# TEACHERS' AWARENESS AND UTILISATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS IN ORAL ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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## Abstract

*This study investigated teachers' awareness and utilisation of artificial intelligence tools in Oral English classroom in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. The study adopted the descriptive research design. Twenty public secondary schools were randomly selected from 42 public secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select two SS II English language teachers from each school making a total of 40 teachers. In all, a total number of 40 SS II English language teachers participated in the study. Two research instruments were used for data collection. They are: Teachers' Awareness of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Oral English Classroom Questionnaire (r=0.74), and Questionnaire on Teachers' Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Oral English Classroom(r=0.78). Data collection for the study lasted three weeks. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage, frequency count, mean and standard deviation. Findings of the study revealed that the level of teachers' awareness of artificial intelligence tools in Oral English classroom was high. It also revealed that the extent to which teachers utilize artificial intelligence tools was low. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that teachers of English language in secondary schools should be trained on how they can use artificial intelligence tools to teach Oral English because its application to teaching of Oral English has positive impacts on students' learning. Curriculum planners should provide instructional designs that are Artificial Intelligence-based. Government should provide artificial intelligence tools that will make teaching and learning of English language easy.*

 **Keywords:** Teachers' awareness, utilisation, Artificial Intelligence, Oral English

## Introduction

Speaking is one of the language skills. It can be seen as a complex skill, which should be taught everywhere, and it is a skill that learners learn better in group. However, in learning English speaking, sometimes students make slips or errors when they try to utter words, phrases or

sentences. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. It is a productive skill because it involves the production of meaningful sounds for the reception of the listener who must also be proficient in the language in which the message is being communicated (Celce-Murcia, 2001). According to Nunan (2004), speaking is the productive oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning. It is considered a skill to practice and master. Moreover, students should learn speaking to be able to communicate effectively. The ability to speak English should be mastered well by student. It is important to be able to speak English either in saying things or expressing thought aloud. Luoma (2004) sees speaking as an important part of the curriculum in language teaching, and it makes them an important object of assessment as well. Hence, it is very important that every student should possess English language skill to speak well. Banjo (2016) asserts that oral aspect of the English language is the most important aspect of its sociological function of which aim is to enable learners to function within reasonable limits as a bilingual as well as in all situations in which the English language is used in or outside the country. Effective speaking in English language depends largely on paying accurate attention to segmental and supra-segmental features.

The assessment of English language in the external examinations organised by recognised examination bodies like WAEC and NECO maintains the standard that the subject is in three stages. Paper one is structured into essay writing, comprehension and summary; paper two consists of lexis and structure (grammar) and guided close passages while paper three consists of the test of Oral English where the segmental and supra-segmental phonology are tested for proficiency in English language. The segmental features consist of the vowels and consonants while the supra-segmental features are stress, rhythm and intonation. The vowels and consonants are separate sound segments but the features of stress, rhythm and intonation affect the quality of the sounds and extend over longer sequences of utterances like words, phrase and sentences. Stress and intonation must be properly used by teachers and learners of English if they want to be understood properly by other users of the English language. Oral English teaching and testing and proficiency is required for solid foundation in communication. The description of phonetic sounds is based on this variety as it is used in schools to teach English phonetics. This is called Received Pronunciation (RP). According to Dada (2000), oral English entails ability to fully understand what is said in English language spoken at a normal speed. This involves ability to perceive the sounds of the language and derive meaning from the utterances of the speaker. This also involves the ability to emit sounds and the sounds chains in a way that is acceptable in the language community.

The most problematic aspect of oral English has been identified to be the supra-segmental (prosodic) features. These features and their importance are highlighted by Egwuogu (2012) that materials for speech work would be far from complete if they did not include the supra-segmental features like stress, rhythm and intonation. Adegbite (1994) notes that more attention is paid to the segmental features than the supra-segmental which are the core speech features. These features influence and modify segmental features, vowels in particular. Adegbite explains that if a syllable in English sentences or phrase lacks stress, the pronunciation of the vowel present in that syllable is affected. This is problematic for ESL learners of English because the stress and unstressed syllables in words of English language are great problems to learners. Adegbite (2007) stresses that some second language learners of English pronounce English consonant and vowel sounds correctly. Omoniyi (2009) asserts that the phonological systems of the various indigenous languages are different from those of English because English is learnt as

a second language, what simply takes place is an adaptation of indigenous phonological systems for English speech sounds and rather than an attempt to manage two phonological systems separately. This is to show that learners of English have challenges in their oral pronunciation. Also, learners might experience difficulties in the area of intonation and stress due to mother tongue interference (Brown, 2001; Mendelsohn, 2006).

Oral English affords learners of the English language the opportunity to become aware of how to pronounce words correctly. It also deals with the ability to develop spoken language used in verbal communication and ability to understand speech. It is an important form and means of realizing the value of languages. Oral English is one of the most important contents in teaching and learning of English language because it comprises the basic skills of listening and speaking which is the ability, to convey thoughts and ideas orally in a way that others will understand what others say (Osisanwo, 2005). According to Oyebade (2008), oral English is an aspect of the English language curriculum that gives learners the opportunity to identify sound and produce it accurately. The ability to pronounce words correctly is important both in the academic setting and various communicative interactions in which the English language is used. This is because learning of spoken English will ultimately develop in students' oral communication skills which will enable them to function effectively in all fields of human endeavor using the power of speech and it will also boost the individual's self-esteem. Quirk (1998) notes that the development of oral skill in students has great privilege throughout the world and for speakers of the English language. Oral English complements the understanding and use of English language so as to improve the standard of spoken English. The objective of teaching oral English skills is to make students communicate effectively and intelligently in English. It also helps students to develop confidence in ability to express themselves in English as fluent as possible and provides an opportunity for correction of mistakes in spoken English. A good approach to oral language instruction will develop reading, writing and speaking skills of students thereby making the learning of English language more effective and learning experiences of learners in other subjects being taught in secondary schools more concrete and enjoyable.

The development of oral English is given an importance as great as that of reading and writing at every level in the curriculum. It has an equal weight with them in the integrated language process. It has crucial role to play not only in language learning but also as an approach to teaching throughout the curriculum (Republic of Ireland, 1999). The emphasis on oral English itself also involves a certain adjustment and on the face of it, has immediate implications for time allocation. At first sight, this may seem a greater problem than it actually is. The use of oral English activity will permeate every facet of the curriculum. It is also the single most important element in realising the integrated language learning experience envisaged in the English curriculum.

Efforts should be placed on the teaching of oral English because it helps learners to develop pronunciation sufficiently to allow effective communication with both native and non-native speakers of the English language. Similarly, it is obvious that common mistakes identified among learners of English as a second language today include improper pronunciation, mispronunciation, poor intonation, as well as misrepresentation of phonetic sounds. It is generally realised that when a person pronounces a word incorrectly, the mispronunciation is an impediment to the listener understanding. For instance, most students misplace the qualities and length of vowels. It is in line with this, that recent development in language teaching and learning made the teaching and learning of oral English not only a necessity but a prerequisite for assessing learners' competence in language use and acquisition.

Despite the importance attached to the teaching and learning of spoken English especially in secondary schools, students' performance in this aspect of English language is still not encouraging. Researchers have looked into the problems arising from the teaching and learning of oral English. Some of the problems manifested as a result of factors like lack of motivation and interest as a result of teachers' incompetence. Rababah (2005) notes that there are factors such as teaching strategies, the curriculum and environment. Students consciously relied on mother tongue models when deprived consistently reliable guidance from teachers, as indeed many teachers did. Atoye (1994) laments that the neglect of oral English teaching in secondary schools because it is hardly taught in schools. For any subject to be taught effectively, there are least two important conditions: A high degree of motivation on the part of both students and teacher and teachers' competence in the subject and his or her mastery of the techniques of imparting knowledge in it. These aforementioned conditions are rarely achieved in the teaching and learning of English pronunciation. Moedjito (2008) observes that most teachers have difficulty in deciding which variety to teach and the particular area to pay more attention to. They believe that non-native speakers should not be too catholic than the popes. Consequently, the teaching of oral English is rather weighed down by various factors which have contributed to the slow pace and ineffectiveness in teaching this aspect of the English language. These factors include poor background, interference of mother tongue, qualified teachers, poor teaching methodology, lack of constant practice, lack of orientation and facilities and shortage or limited accessibility to relevant books.

Efforts to address the problem of students' poor performance in oral English among secondary school students have made scholars and researcher to carry out studies on learner-centred strategies (Oyinloye, 2007), students' psychological factors (Fasanmi, 2008), pedagogical factors and achievement in oral English is a predictor to students' learning outcomes in oral English from their cognitive styles and beliefs. However, these studies came up with good contributions to the teaching and learning of oral English in secondary schools but with little research focus on teachers' awareness and utilisation of artificial intelligence tools in Oral English classroom. AI is a branch of computer science focused on creating intelligent systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, perception, and language understanding (Russell &Norvig, 2021). It encompasses various techniques, including Machine Learning (ML), which enables systems to enhance their performance based on data, and Deep Learning, a subset of ML that uses artificial neural networks to process complex patterns in large datasets (Goodfellow, Bengio, &Courville, 2016). Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education involves the application of AI technologies to improve teaching, learning, and administrative processes within educational settings. AI-powered systems can personalize learning experiences, automate administrative tasks, provide intelligent tutoring, and help educators enhance student outcomes (Luckin et al., 2016).AI systems can create individualised learning experiences, serve thousands of learners simultaneously, and offer continuous support through chatbots and virtual assistants.

Many studies have shown that teacher's awareness and attitude are strong determinants of students' learning outcomes in English language, Mathematics, Economics and Biology but to the best knowledge of the researcher, these factors have not been significantly linked to teachers' awareness and utilisation of artificial intelligence tools in Oral English classroom especially in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. Therefore, this study investigated teachers' awareness and utilisation of artificial intelligence tools in Oral English classroom in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State.

**Statement of the Problem**

Communication is the process by which one person shares and imparts information to another person so that, both people clearly understand one another. The objective of teaching oral English skills is to make students communicate effectively and intelligently in English. Despite the importance attached to the teaching and learning of spoken English, studies have shown that students are not doing well in this aspect of the English language. Efforts to address the problem have made scholars and researchers to carry out studies on learner-centred strategies, students' psychological factors and teacher-related factors as predictors of students' achievement in oral English. However, these studies came up with good contributions to the teaching and learning of oral English in secondary schools but with little emphasis on teachers' awareness and utilisation of artificial intelligence tools in Oral English classroom especially in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. Therefore, this study investigated teachers' awareness and utilisation of artificial intelligence tools in Oral English classroom in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State.

**Research Question**

The following questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of teachers' awareness of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom?

2. To what extent do teachers utilize Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom?

**Methodology**

The study adopted the descriptive research design. Twenty public secondary schools were randomly selected from 42 public secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select two SS II English language teachers from each school making a total of 40 teachers. In all, a total number of 40 SS II English language teachers participated in the study. Two research instruments were used for data collection. They are: Teachers' Awareness of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Oral English Classroom Questionnaire (r=0.74), and Questionnaire on Teachers' Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Oral English Classroom(r=0.78). Data collection for the study lasted three weeks. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentage, frequency count, mean and standard deviation.

**Research Question One:** What is the level of teachers' awareness of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom?

**Table 1: The level of teachers' awareness of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom**

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | St. D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The use of Artificial Intelligence tools promotes learning of Oral English | 20 (50%) | 17 (42.5%) | 3 (7.5%) | - | 3.42 | .635 |
| 2 | The use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom is time consuming | 12 (30%) | 19 (47.5%) | 6 (15%) | 3 (7.5%) | 3.00 | .877 |
| 3 | The use of Artificial Intelligence tools makes students to participate actively in Oral English instruction | 21 (52.5%) | 18 (45%) | 1 (2.5%) | - | 3.50 | .554 |
| 4 | Using Artificial Intelligence tools in | 20 | 19 | - | 1 | 3.45 | .638 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | learning Oral English increases students' interest in the subject | (50%) | (47.5%) | | (2.5%) | | |
| 5 | Using Artificial Intelligence tools in teaching Oral English enables students to learn the subject very fast. | 20 (50%) | 17 (42.5%) | 2 (5%) | 1 (2.5%) | 3.40 | .708 |
| 6 | The use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English instruction is not objective in improving students' performance in the subject. | 17 (42.5%) | 11 (27.5%) | 3 (7.5%) | 9 (22.5%) | 2.90 | 1.194 |
| 7 | Using Artificial Intelligence tools in teaching Oral English does not foster future learning that is expected to occur in Oral English. | 13 (32.5%) | 19 (47.5%) | 4 (10%) | 4 (10%) | 3.02 | .919 |
| 8 | The use of Ar _Oseni Muinat Adewumi & Badmus Babatunde Ojo (pages 258-267)_ makes students l | | | | - | 3.60 | .496 |
| 9 | Using Artificial Intelligence tools in teaching Oral English stimulates students' ability to think very fast | 24 (60%) | 16 (40%) | - | - | 3.60 | .496 |
| 10 | The use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English instruction does not facilitate the development of students' competence in Oral English | 22 (55%) | 11 (27.5%) | 2 (5%) | 5 (12.5%) | 3.25 | 1.031 |
| 11 | The use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English instruction develop students' speaking ability | 19 (47.5%) | 17 (42.5%) | 2 (5%) | 2 (5%) | 3.32 | .797 |
| 12 | Using Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom makes students acquire a wide range of ideas about their work in Oral English | 21 (52.5%) | 18 (45%) | - | 1 (2.5%) | 3.47 | .640 |
| 13 | The use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom enables students to become more aware of their strength in the Oral English. | 20 (50%) | 11 (27.5%) | 4 (10%) | 5 (12.5%) | 3.15 | 1.051 |
| 14 | Using Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom does not make students to be more aware of their problems in the subject. | 20 (50%) | 15 (37.5%) | 2 (5%) | 3 (7.5%) | 3.30 | .882 |
| 15 | The use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom makes to be lazy. | 21 (52.5%) | 13 (32.5%) | 4 (10%) | 2 (5%) | 3.32 | .858 |
| | **Standard Mean = 2.50;    Weighted Mean=** | | | | | **3.31** | |

Table 1 shows the level of teachers' awareness of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom as revealed by the descriptive analysis of the responses of the respondents to the set items. The results indicates that majority (92.5%) of the respondents agreed that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools promotes learning of Oral English, majority (77.5%) of the

respondents agreed the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom is time consuming, majority (97.5%) of the respondents agreed that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools makes students to participate actively in Oral English instruction, majority (97.5%) of the respondents agreed that using Artificial Intelligence tools in teaching Oral English enables students to learn the subject very fast, majority (92.5%) of the respondents agreed that using information communication technology (ICT) in teaching English language enables students to learn the subject very fast, majority (70%) of the respondents agreed that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English instruction is not objective in improving students' performance in the subject, majority (80.5%) of the respondents agreed that using Artificial Intelligence tools in teaching Oral English does not foster future learning that is expected to occur in Oral English, all (100%) of the respondents agreed that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools makes students learn new pronunciation, all (100%) of the respondents agreed that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English instruction does not facilitate the development of students' competence in Oral English, majority (82.5%) of the respondents agreed that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English instruction develop students' speaking ability, majority (90.5%) of the respondents agreed that the use of information communication technology in English language instruction develop students' speaking ability, majority (92.5%) of the respondents agreed that using Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom makes students acquire a wide range of ideas about their work in Oral English , majority (77.5%) of the respondents agreed that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom enables students to become more aware of their strength in the Oral English., majority (87.5%) of the respondents agreed that using Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom does not make students to be more aware of their problems in the subject. , majority (85%) of the respondents agreed that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom makes to be lazy. In conclusion, the weighted mean of 3.31 against the threshold of 2.50 implies that the level of teachers' awareness of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom was high.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent do teachers utilize Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom?

**Table 2: Teachers' utilisation of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom**

| S/N | Items | Always | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Mean | St. D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I make use of Artificial Intelligence tools in my Oral English classroom | 4 (10%) | 10 (25%) | 14 (35%) | 12 (30%) | 2.15 | .975 |
| 2 | I can use Artificial Intelligence tools to teach Oral English | 5 (12.5%) | 8 (20%) | 19 (47.5%) | 8 (20%) | 2.25 | .926 |
| 3 | I use Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to make students pronounce English words well. | 2 (5%) | 5 (12.5%) | 20 (50%) | 13 (32.5%) | 1.90 | .810 |
| 4 | I use Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to improve my students' speaking competence. | 1 (2.5%) | 5 (12.5%) | 14 (35%) | 20 (50%) | 1.67 | .797 |
| 5 | I use Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroomto increase my students' readiness to learn Oral | 10 (25%) | 8 (20%) | 13 (32.5%) | 9 (22.5%) | 2.47 | 1.109 |

| | English | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | I enjoy using Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom | 7 (17.5%) | 9 (22.5%) | 15 (37.5%) | 9 (22.5%) | 2.35 | 1.026 |
| 7 | I use Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to make my students learn Oral English very fast | 6 (15%) | 7 (17.5%) | 19 (47.5%) | 8 (20%) | 2.27 | .960 |
| 8 | I use Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to teach Oral English for my students to pass examinations | 3 (7.5%) | 5 (12.5%) | 21 (52.5%) | 11 (27.5%) | 2.00 | .847 |
| 9 | I make a lot of mistake when using Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom. | 11 (27.5%) | 20 (50%) | 7 (17.5%) | 2 (5%) | 3.00 | .816 |
| 10 | I find Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom not easy to teach Oral English. | 19 (47.5%) | 14 (35%) | 5 (12.5%) | 2 (5%) | 3.25 | .869 |
| | **Standard Mean = 2.50; Weighted Mean= 2.33** | | | | | | |

Table 4 shows the extent do teachers utilize Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom, as revealed by the descriptive analysis of the responses of the respondents to the set items. the results indicates that majority (35%) of the respondents rarely make use of Artificial Intelligence tools in my Oral English classroom, majority (47.5%) of the respondents could rarely use Artificial Intelligence tools to teach Oral English, majority (50%) of the respondents rarely used Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to make students pronounce English words well, majority (50%) of the respondents never used Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to improve my students' speaking competence, majority (32.5%) of the respondents rarely used Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to increase my students' readiness to learn Oral English, majority (37.5%) of the respondents rarely enjoyed using Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom, majority (47.5%) of the respondents rarely used Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to make my students learn Oral English very fast, majority (52%) of the respondents rarely used Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom to teach Oral English for my students to pass examinations, majority (50%) of the respondents sometimes made a lot of mistake when using Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom, majority (47.5%) of the respondents found Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom not easy to teach English language. In conclusion, the weighted mean of 2.33 against the threshold of 2.50 implies that the extent teachers utilized Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom was low.

**Discussion of Findings**
　　This study revealed that the level of teachers' awareness of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom was high. The finding of the study is similar to the study of Moganashwari (2013) who found that teachers' awareness of ICT use for the teaching of English language was high. This is against the findings of Li, Kazi, Abduljalil & Ahmad (2014) and Bindu (2017) who found that in their separate study that ICT awareness of teachers was at the average level.

The study revealed that the extent teacher's utilized Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom were low. This finding is similar to the study of Kolawole & Olatunji (2006) who found that a few of the teachers are knowledgeable in the use of some ICT facilities even though some of the schools had adequate facilities to promote the use of ICT facilities and did not use the facilities. This is against the finding of Tinio (2010) who discovered that the extent to which teachers utilise ICT in teaching English language was high.

**Conclusion**

The study has shown that the use of Artificial Intelligence tools in Oral English classroom could be enhanced by teachers' awareness and utilisation of the tools. Based on the findings, this study has provided a better understanding of in teachers' awareness and utilisation of artificial intelligence tools in Oral English classroom in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that teachers of English language in secondary schools should be trained on how they can use artificial intelligence tools to teach Oral English because its application to teaching of Oral English has positive impacts on students' learning. Curriculum planners should provide instructional designs that are Artificial Intelligence-based. Government should provide artificial intelligence tools that will make teaching and learning of English language easy.

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