



## **THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE TEACHING OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated the role of technology in the teaching of indigenous languages. The sample for the study consisted of 200 secondary school students and teachers in Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State selected through simple random sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was used to select four (4) secondary schools that was used for the study. The study employed descriptive design of survey type. A self-developed questionnaire instrument was used for the study. Two research questions were raised to guide the study and they were answered descriptively. The two research hypotheses formulated for the study were tested using Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) statistic of independent sample and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Based on the data analysis, findings revealed that there was significant influence of access and usage of technology on teaching of indigenous languages. Also, there was significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages. The study recommends that students can take advantage from technological devices in gathering information, learning vocabularies, and listening to indigenous languages discussions.*

**Keywords:** Indigenous Languages; Teaching; Teachers' Technology; Multimedia

### **INTRODUCTION**

The use of Information Technology (IT) in education has become a subject that is mostly discussed in this modern era. It has brought great improvement to the life of mankind in all human endeavors. Computers and other aspects of information technology are now used in education to monitor students' achievements, teach students and also as instructional media to assist in teaching in the classroom (Fallis, 2007). Teaching process is considered paramount, especially when we consider teaching and learning as the acquisition of knowledge and skills by individuals who become useful members of the society. Indeed, teaching may convey and at the same time, actualize the objectives of



education of learners. It involves deliberate activities geared towards the development of the less matured and the inexperienced (Ellison, Steinfield& Lampe, 2007).

According to Douglas (2012), teaching embraces forms of process, behaviours and activities which do not succumb to explanation by a single theory, it is also argued that in educational institutions, teaching cannot take place without the students (learners), the teacher and the curriculum, the content and instructional materials. The above judgment according to Mabawonku (2014) cannot stand the test of the information aspect. This is because teaching imposes content, learner's freedom in teaching is restricted while information technology employs independent judgment in decision-making. This seriously eroding teaching situation, the only main task of the teacher is to create enabling environment that may bring about desirable change in behaviour (Johns, 2012). Nelson &Kuh (2005) is of the opinion that classroom teachers are expected to utilize IT facilities such as the computer, the internet, the visual aids, the audio-visuals etc., to inculcate relevant knowledge to students. Any classroom teacher therefore, with adequate and professional skills in ICT utilization will definitely have his/her students perform better in classroom learning.

Local or indigenous language can be construed to mean a language spoken of belonging or connected with a particular place or area which one is talking about or with the place where one lives (Adedeji, 2015). Language plays pivotal role in any human society. The functionality of language depends on its usage. The choice of words and the context of usage determine the effect on the people. Language can be used to unite and also be used to disintegrate people. Gardeazabal (2011) opines that language can be an instrument to unify people and also be used to separate people. The number of languages and ethnic groups in society may determine the tendency of the segregation caused by language and ethnic loyalty. Nigeria is a plural society with several languages and ethnic groups. At the moment, English is used as a language of wider communication (LWC) in the country, particularly for those who are literate in the language (about 39% based on UNESCO Institute for Statistics).



### **Digital technology and Indigenous people**

Recent advances in mobile technology have greatly contributed to the breakdown of the digital divide. A synthesis study points out that mobile technology has been rapidly adopted by Indigenous youth in Australia and Africa (Johnson, 2016) and a community-owned mobile phone service project reported a strong desire for using mobile technology to communicate in northern Ontario Indigenous communities (Beaton, Burnard, Linden & Donnell, 2015). Mobile phones have become more affordable and accessible for many Indigenous youth, therefore communication via mobile phones has become the norm (Kral, 2014). As a result, this has fostered interest, especially among Indigenous youth, in a wide range of digital technologies, and they have actively incorporated information and communication technology (ICT) in their daily lives.

Indigenous people often communicate via text messaging and social media and use photography and video to produce content to self-represent and establish their own identity and create visibility within and beyond their communities. Facebook especially has been reported in several studies as becoming part of Indigenous youth's everyday communications (Brady, Dyson and Asela, 2008; Virtanen, 2015). An earlier study by Singleton, Rola-Rubzen, Muir, Muir and McGregor (2009) reported that Indigenous elders believed that the use of digital technology opened doors for young people, who in turn play a crucial role in maintaining cultural traditions and bringing contemporary innovations into the community, and helps amplify Indigenous voices across time and distance. It is evident that digital technology has been well-received by many Indigenous communities.

To help tackle the limited language and literacy skills among Indigenous people, efforts have been made to develop teaching and learning strategies by leveraging digital technology.

Technological paradigm shift from analogue to digital has immensely changed the way people communicate in society. It is something that cannot be underestimated. Ellison (2007) observe that technology has become part of the daily life experience for increasing number of people. Lenhart, Madden, Macgill and Smith(2007) note that 85 percent of teens ages 12-17 engage at least occasionally in some form of electronic personal communication,



which includes text messaging, sending email or instant messages, or posting comments on social media sites.

A growing body of literature has shown that digital technology has enabled new forms of textual communications and linguistic creativity for Indigenous youth who have shown enhanced motivation to partake in literacy learning. Therefore, to examine the role of technology in the teaching of indigenous language at school and work for Indigenous people, we conducted a thorough literature review on empirical studies.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study;

1. To what level does the access and use of technology influence teaching of indigenous languages?
2. Is there any significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages?

## **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant influence of access and usage of technology on teaching of indigenous languages.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages.

## **Literature Review**

### **Technology and Indigenous Language Teaching**

One cannot mention about indigenous language teaching without employing the services of technology which is an important gadget employed in language teaching in the modern technological world. Even indigenous language commonly taught in Nigeria that have relatively large numbers of speakers faced a lack of authentic materials. Hugo (1994) once said "Nothing is as powerful as an idea whose time has come". Technology, computer technology is more in existence than ever before. As such, it has rapidly changed education



in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and will continue to do so. One of the innovations used in promoting the writing of indigenous languages is Microsoft Word.

Microsoft Word is quickly becoming one of the most widely used word processing programs today. However, as people are aware, representing an indigenous language in a word document still remains a challenge. A common fact is often require a unique set of characters to represent them. This is coupled with the fact that “font” makers (i.e. those people who make character set for others) simply don’t take into account the character needs of small minority languages.

### **The Role of Technology in Indigenous Language Teaching**

Essen (1996) defines the Computer as an electronic device which work under the control of a stored program automatically accepting data and applying services of logical operations to produce information as the output. Technology has been used to support teaching and learning most especially post-secondary education. Quite often, technology has been practiced to supplement classroom teaching. Computer are now commonly used to present seminars at conferences. Conferences could be held on the teaching of indigenous languages. Symposiums through the aid of overhead projectors, bulletin boards have featured a wide range of presentations, ranging from marketing the value of indigenous languages to implementing immersion teaching programs, to using total physical response teaching techniques to develop indigenous language textbooks useful for children and even to people in long distance so that students may be at a distance, very far from the teacher, and language learning can still take place effectively.

The internet is now more in use to access websites to support teaching technology, such as television, educational DVD’s encourage more young parents to speak the indigenous language at home with their young children. The roles of the computer as a tutor and as a tool are complementary. As a tutor, the computer evaluates the users’ input and responds to it, while as a tool, the computer is employed by the user to enhance his or her own learning or communication.

### **Internet and Social Networking**

Increased internet use and social networking has become very popular in the recent years. Everyone nowadays is a member to at least one social networking site where they



have created a personal profile online which they use to interact. Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities, and showcase their social lives (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Teenagers spend most of their free time on the internet and social networking. As opposed to older generations who used resources like the television or newspaper, teenagers now use the Internet for the majority of their daily activities and information gathering (Kalra & Manani, 2013). As for teenagers who are still in school hours spent on the internet can be/is precious study time wasted and this can impact negatively on their learning.

### **The Effect of Technological Transfer on Students' Communicative Competence**

Due to the impact and influence of information technology on society and education, computer assisted language learning is becoming the trend in indigenous language teaching. This involves passing of information continuously between the computers and the students. Computer is seen as an assessment tools which has been programmed to provide standardized testing situation data for individual item as well as total score and it gives immediate feedback to the examiner.

The use of ICT in teaching can change the ways of learning indigenous languages in Nigeria. However, in the new millennium and a rapidly changing world of technology, the teaching of indigenous languages most especially Yoruba language in tertiary institutions could be broadly divided into four: Phonology, Grammar, Culture and Literature (oral and writing). In tertiary institutions, for prompt improvement on teacher's and learner's spoken language, there is a need for a satisfactory method that will enhance the speck teaching.

Yai (1986) identifies "apparatuses" that can be used in the teaching of oral literature as tape-recorder, records films and video to make the students see nature of oral poetry. Other important gadgets are still cameras and video cameras. Sanni (2007) explain that the essence of using the visual equipment to record proceedings of the performance of oral literature is to enhance the teacher to be able to capture not only the voice of the performer, but also immediate environment of the presentation which is also very important. According to Nwarunta (2007) describes technological aids like audio-visual recording devices such as reel to real, VCRS, PCS are used to capture language samples while



playback and broadcast devices like phonographs, radios, video tape projectors, televisions have been known to be used to provide access to authentic speech samples. All the aforementioned makes the teaching and learning of indigenous language more vivid and engaging. It also aided independent study and individualized instruction and enable the Yoruba learners to learn at their pace.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study employed a descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey design was used due to the fact that it enables information to be obtained from a representative sample of a targeted population in order to describe situations as they exist.

### **Population and Sample**

The target population of this study consisted of all the students and teachers in senior secondary schools in 2021/2022 academic session in Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State. The population comprises of male and female students and teachers. The sample consisted of two hundred (200) senior secondary school two (SSS 2) students and teachers obtained using simple random sampling technique. It comprised of 180 students and 20 teachers. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the 4 schools out of 10 public secondary schools in Ikere Local Government. This comprised of mixed and single-sex schools where 45 students and 5 teachers were selected in each sampled schools to make a total of 200 respondents.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used for data collection for this survey was a self-structured questionnaire. This was due to the nature of information required and the form of analysis to be conducted. The face and content validities of the instrument were ascertained by experts in Test and Measurement. The reliability of the instrument was established by administering the test on some respondents who were not part of the sample selected for the study. The responses to the instrument after administering were subjected to a test and



retest reliability co-efficiency analysis, using Pearson product moment co-efficient correlation. A reliability index of 0.79 was obtained which is high enough, hence the instrument was adjudged to be reliable for the study.

### Data Analysis

Data collected was analyzed using the descriptive statistics. Responses of the respondents on the four point Likert scale instrument was analyzed using frequency counts, simple percentage, mean and standard deviation. The two hypotheses formulated for the study were tested inferentially using Chi-square statistic of independent sample and one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) respectively at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS version 23.

**Decision Rule:** Cluster mean value greater than 2.5 indicated a significant extent and influence while the cluster mean value less than 2.5 indicated otherwise.

### Result and Discussion

#### Presentation of Respondents' Demographic Information

**Table 1:** Respondents' demographic characteristics.

Demographic Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	105	52.5
	Female	95	47.5
	<b>Total</b>	200	100.0
Status	Student	180	90.0
	Teacher	20	10.0
	<b>Total</b>	200	100.0

**Source:** Researcher's field survey (2022)

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents sampled in this study. In relation to Sex, the result shows that 105 (52.5%) of the respondent are male while 95 (47.5%) of the entire respondent are female. Based on the result, majority of the





respondent are male. In relation to respondents' status, the result shows that 180 (90.0%) of the respondent are students while the remaining 20 (10.0%) of the entire respondent are teachers.

**Research Question 1**

To what level does the access and use of technology influence teaching of indigenous languages?

**Table 2:** Response to the level whereby the access and use of technology influence teaching of indigenous languages

Item	Mean	Std. Dev	Remark
I cannot but engage in the use of social media daily	3.52	.484	Agree
When I am seriously in need of information concerning teaching or learning indigenous language, I search for it through internet	3.68	.871	Agree
Teachers performs optimally in teaching indigenous language when technological aids are used	3.90	.978	Agree
I find it easy to get relevant information through ICT and multimedia aids in teaching or learning indigenous language effectively	3.77	.805	Agree
Through the use of ICT and computer, I share information and discuss with my peers on the prospect of teaching or learning indigenous language	3.89	1.146	Agree

Total mean = **18.76**

Cluster mean = **3.75**



Table 2 showed the response to the level whereby the access and use of technology influence teaching of indigenous languages. It was revealed that cluster mean of 3.75 indicated that a greater number of respondents agreed that there is a greater level to which access and usage of technology influenced teaching of indigenous languages. The cluster mean of 3.75 is greater than the bench – mark which is 2.5 (that is,  $3.75 > 2.5$ ). This implies that technology played a significant role in teaching of indigenous languages.

In item 1, a total mean score of 3.52 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 0.484 was obtained from the analysis on frequency of engagement in the use of social media by the respondents. This shows a very significant value of the mean. In item 2, a greater number of respondents agreed that when they are seriously in need of information concerning teaching or learning indigenous language, they search for it through internet, and this resulted to a mean score of 3.68 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 0.871, this shows that it is statistically significant. Also, in item 3, total mean scorer of 3.90 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 0.978 was obtained from the analysis. This equally established significant response that teachers performs optimally in teaching indigenous language when technological aids are used.

In item 4, most of the respondents held that they find it easy to get relevant information through ICT and multimedia aids in teaching or learning indigenous language effectively, and these constituted a mean score of 3.77 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 0.805, which is significant. In item 5, a mean of 3.89 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 1.146 was obtained which indicated that through the use of ICT, they respondents held that they share information and discuss with their peers on the prospect of teaching or learning indigenous language.

### **Research Question 2**

Is there any significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages?

**Table 3:** Response to the role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages



Item	Mean	Std. Dev	Remark
The usage of social media platform has aided teachers in effective teaching of indigenous languages	3.43	.701	Agree
The use of technology has contributed to the improvement of teacher's direct communication with his students in the course of teaching indigenous languages	3.18	.891	Agree
Multimedia technologies equips teachers with versatile tools of knowledge exchange and collaboration in the teaching of indigenous languages.	3.71	.915	Agree
Multimedia technology featuring audio, visual animation effects naturally andeffectively makes teachers have more access to information on teaching indigenous languages	3.50	1.075	Agree
Multimedia technology offers a sense of reality andfunctions very well, which greatly processes and improves teachers and students' interest and motivation instudy and their involvement in class activities	3.09	.966	Agree

Total mean = **16.91**

Cluster mean = **3.38**

Table 3 showed the response to the role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages. It was revealed that cluster mean of 3.38 indicated that a greater number of respondents agreed that there is significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages. The cluster mean of 3.38 is greater than the bench – mark



which is 2.5 (that is,  $3.38 > 2.5$ ). This implies that technology played significant role in the teaching of indigenous languages.

In item 1, a total mean score of 3.43 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 0.701 was obtained from the analysis on the usage of social media platform in aiding teachers in effective teaching of indigenous languages. This shows a very significant value of the mean. In item 2, a greater number of respondents agreed that the use of technology has contributed to the improvement of teachers' direct communication with their students in the course of teaching indigenous languages, and this resulted to a mean score of 3.18 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 0.891, this shows that it is statistically significant. Also, in item 3, total mean scorer of 3.71 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 0.915 was obtained from the analysis. This equally established significant response that multimedia technologies equips teachers with versatile tools of knowledge exchange and collaboration in the teaching of indigenous languages.

In item 4, most of the respondents held that multimedia technology featuring audio, visual animation effects naturally andeffectively makes teachers have more access to information on teaching indigenous languages, and these constituted a mean score of 3.50 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 1.075, which is significant. In item 5, a mean of 3.09 with corresponding Standard Deviation of 0.966 was obtained which indicated that multimedia technology offers a sense of reality andfunctions very well, which greatly processes and improves teachers and students' interest and motivation instudy and their involvement in class activities.

## **Hypotheses Testing**

### **Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant influence of access and usage of technology on teaching of indigenous languages.



**Table 4:** Chi Square analysis of the influence of access and usage of technology on teaching of indigenous languages

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asy mp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1- sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	112.50	3	.000	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	71.644	3	.000	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test	37.009			.000		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.052 <sup>b</sup>	1	.821	.698	.367	.019
N of Valid Cases	200					

*a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.28.*

*b. The standardized statistic is .211.*

The result of the analyses in table 4 showed the influence of access and usage of technology on teaching of indigenous languages. The chi-square test revealed that calculated  $\chi^2$  (0.000) was lesser than the significant level at the 0.05. This implies that there is significant influence of access and usage of technology on teaching of indigenous languages; hence the null hypothesis was not upheld. The alternative hypotheses which stated that there is significant influence of access and usage of technology on teaching of indigenous languages was upheld.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages.

**Table 5:** One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the analysis of the role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages.



Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
Between Group	221.9 08	3	140.219	3.008	0.027
Within Group	6315. 410	197	29.537		
Total	6537. 318	200			

**p>0.05**

The result in table 5 showed the analysis of the role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages. The analysis revealed that the p value (0.027) was less than the significant level at the 0.05. This implies that there was significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages. Hence, the null hypothesis was not upheld. The alternative hypothesis that stated that there is significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages was upheld.

### Discussion of Findings

In this study, two research questions were raised to guide the study, and two hypotheses were formulated from the research questions. The research questions were answered descriptively using mean and standard deviation while the research hypotheses were analyzed inferentially using Chi-square statistic of independent sample and one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

The inferential analysis of the study revealed that there was significant influence of access and usage of technology on teaching of indigenous languages. This findings is in line with the findings of Kral (2014) who opined that mobile phones have become more affordable and accessible for many Indigenous youth, therefore communication via mobile phones has become the norm. Also, Singleton, Rola-Rubzen, *et al.* (2009) reported that Indigenous elders believed that the use of digital technology opened doors for young people, who in turn play a crucial role in maintaining cultural traditions and bringing contemporary innovations into the community, and helps amplify Indigenous voices across time and distance.



The inferential analysis of the study further revealed that there was significant role played by technology in the teaching of indigenous languages. This corroborated the position of Boyd and Ellison (2007) who posited that everyone nowadays is a member to at least one social networking site where they have created a personal profile online which they use to interact. Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities, and showcase their social lives. The findings further supported Sanni (2007) who explained that the essence of using the visual equipment to record proceedings of the performance of oral literature is to enhance the teacher to be able to capture not only the voice of the performer, but also immediate environment of the presentation which is also very important.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that technological transfer came in response to the need of indigenous language teaching. If an indigenous language is to be taught according to its philosophy and nature, a lot of technology has to be involved. The various levels of instruction of learning as well as teachers have been made to have increase awareness about indigenous efforts of technologically minded citizens, as technology is believed to be a promising way to bring our rich heritage of indigenous languages into present practical use. Hence, access, usage and role played by technology is very effective in the teaching of indigenous languages.

At the end of this study, it appears that technology these days are very important in our lives and especially for teaching/learning. We have to take into consideration that students can take advantage from technological devices in gathering information, learning vocabularies, and listening to indigenous languages discussions. There is need to promote indigenous newsletters, newspapers, radio and television stations. Teachers must avoid the temptation of use of technologies without understanding the teaching principles of using them. Overall technology must be used in the classrooms for its importance and effectiveness.



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