then be explicitly explained, to bring about thorough mastery of the differences in the pronunciation features of these sounds.

The mimicry-memorization technique, as briefly stated earlier, requires the assistance of a native speaker of the target language who serves as a model for learners. The learners, in turn, acquire the second language (L2) through imitation and repetition of the model provided (Hidayati, 2018; Eze & Okafor, 2019; Onyema & Nwosu, 2020). This aligns with the definition offered by Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, and Pincas (1980), who described the audio-lingual method as a teaching approach in which oral imitation, memorisation, and drilling precede spontaneous speech, with extensive use of recorded dialogues and drills. However, the present researchers are of the opinion that the definition provided by these scholars places greater emphasis on some of the instructional devices employed, such as recorded dialogues, to demonstrate techniques like drilling, imitation, and memorisation during classroom instruction, rather than offering a comprehensive definition of the audio-lingual method itself.

These, and all others earlier listed in the preceding paragraphs, are techniques in which audio-lingual method can be effectively implemented in oral English classroom activity. Techniques deal with the over all implementation of some specific methods based on a specific approach. The approach under which the audio-lingual method of teaching emanated from is the structuralist school of linguistics in Geneva, championed by Ferdinand de Saussure, reputed to be the father of the modern linguistics. Suffice it to submit that the the audio-lingual method is grounded in structural linguistics and behaviorist learning theory.

Gadgets such as tape recorders, television sets, films and other language laboratory materials (contrivances), are usually deployed to aid these techniques in the classroom. Williams (1990) highlighted the following characteristics of the method: (a) Choral practices with learners and the teacher. (b) Questioning by telling the students to work out the rules of generalization after they are able to manipulate the structures (p.23). Parts of what the teacher does is subjecting the learners to series of exercises such as writings to validate what has been practiced orally in speech. It has been widely used in countries such as the U.S.A; France (where it was known as the “‘audio-visual method’”, Britain, where it was known as ‘Teacher Audio-visual Oral’ “ (Araromi, 2005, p.5).

One of the reasons for the preference of audio-lingual method for the teaching and learning of oral English is that the lecture method is an old teaching method. It will not be out of place to also refer to it as the conventional method based on teacher - centred approach to teaching. The teacher is the Alpha and Omega of this method. He does much of the talking and provides little or no opportunity for the learners to engage in the teaching / learning process. Based on Tshering’s submission, it involves systematic presentation of knowledge by the teachers to the learners, where information is expected to be disseminated by the teacher to the students directly, thus leaving them to fathom this information themselves (Tshering, 2024)

Similarly, Saira and Hafeez (2021) affirmed the statement just raised. Learners’ hope is on the teacher as he is expected to dish out instruction with learner’s minimal participation (Saira & Hafeez, 2021). This method wholly depends on “narration, explanation, note giving and verbal presentation”(page unspecified) as stated by these authors.

Irrespective of the advantages of audio-lingual method just stressed in this discourse, many teachers still rely heavily on lecture

method instead of learner-centred instructional strategies such as the audio-lingual strategy. Consequently, students are unable to develop effective oral communication skills required for successful performance in English Language examinations and real-life communication. Although the lecture method has been credited to be useful for starting and arranging concepts in the classroom during the early segment of teaching. The problem, however, is that it limits students’ communicative engagement, particularly, if it is solely depends upon without interactive activities (Prayogi, et al., 2025). To sum up this argument, the lecture method of teaching can be perceived as a conventional method of teaching approach in which the teacher becomes the centre of attraction as he controls and dominates the classroom activities. Learners are only passive recipient of knowledge.

Eyou and Lawal (2024) did a comparative study of audio - lingual and lecture methods of teaching on students’ oral English achievement in the Republic of Benin. The study conducted, using quasi experimental design revealed that students exposed to audio-lingual method of teaching exhibited greater fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and oral performance than those taught with conventional lecture method. The use of audio -lingual activities like drills, repetition and dialogue practice were thereafter, recommended.

Ebrahimi and Elahifar (2021) compared audio-lingual and lecture method in the teaching and learning of speaking and listening skills. The results of this study indicated that the learners exposed to audio- lingual method of instruction significantly did well more than those of conventional group. The researchers concluded that constant oral drills and imitation are reliable measure of learners’ speaking competence. Also, it has been confirmed by other researchers that students exposed to the Audio-Lingual Method tend to perform better in speaking competence than those taught using traditional lecture-based methods (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Brown, 2007).The

post test results of Alhomaïdan (2018) on lecture and audio-lingual method of teaching oral English also confirmed that students taught or exposed to audio-lingual method of teaching oral English performed well in speaking competence than those taught with other traditional methods. The study therefore, laid emphasis on teaching oral English classes with repetitive oral practice, and structured pronunciation drills to boost oral English teaching. The findings of Iyorza (2015) blamed the problem of poor oral performance on conventional lecture-oriented approaches for the teaching of oral English.

These empirical evidences indicated the importance of audio-lingual strategy as a reliable method for teaching oral English much more than the lecture method. Standing on these various submissions, the intention of these researchers is to therefore, reexamine or replicate this study in Ogun state schools. This becomes necessary in this age of advanced digital technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) teaching tools. This study therefore investigated the effects of audio-lingual and lecture method of teaching on junior secondary school students' achievement in Oral English in Ogun State.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Behaviourist Learning Theory as propounded by B. F. Skinner (1957). Behaviourism views language learning as a process of habit formation achieved through stimulus, response, repetition, reinforcement, and practice. According to the theory, learners acquire language habits when they are repeatedly exposed to correct language models and are reinforced through continuous practice.

The audio-lingual strategy derives its principles from behaviourist psychology and structural linguistics. The strategy emphasizes listening, imitation, memorisation, dialogue practice, and pattern drills through which learners internalise correct language forms. Frequent repetition of language structures helps learners develop automatic and accurate

responses in communication situations. Reinforcement provided by the teacher further strengthens desirable language habits and pronunciation patterns.

The relevance of this theory to the present study lies in its explanation of how students can improve their Oral English achievement through repeated exposure to correct pronunciation models and structured oral practice. Since Oral English requires mastery of stress, rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation, the audio-lingual strategy provides opportunities for learners to acquire these skills through imitation and repetition. The theory therefore provides a suitable explanation for the expected improvement in students' achievement when exposed to audio-lingual instructional activities.

Statement of the Problem

Oral English occupies a strategic position in the English Language curriculum because it develops learners' listening and speaking competencies, which are essential for effective communication and academic success. Mastery of Oral English enables learners to pronounce words correctly, use appropriate stress and intonation patterns, and communicate fluently in both academic and social contexts. Consequently, curriculum planners and language educators expect secondary school students to demonstrate a reasonable level of proficiency in Oral English.

Despite its importance, students' achievement in Oral English has remained unsatisfactory in many Nigerian secondary schools. Reports of public examination bodies, particularly the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), have consistently highlighted candidates' weaknesses in pronunciation, stress placement, intonation, and listening comprehension. These deficiencies continue to affect students' overall performance in English Language and limit their communicative competence.

One factor that may be responsible for this persistent poor achievement is the continued reliance on conventional teacher-centred

instructional methods, particularly the lecture method. The lecture method provides limited opportunities for active learner participation, oral practice, listening activities, imitation, and pronunciation drills that are necessary for the development of Oral English skills. As a result, many students remain passive recipients of knowledge rather than active participants in the learning process.

Several studies have reported the effectiveness of the audio-lingual strategy in improving learners' listening and speaking abilities. However, most of these studies were conducted outside the Nigerian context or in different learning environments, making it difficult to generalise their findings to secondary schools in Ogun State. Furthermore, the increasing emphasis on digital technologies and artificial intelligence-assisted instruction has shifted attention away from traditional language teaching strategies such as the audio-lingual approach, thereby creating the need to re-examine its effectiveness in contemporary classroom settings.

It is against this background that this study investigated the effects of audio-lingual strategy on secondary school students' achievement in Oral English in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study sought to determine whether the use of audio-lingual strategy would significantly improve students' achievement in Oral English when compared with the conventional lecture method.

Research Questions

- (1) Is there any significant effect of audio-lingual strategy on students' achievement in Oral English?
- (2) What difference exists between the achievement mean scores of students taught Oral English using audio-lingual strategy and those taught using lecture method?

3. Hypotheses

H₀ : There is no significant main effect of audio-lingual strategy on students' achievement in Oral English.

Methodology

The study adopted a pretest-post-test non-randomized quasi-experimental design. The population comprised all Junior Secondary School II students in public secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria. Four Local Government Areas were randomly selected from Ogun State. Forty secondary schools were selected using simple random sampling technique. Twenty schools were assigned to the experimental group, while twenty schools were assigned to the control group. A total of 800 students participated in the study. The instrument used for data collection was the Students' Oral English Achievement Test (SOEAT) developed by the researchers. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.82 using Kuder-Richardson Formula 21 (KR-21). The experimental group was taught Oral English using audio-lingual strategy, while the control group was taught using lecture method. Pretest and posttest were administered to both groups. Data collected were analysed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Achievement in Oral English by Treatment Group

Treatment Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Audio-lingual Strategy	400	10.14	3.07
Lecture Method	400	7.45	2.78
Total	800	8.80	3.02

Corrected Interpretation

Table 1 shows that students exposed to audio-lingual strategy obtained a higher mean score (Mean = 10.14, SD = 3.07) than students taught using lecture method (Mean = 7.45, SD = 2.78). This indicates that audio-lingual strategy improved students' achievement in Oral English.

ANCOVA Table

Table 2: ANCOVA Showing Main Effect of Audio-lingual Strategy on Students' Achievement in Oral English

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Model	3447.919	2	1723.960	76.962	.000	.438
Intercept	7511.337	1	7511.337	1341.303	.000	.629
Pretest	7.705	1	7.705	1.377	.241	.002
Treatment	303.042	1	303.042	54.160	.000*	.060
Error	4429.630	795	5.595			
Total	85279.000	800				
Corrected Total	7877.549	799				

Table 2 reveals that there was a significant main effect of audio-lingual strategy on students' achievement in Oral English ($F(1,795) = 54.160$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The partial eta squared value of 0.060 indicates that treatment accounted for 6.0% of the variance observed in students' posttest achievement scores in Oral English.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that audio-lingual strategy significantly improved students' achievement in Oral English. Students exposed to the strategy obtained higher mean achievement scores than those taught using the lecture method. This suggests that active participation in dialogue practice, repetition drills, imitation, and listening exercises enhanced learners' mastery of pronunciation and oral communication skills.

The finding supports the Behaviourist Learning Theory, which maintains that language learning occurs through habit formation, repetition, and reinforcement. Through constant exposure to correct pronunciation models and structured oral practice, learners gradually develop desirable speech habits and improved

oral proficiency.

The result is consistent with the findings of Thomson and Derwing (2015), who reported that systematic pronunciation instruction improves learners' oral language performance. Similarly, Kamidi, Mukrim, Hastini, and Mertosono (2025) found that the audio-lingual method significantly enhanced learners' pronunciation achievement through repetitive oral practice and imitation. The finding also corroborates that of Ash'ari and Ma'rifatulloh (2025), who reported that students taught through the audio-lingual method demonstrated better pronunciation performance than those taught using conventional instructional approaches.

Furthermore, the finding agrees with Ebrahimi and Elahifar (2021), who established that students exposed to audio-lingual instruction performed significantly better in listening and speaking skills than those taught through traditional methods. Likewise, Eyou and Lawal (2024) reported that students taught through audio-lingual activities exhibited greater fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and oral performance than their counterparts taught using conventional lecture method approaches.

The convergence of these findings indicates that the audio-lingual strategy remains a viable instructional approach for improving Oral English achievement despite contemporary advances in educational technology. However, unlike purely technology-driven instructional approaches, the audio-lingual strategy provides direct opportunities for oral interaction, immediate feedback, and repetitive language practice, which are essential for developing communicative competence.

The findings revealed that audio-lingual strategy significantly improved students' achievement in Oral English. Students exposed to audio-lingual strategy performed better than those taught using conventional lecture method. This finding may be attributed to the learner-centred nature of the audio-lingual strategy, which provides students with opportunities for imitation, repetition, pronunciation drills, listening practice, and oral interaction.

Lastly, the finding also agrees with the submission of Adegbite (2005), who observed that audio-lingual strategy exposes learners to language use in meaningful contexts and improves communicative competence.

Conclusion

The study concluded that audio-lingual strategy significantly improved secondary school students' achievement in Oral English in Ogun State. The strategy enhanced students' listening and speaking abilities and promoted better pronunciation and oral communication skills compared with lecture method.

Recommendations

Based on the final outcome of this study, the following recommendations were made:

Irrespective of the various teaching methods enhanced by the modern-day technology, audio-lingual method still remains the best for teaching oral English classroom than the lecture method of teaching.

As a result, the teaching and learning of oral English using audio-lingual strategy should be encouraged now than before. Teaching method solely placed on advanced technological

aids, will limit the knowledge and exposure of our secondary school students to mere head knowledge rather than practical-oriented experience. Workshops and training of teachers should be encouraged by all the stakeholders involved in teaching and learning of English language in Ogun state, and Nigeria in general.

Lastly, teachers of English Language should be proactive in attending in-service training programmes that will expose them to modern audio-lingual teaching methods, including the use of technological teaching aids and the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the teaching and learning of English Language.

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