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## English Language Teachers' Classroom Practices in Ibadan, Nigeria

Bolape Olufunto Olaosebikan<sup>1\*</sup> and COO Kolawole<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>University of Ibadan, Nigeria

\*e-mail: [olufuntoedu@gmail.com](mailto:olufuntoedu@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

*The focus of the research is to find out about the practice of English teachers in the classroom because teachers are the best model for students' acquisition of linguistic knowledge and what they do in class during the teaching and learning process. Although all English teachers are responsible for transferring linguistic expertise to students in class, their classroom practices differ. Therefore, this study qualitatively examines the classroom practice of English teachers in the Akinyele Local Government, Ibadan, Nigeria. This study adopted a mixed methods research design. The findings reveal that English teachers in Akinyele Municipality, Ibadan, Nigeria, use a traditional approach to teach students, paper and pencil tests primarily to assess students, engage in learning assessment and enforce classroom rules to manage their classrooms. Based on the findings, it is recommended that English teachers improve their classroom practices and update their teaching methods with modern ones.*

### Keywords:

Achievement, Assessment Techniques, Classroom Management, Motivation.

### ABSTRAK

*Fokus penelitian adalah untuk mengetahui pada praktik guru bahasa Inggris di kelas karena guru adalah model terbaik untuk perolehan pengetahuan linguistik siswa dan apa yang mereka lakukan di kelas selama proses belajar mengajar. Meskipun, semua guru bahasa Inggris memiliki tanggung jawab untuk mentransfer pengetahuan linguistik kepada siswa di kelas, praktik kelas mereka berbeda. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini mengkaji secara kualitatif praktik kelas guru bahasa Inggris di Pemerintah Daerah Akinyele, Ibadan, Nigeria. Penelitian ini mengadopsi desain penelitian metode campuran. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa guru bahasa Inggris di Akinyele Municipality, Ibadan, Nigeria kebanyakan menggunakan pendekatan tradisional untuk mengajar siswa, tes kertas dan pensil kebanyakan untuk*

*menilai siswa, terlibat dalam penilaian pembelajaran dan pada dasarnya menegakkan peraturan kelas untuk mengelola ruang kelas mereka. Berdasarkan temuan, direkomendasikan bahwa guru bahasa Inggris harus memperbaiki praktik kelas mereka dan memperbarui metode pengajaran mereka dengan yang modern.*

**Kata kunci:**

Prestasi, Teknik Penilaian, Pengelolaan Kelas, Motivasi.

## 1. Introduction

As a result of colonization and globalization, English is a language of various functionalities in Nigeria. To account for the linguistic differences in the country, English is an official language, a lingua franca, and even a language of instruction for the diverse ethnic groups in the country. It is also a language of curriculum dissemination in Nigerian classrooms and a core subject in the school curriculum; hence, much emphasis is placed on the language so that students can become proficient users since poor mastery of the language would disenable students from using it functionally in society. Inferior talent also hinders them from proceeding to higher studies, so English is taught at every level of education, from the elementary class to the secondary level and beyond. In the primary and junior secondary classes, it is taught as English Studies: a product of the English language and Literature-in-English, while in the senior secondary class, it is learned as English. There are better methods for teaching specific academic subjects in classroom situations. However, there are teaching strategies that are more suitable and capable of enhancing students' academic performance than some others, depending on lesson objectives, learners' characteristics, nature of subject matter, teachers' competence in the use of different strategies, and availability and access to required instructional resources (Olokooba, 2022). Interaction with other teachers and focusing on developing their skills and abilities are essential components of professionalism (Muyunda et al., 2023). The importance of education as an agency of modernization and a source of employment has long been recognized in our national plans (Mishra, 2022).

Akanbi (2018) reiterates the intent of teaching the English language in senior secondary schools by submitting that students are taught the language to be well versed in it since getting admission into any tertiary institution in Nigeria depends on its successful mastery. The introductory page of the revised senior secondary school English language curriculum (NERDC, 2007) also documents the intents of the curriculum, and it is to furnish students with a commensurate amplitude of words, sentences, and sentence types. This is to enable them to communicate effectively in school and outside it. It additionally aims to aid the effective development of students listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to function effectively in higher studies and society. The curriculum is structured into five segments vocabulary development, oral English, grammatical structure, reading comprehension, and essay writing (NERDC, 2007). All these components are expected to be taught effectively by teachers to ensure students' academic success in the subject and all subjects relying on the English language as the language of instruction. Educators, school administrators, and other pertinent

stakeholders need to understand how students want to learn, especially during times of crisis where their Learning could easily be hindered or disrupted (Pingol, 2022). Inclusive education is seen as a positive response that involves the alteration and accommodation of students with diverse needs that extend to teaching strategies, teaching aids as well as infrastructural adjustments and later evolved to include beyond the scope of only educational method in which the sense of community was added into the philosophy of inclusive education to emphasize the worth and value of every individual (Khalid et al., 2022).

Despite these efforts at aiding students' English language proficiency, there has been a continuous decline in students' English language achievement. Enough evidence abounds for students' poor performance in the English language. For instance, student performance in the English language in West African Examinations Council (WAEC) May/June 2005-2015, as Lawore (2017) reported, reveals no sustainable improvement as more than 60 percent of students scored below credit passes within the duration of the specified years. Additionally, the May/June 2017 WAEC results could have been more encouraging; although there was a slight improvement from the past performances, most of the 59.22% who passed had just credit passes (Kolawole, 2019).

The evidence above has implications for other school subjects as it has also been repeatedly reported by the standardized examination bodies in Nigeria (WAEC and NECO) that one of the reasons why students have poor performance in subjects like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, etc., is their poor understanding and usage of English language which makes them unable to translate story problems and express their answers meaningfully in written forms (WAEC Chief Examiner's Reports 2010-2018, NECO Chief Examiners Reports 2010-2018). The unpalatable picture painted about the poor achievement of students in the English language has been traced to several factors such as teacher, student, parent, home, etc. Still, the chief of all the elements is the teacher. Teachers play critical roles in implementing the curriculum (Kolawole, Olatunji & Akanbi, 2015, Fan, 2017). Teachers are the ones who translate the curriculum to students in the classroom, and whatever they do or fail to do in the school could motivate or demotivate students. Therefore, this study employed qualitative and quantitative means to examine the practices of English teachers in Akinyele Local government, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

### *1.1 Statement of Problem*

Although several researchers have submitted that English teachers' classroom practices heavily impact students' learning outcomes in the English language, they have not been able to consistently and conclusively agree about the specific rules exhibited in the classrooms that influence students' motivation and achievement in the English language. Also, the existing studies in English teachers' classroom practices usually use the quantitative method only in reporting their findings. This study, therefore, was designed to fill the current gaps by examining the classroom practices of English language teachers through the mixture of the quantitative and qualitative approaches, as literature has established that they impact students' motivation for learning a language and performing well in that language. This study, therefore, employs the mixed method approach to examine the variables

underlying the classroom practices of English language teachers in Akinyele Local Government, Ibadan, Nigeria.

### 1.2 Research Questions

- (1) What are teachers' English language classroom practices in terms of their pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management style, and classroom assessment technique?
- (2) What is the level of English teachers' subject mastery, pedagogical content knowledge, classroom assessment skill, and classroom management skill?

## 2. Methods

This study adopted the mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) research design. For the quantitative method, the descriptive survey design of correlational type was used. For the qualitative approach, the content analysis method was used. This design was considered appropriate for this kind of research which aimed to provide detailed descriptions of the variables. The simple random sampling technique was adopted to select ten (10) senior secondary schools from the public secondary schools in Akinyele Local Government. Also, two SS II English language teachers were selected for each school chosen. Twenty (20) English language teachers were respondents to this study. Two instruments were employed to collect data, the English Language Teachers' Classroom Practices Observation Scale (ELTCPOS), divided into four subscales, and Oral Interview on English Language Teachers' Classroom Practices (OIELTCS), divided into four subscales. Data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The descriptive statistics of frequency count and percentage were used to analyze the quantitative data collected, while the qualitative data were content analyzed.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 What are teachers' English language classroom practices in terms of their pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management style, and classroom assessment technique?

Table 1 reveals three English language teaching methods (Traditional, communicative, and multilingual methods) and four strategies (questioning; modeling, practice, and repetition; code-switching, use of multiple languages, and activity-based and task-based strategy) which the teachers in Akinyele Local Government adopted. 70% of teachers used the traditional approach, whereas 30% utilized the modern system, 20% for multilingual, and 10% for the communicative approach. Specifically, 30% of the English teachers used a questioning strategy under the conventional method, while 40% adopted modeling, practice, and repetition. Under the multilingual approach, 20% of the teachers use multiple languages and code-switching; however, only 10% use the communicative approach through an activity-based instructional strategy. This implies that the traditional approach to teaching English is utilized in Akinyele Local Government.

The oral interview with teachers revealed that each of the 20 English teachers, who participated in the study, adopted different methods when teaching the English language. Three English language teaching methods (Traditional, communicative, and multilingual methods) and four strategies

(questioning; modeling, practice and repetition; code-switching, use of multiple languages, and activity-based and task-based strategies) were utilized by the teachers in Akinyele Local Government. The majority of them shared that they used questions, modeling, practice, and repetition when teaching the English language. Some responded that they code-switched and code-mixed when instructing their students. A few shared that they teach English using an activity-based instructional strategy. This means that the traditional method of teaching English was utilized mainly by the teachers in Akinyele Local government, followed by the multilingual way, and the least approach was the communicative approach, as observed from their teaching strategies.

**Table 1.** Pedagogical Content Knowledge

<b>Teaching methods/ Approach</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Percentage of teachers</b>	<b>Reasons for techniques or strategies used</b>
Traditional method	Questioning strategy	6 (30%)	to stimulate students' interest in the lesson to make students responsive in the large classroom
	Modeling, practice, and repetition	8 (40%)	to ensure that students learn the correct spellings and pronunciations of sounds/words to enable students to acquire the English language.
Multilingual method	Code-switching, use of multiple languages	4 (20%)	to make the lesson delivery comprehensive for students who have English difficulties to ensure students' active participation in the classroom talk to motivate learners to ask and answer questions in the classroom
Communicative method	Activity-based strategy,	2 (10%)	to encourage students to learn the English language to assist students in acquiring language skills communicatively
Total		20 (100%)	

The reasons given by the teachers for utilizing questions, modeling, practice, and repetition include the intention to stimulate students' interests in the lesson, make students responsive in the large classroom, ensure that students learn the correct spellings and pronunciations of sounds/words and enable students to acquire the English language. Teachers who responded that they code-mixed and code-switched during the English language instruction gave the following as reasons for their choices: to make the lesson delivery comprehensive for students who have English difficulties, ensure students' active participation in the classroom talk and motivate learners to ask and answer questions in the classroom. In contrast, those who teach through activity-based instructions said they used it so that students can acquire language skills communicatively and use the language outside the classroom.

From the quantitative and qualitative data obtained, it is clear that most of the English teachers in Akinyele Local government, Ibadan, Nigeria teach the English language utilizing a traditional in their approach to English language teaching according to the strategies such as questions, modeling, practice, and repetition that they employed. Some of the teachers code-mixed and code-switched. Hence they were multilingual in their approach. A few, however, made use of activities to teach

English communicatively. Findings imply that the English teachers in Akinyele Local Government of Ibadan are traditional in their approach to the teaching of the English language. This submission is in line with that of Mokotedi (2012), who examined the teaching practices of reading among teachers in Botswana and found that teachers' methods of teaching the English Language are traditional.

**Table 2.** Classroom Assessment Practices

Assessment Techniques	No of Teachers	Reasons for the choice of technique
Giving paper and pencil test	(12) 60%	to prompt students to remain active during lesson delivery for ease of marking
Using varieties of assessment means (take-home assignment, short exercise)	4 (20%)	to improve students' chances of getting higher marks
Using assignment alone	2 (10%)	to ensure that all students have scores
Using classwork	2 (10%)	to ensure that students have many scores from which the cumulative average would be selected
Total	20 (100%)	

Table 2. shows the assessment techniques of English teachers in Akinyele Local Government. The four assessment techniques used were: paper and pencil test, take-home assignment and short exercise, assignment, and classwork. Overall, 60% of the teachers used paper and pencil tests only to assess students, 20% adopted some varieties of assessment techniques, while 10% of them relied on assignments and 10% on classwork. Teachers gave diverse reasons for their choice. This implies that the paper and pencil test is the primary assessment technique utilized by English teachers in Akinyele Local Government.

The interview reveals four assessment techniques used by English teachers in Akinyele Local Government. The four assessment techniques used were: paper and pencil test, take-home assignment and short exercise, assignment, and classwork. Teachers using varieties of assessment techniques such as take-home assignments and short exercises revealed their reasons for using these techniques to improve students' chances of getting higher marks; those who used tasks did this to ensure that all students had scores that could be graded and those using assignment adopted this format to ensure that students have many scores from which the cumulative average would be selected. From the quantitative and qualitative data analysis, the highest assessment technique used by English language teachers in Akinyele local government, Ibadan, Nigeria, was a paper and pencil test. The reasons given by teachers for this choice include testing students' level of knowledge and ensuring that students concentrate during classroom instructions for ease of marking and grading. Also, from the interview, English teachers in Akinyele Local Government mainly assess students to measure their Learning. That is, they engage primarily in the assessment of Learning. These results corroborate Alkharusi's (2008) study, which revealed that English teachers mostly used pen and paper pencils and conducted assessments of Learning.

**Table 3.** Classroom Management Practices

<b>Management style</b>	<b>No of Teachers</b>	<b>Reasons for the Choice</b>
Enforcement of rules guiding class conducts	12 (60%)	to control the large class being taught
Reshuffling of seats	4 (20%)	to make students conscious of being monitored
Using scarecrow	4 (20%)	to make students well-behaved
Total	20 (100%)	

Table 3. reveals the various management styles used by English teachers in Akinyele Local Government, Oyo State. Overall, three types were engaged by teachers: enforcement of rules guiding class conduct, reshuffling of seats, and using scarecrows. Specifically, 60% of the English teachers enforced class rules to manage their class, while 20% reshuffled students, and lastly, 20% used scarecrows in the form of canes which they brought to the classroom to control students. The implication is that enforcement of rules is used to manage classrooms in English Language classrooms in Akinyele Local Government.

The interview shows that English teachers used three strategies in Akinyele Local Government: enforcing rules guiding class operations, reshuffling seats, and using scarecrows. The highest style observed in the management practice of English teachers was enforcing class rules to manage class, and the reason for utilizing this style was to ensure the control of the significant class being taught; teachers who reshuffled seats did this to make students conscious of being monitored while scarecrow method where canes were used to warn students off. The interview further revealed that English teachers do not beat students in Akinyele Local Government though they took those canes to the classroom to command students' attention. The discussion also gathered that most teachers reported erring students to the school management to deal with erring class members. At the same time, some asked unruly students to remove weeds or engage in manual work within the school. The teachers gave the government instructions not to beat as the reasons for responding in these manners in dealing with uncooperative students.

Findings from the descriptive and content analysis showed that English teachers in Akinyele local government, Ibadan, Nigeria, enforce class rules the most to manage their type. At the same time, some reshuffle students, and lastly, a few use scarecrows in the form of canes which they bring to the classroom to control students. The findings also revealed that the teachers do not beat erring students. As such, learners are reported to the school authorities, who punish students by asking them to do manual activities around the school. Findings from this study agree with that of Debreli and Ishanova (2019), who found that the most utilized management strategy teachers use in their classroom practices is in their area of study rules enforcement.

### *3.2 What is the level of English teachers' subject mastery, pedagogical content knowledge, classroom assessment skill, and classroom management skill?*

Table 4. gives the weighted mean of 3.22 out of the 5.00 maximum score that could be obtained, which is also higher than the standard mean of 3.00. Based on the weighted mean of 3.22, most

teachers demonstrated good subject mastery in English Language. Out of the five items used to measure English teachers' subject mastery, only one item, item 3, 'Teachers displays ample knowledge of the linguistic content (sounds/vocabulary/structure/comprehension /summary/essay) taught,' contributed to the good English teachers' subject mastery because its mean score is greater than the weighted mean ( $3.60 > 3.22$ ). The remaining four items do not contribute to the excellent English teachers' subject mastery since they are lower than the weighted mean (3.22). However, they are higher than the standard mean (3.00) in the following order: item 1; teacher covers the topic in the lesson plan adequately ( $3.20 > 3.00$ ); item 5; teacher answers questions on the topic judiciously, item 3; teacher displays knowledge of the rules of the issue taught ( $3.10 > 3.00$ ), and item 4; lastly teacher shows a critical understanding of the intricacies of the topic led ( $3.00 = 3.00$ ).

**Table 4.** English Language teachers' subject mastery level

S/N	ITEMS	Excellent	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Mean	SD
1.	Covers the topic in the lesson plan adequately.	-	10 (50%)	4 (20%)	6 (30%)	-	3.20	.919
2.	Refrain from displaying knowledge of the rules of the topic taught.	-	8 (40%)	6 (30%)	6 (30%)	-	3.10	.876
3.	Displays ample knowledge of the linguistic content(sounds/vocabulary/structure/comprehension /summary/essay) taught.	2 (10%)	12 (60%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	-	3.60	.966
4.	Shows a critical understanding of the intricacies of the topic taught.	-	4 (20%)	12 (60%)	4 (20%)	-	3.00	.667
5.	Answers questions on the topic judiciously.	2 (10%)	8 (40%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)	3.20	1.229

**Standard Mean = 3.00; Weighted Mean 3.22**

Table 5. shows the weighted mean of 3.16 out of the maximum obtainable score of 5.00, which is higher than the standard mean of 3.00. From this, it can be submitted that English language teachers have excellent pedagogical content knowledge in the English language. Out of the ten items seeking information on teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, the table reveals six things contributing to the perfect pedagogical content knowledge in the following order of rank: Teacher presents lesson content logically and clearly ( $3.40 > 3.16$ ) being the highest, followed by teacher links students' previous knowledge with the current topic ( $3.30 > 3.16$ ), teacher makes use of the chalkboard for



clarifications of linguistic concepts judiciously (3.30>3.16). The teacher encourages students to use the linguistic knowledge they are learning (3.20>3.16), the teacher exemplifies linguistic concepts taught with the daily life experience of students (3.20>3.16), and lastly, the teacher allows learners' inputs during teaching and Learning (3.20>3.16). The remaining four items do not contribute to the excellent English teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. Still, one is higher than the standard mean, that is, a teacher uses strategies to support students' Learning (3.10>3.00), and two are equal to the average norm, that is: teachers make use of classroom situations to explain linguistic concepts (3.00=3.00), teachers explains in clear terms, the rules of the linguistic concept being taught to students and (3.00=3.00)

**Table 5.** English Language Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge Level

S/N	ITEMS	Excellent	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Mean	SD
1.	Links students' previous knowledge with the current topic.	-	8 (40%)	10 (50%)	2 (10%)	-	3.30	.675
2.	Presents lesson content logically and clearly.	-	10 (50%)	8 (40%)	2 (10%)	-	3.40	.699
3.	Encourages students to participate in classroom discussions.	2 (10%)	6 (30%)	6 (30%)	6 (30%)	-	3.20	1.033
4.	Uses strategies to support students' Learning.	-	6 (30%)	10 (50%)	4 (20%)	-	3.10	.738
5.	Exemplifies linguistic concepts taught with the daily life experience of students.	-	8 (40%)	8 (40%)	4 (20%)	-	3.20	.789
6.	Makes use of classroom situations to explain linguistic concepts.	-	6 (30%)	8 (40%)	6 (30%)	-	3.00	.816
7.	Allows learners' inputs during teaching and Learning.	-	6 (30%)	12 (60%)	2 (10%)	-	3.20	.632
8.	Explains, in clear terms, the rules of the linguistic concept being taught to students.	-	4 (20%)	12 (60%)	4 (20%)	-	3.00	.667
9.	Gives students copious practical examples of the linguistic concepts being taught.	-	8 (40%)	2 (10%)	10 (50%)	-	2.90	.994
10.	Makes use of the chalkboard for clarifications of linguistic concepts judiciously.	-	8 (40%)	10 (50%)	2 (10%)	-	3.30	.675
Standard Mean = 3.00; Weighted Mean							3.16	

**Table 6.** English Language Teachers' Classroom Assessment Practices Level

S/N	ITEMS	EX	VG	G	F	P	Mean	SD
1.	Assesses students' previous knowledge and links to the present topic.	-	2 (10%)	14 (70%)	4 (20%)	-	2.90	.568
2.	Asks students questions that test their higher-order thinking skills.	-	-	4 (20%)	14 (70%)	2 (10%)	2.10	.568
3.	Uses assessment techniques that elicit students' engagement.	-	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	14 (70%)	-	2.40	.699
4.	Uses assessment techniques to promote positive classroom interactions.	-	-	4 (20%)	12 (60%)	4 (20%)	2.00	.667
5.	Uses adequate feedback to correct or strengthen students' understanding of linguistic concepts being taught.	-	-	6 (30%)	10 (50%)	4 (20%)	2.10	.738
6.	Asks questions from every student in the class, irrespective of their disposition to participate.	-	2 (10%)	6 (30%)	12 (60%)	-	2.50	.707
7.	Gives ample time for students to think about the questions before moving on.	-	-	8 (40%)	12 (60%)	-	2.40	.516
8.	Grades students on time.	-	-	10 (50%)	8 (40%)	2 (10%)	2.40	.699
9.	Gives class activities to strengthen their understanding of the linguistic concept taught.	-	-	10 (50%)	10 (50%)	-	2.50	.527
10.	Gives assignments to students to further strengthen their understanding of the linguistic concept taught.	-	2 (10%)	12 (60%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)	2.70	.823
Standard Mean = 3.00; Weighted Mean							2.40	

Table 6. reveals the weighted mean of 2.4 out of the maximum obtainable score of 5.00, which is lower than the standard mean of 3.00. This means that the classroom assessment of English teachers could be more excellent but fair because the weighted mean is not up to the average norm. The table also shows that seven items used to measure English teachers' classroom assessment contributed to the fair score. The seven items are: teacher assesses students' previous knowledge and links to the present topic (2.90>2.40), the teacher gives assignments to students to further strengthen their

understanding of the linguistic concept taught (2.70>2.40), the teacher provides class activities to enhance their knowledge of the linguistic concept introduced (2.50>2.40), the teacher uses assessment techniques that elicit students' engagement (2.40 = 2.40), the teacher gives ample time for students to think on the questions before moving on (2.40 = 2.40) and lastly, teacher grades students on time (2.40 = 2.40). However, two items do not contribute to teachers' fair classroom assessment.

Table 7. shows the weighted mean of 3.15 out of the maximum obtainable score of 5.00, which is higher than the standard mean of 3.00. This means that English language teachers have good classroom management. The table equally showcases that out of the ten items used to measure English teachers' classroom management, six things contributed to the excellent classroom management of teachers. These six items are reported as follows: teachers monitor classroom activities judiciously (3.40>3.15), teacher promotes learners' self-confidence by creating an interactive classroom atmosphere (3.30>3.15), the teacher uses voice audibly during lesson presentation (3.30>3.15), teachers maintains a positive teacher-student relationship (3.20>3.15), teacher demonstrates high level of self-control (3.20>3.15) and lastly teacher disallows chorus answer (3.20>3.15). The remaining four items do not contribute to teachers' excellent classroom management though two are higher than the standard mean of 3.00. The two items are: the teacher teaches in a well-arranged, neat, and orderly classroom (3.10>3.00), and the teacher manages time effectively (3.00 = 3.00).

The quantitative findings of this study revealed that the classroom practice of the selected English teachers in this study is above average, as observed in terms of subject mastery, pedagogical content knowledge, and classroom assessment but only fair in classroom management during classroom instructions. Most teachers selected for this study were qualified and experienced, while only some were. However, findings raise some questions about the classroom management strategies adopted in this study which, though indirectly, might impact students' achievement in English. This situation is similar to Wilson's (2011) study, which examined the pedagogical practices of English teachers in Parker County, US. However, Wilson focused on the language of instruction used in English. He found that English teachers' pedagogical practices during lesson delivery were more of English medium education, with most teachers emphasizing Standard American English during their English lesson delivery. In contrast, few welcome students' dialects, and the concerns raised about the place of students' language during English lessons were important. This is because they impact students' performances in English just like the kinds of strategies utilized for classroom management in this study might affect learners' performance.

This current study negates that of Mokotedi (2012), which found that the overall teachers' classroom practices regarding the reading strategies they adopted during reading needed to be better and could affect students' Learning and achievement in reading. The distinctions in the reports could be because of the dimension of classroom practice being investigated, differences in the study location, and the level of professional readiness of the teachers of both studies. For instance, Mokotedi's analysis was focused on teaching strategies for reading only, which is an aspect of English; the study was done in Botswana, and the examined English teachers were reported to have had inadequate professional training in reading methodology as such, could not adopt the appropriate

phonics and other reading instructions needed to teach reading successfully. On the other hand, this recent study examined English as a whole and focused attention on other classroom practices other than teaching strategies, the study was done in Nigeria, and the challenged teachers were reported to be experienced teachers, as revealed in their more-than-average scores in subject mastery, pedagogical content knowledge, teaching approach/strategies, and classroom assessment practice but only had a fair result in their classroom management practice.

**Table 7.** English Language Teachers’ Classroom Management Practices Level

S/N	ITEMS	EX	VG	G	F	P	Mean	SD
1.	Maintains a positive teacher-student relationship.			8 (40%)	4 (20%)	-	3.20	.789
2.	Teachers in a well-arranged, neat, and orderly classroom.			2 (60%)	4 (20%)	-	3.10	.876
3.	Promotes learners’ self-confidence by creating an interactive classroom atmosphere.			8 (20%)	4 (40%)	-	3.30	.949
4.	Monitors classroom activities judiciously.			6 (30%)	4 (20%)	-	3.40	.966
5.	Maintains discipline in the classroom.			10 (50%)	6 (30%)	-	2.90	.738
6.	Demonstrates a high level of self-control.			12 (60%)	2 (10%)	-	3.20	.632
7.	Manages time effectively.			12 (60%)	4 (20%)	-	3.00	.667
8.	Disallows chorus answer.			8 (40%)	4 (20%)	-	3.20	.789
9.	Walks through the classroom, observing students work.			8 (40%)	8 (40%)	-	2.90	.994
10.	Uses voice audibly during lesson presentation.			10 (50%)	2 (10%)	-	3.30	.675
							3.15	

### 3.3 Discussion

Although motivation is often viewed as a psychological arousal that propels performance, it is widely acknowledged that teachers can build, encourage, or even reduce it. This is because the main reasons for lack of motivation are often low self-confidence and anxiety, which could result from teachers' negative attitudes towards students, absence of positive reinforcements, absence of approval

and appreciation of students by teachers, and non-supportive classroom environments. All these are conditions that the teacher could create through their behavior and practice (Gardner, 2001; Dörnyei, 2005; Brophy, 2008; Renninger, 2009). English language learning in a second language context, for instance, has the English teacher as the perfect model for students to acquire the required skills in the English language. So such a teacher must display adequate classroom practices that would enhance students' interests and desires to learn the target language since learners' curiosities and hypotheses about the language they are learning are being answered and tested respectively in the classroom

Even though English teachers are at the forefront of imparting learners with permanent literacy in the English Language and helping students to build a solid foundation for academic success at the higher education level (FRN, 2004), yet, they face many challenges while performing their pedagogical duties which impact heavily on their classroom practices. For instance, typical classrooms in most Nigerian public schools see teachers facing several delimitating factors, such as large classroom sizes, poor infrastructures, inadequate teaching materials, etc. (Ossai, 2004). This situation usually affects the classroom practices of English teachers as it could make them inflexible. Therefore, English teachers' pedagogical approaches need to be continuously examined to improve their classroom practices, consequently ensuring students' motivation and achievement in the English language.

English language teaching entails many activities, and English teachers must support students' Learning through practical, interactive lessons that impart students with comprehensible linguistic inputs and modify their understandable outputs through quality assessment and classroom management. Classroom practice includes all a teacher does regularly during classroom interactions with students to bring about effective teaching and Learning (Kalu-Uche, 2010). Since teachers can only practice what they know, their classroom practices can be said to incorporate the pedagogical skills they display (Khader, 2012). These entail the teachers' knowledge of how to organize, represent, present, and assess subject matter topics of the curriculum according to the interests and abilities of learners in the classroom (Ball, Thames, and Phelps, 2008). Borg (2001) states that these teaching skills comprise their knowledge of the subject matter, the methods, and abilities displayed while delivering the content to students, which subsequently impact students' motivation and performance. Borg further submits that teachers must be aware of this influence and make sound instructional decisions. Effective teachers have adequate mastery of the subject content and can effectively pass this knowledge to the students irrespective of the situation they meet in the classroom.

English teachers' pedagogical skills usually involve their subject mastery, pedagogical content knowledge, classroom assessment techniques, and classroom management strategies they utilize in teaching students. These skills, when observed, form their pedagogical practices as showcased by them regularly during teaching and learning in the classroom. Studies (Fakeye, 2012; Adediwura and Bada, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000) have reported that the correlation between teachers' knowledge and practice is usually high. This is also averred by Olowoyeye and Alonge (2014), who submit that teaching effectively depends on the teachers' mastery of the subject matter. This is because

a teacher would only teach what he understands, which could be why some English teachers usually focus their teaching on some aspects of the language to the detriment of others.

An English teacher, therefore, needs to know and understand the nuances and nitty-gritty of his subject matter since the students regard them as an authority in the field, and they are undoubtedly the perfect model for students to acquire the required English language skills. But when students are left confused in the English language lessons with little or no clarifications given about the subject they are learning, they quickly lose interest in the subject matter and consequently perform poorly. Fakeye (2012) submits that a competent English teacher has adequate knowledge of the subject matter and understands such language's content, rules, and structure. Kamamia, Ngugi, and Thinguri (2014) equally aver that the teachers' subject mastery is the foundation upon which successful teaching/learning is based since students imitate what they are exposed to. This means that if students are exposed to teaching by a defective model who lacks adequate linguistic knowledge, they also become deficient. This might be why students have been recording low achievement in the English language. Some studies (Guimaraes, Sitaram, Jardon, Taguchi, and Robinson (2013) have supported that a teacher's subject mastery influences the performance of students in such a subject the teacher teaches. This means that more examination of English teachers' subject mastery needs to be continuously done since it is vital to their teaching practice.

Even when a teacher has mastery of the English language content, transmitting such knowledge to students requires academic content knowledge, which Singh (2019) confirms is necessary for imparting linguistic expertise to students in a way that would make them love the subject and perform excellently in it. This knowledge blends the teachers' understanding of their subject matter and the courses by which they teach their content knowledge to students via diverse methods and strategies. Effective teachers have adequate pedagogical content knowledge, and so employ various techniques and strategies for teaching their subject content in the classroom besides the general teaching methods. For instance, there are many English-language teaching methods, including the Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-lingual, Silent way Method, Total Physical Response Method, and Suggestopedia Method (Kolawole and Shittu, 2019).

Closely related to the methods are some specific strategies for teaching each language aspect of the English language that English teachers utilize vis-à-vis the practices in the classroom. English teachers can choose from these methods and techniques when teaching students. From the explanation above, we can conclude that a teacher can have an adequate mastery of his subject but cannot effectively transfer the knowledge to students because he lacks the teaching skills that would enable him to prepare and present the knowledge in understandable steps. Taylor, Pearson, Clark, and Walpole (2000) have reported that some English teachers they observed divided students into groups and individualized the teaching processes because of their small class size. In contrast, others engaged in a whole class teaching because of the large class size they needed to teach. It was, however, found that students whose teachers' individualized instructions performed higher in their tests than students whose teachers did not. In most Nigerian public schools with large class sizes, classroom teaching is not individualized but teacher-centered, and it has been reported that teachers who make their lessons

teacher-centered demotivate their students as students become passive learners rather than active participants in the teaching-learning process. Also, most English language teachers in Nigeria still use the Grammar Translation Method to teach students when there are better methods that are more effective that teachers can use to enhance achievement.

Pedagogical skills also require the skills of assessment techniques and management strategies in addition to that of content, methods, and systems for appropriate lesson delivery because these skills are needed in expanding students' cognitive and skillful perceptions of the English language, especially in a second language setting (Kalu-Uche, Alamina and Ovute, 2015). Therefore, the practice of classroom assessment through utilizing effective strategies that would test and enhance students' knowledge becomes pivotal in the teaching and learning process, and it constitutes an integral part of the English teachers' practice. According to Amusan (2016), quality teachers are more than just teachers who can teach well but can assess students effectively. According to Linn and Gronland (2005), assessment is an integrated process of determining the nature and extent of students' Learning and achievement. Akinpelu (2018) reports that English teachers usually assess students during the teaching-learning process by questioning them to stimulate, recall and mobilize their existing knowledge and experience to produce new understanding. Through quality assessment, teachers can observe and measure students' language use and give adequate repairs to their slips and deviant expressions.

Effective teachers not only assess students but also give students feedback on their assessment, which is why there is a shift from mere testing to evaluation, which intends to aid Learning (Lin and Gronland, 2005). It has been observed that most teachers rely on 'tests' only to assess students when they can be evaluated in different ways like classroom participation, group work, assignments, etc. This could have accounted for why many secondary school students dislike the English language (Jibowo, 2012). Also, most teachers wait till the end of the lesson before assessing, whereas students can be evaluated from the beginning to the back through questions, tasks given, etc. However, through quality and continuous assessment, students become active participants in the learning process in the classroom. In fact, through this process, they have better opportunities of getting higher marks in the English language, which would further motivate them to learn the language (Dilion, 2008). But, when the teacher cannot assess students effectively, students can become demotivated and perform poorly in English. Therefore, this calls for continuously examining how English teachers evaluate their students and its impact on student achievement.

The fourth pedagogical practice showcased by teachers in the classroom is how they manage their classrooms. Marzano (2003) submits that classroom management practice consists of the integration of four areas: "establishing and reinforcing rules and procedures, carrying out disciplinary actions, maintaining effective teacher-student relationships and maintaining an appropriate mental set for management" (Marzano, 2003). A positive practice of classroom management is usually achieved by four factors: how teachers regard their students, set up the classroom environment, teach their content skillfully, and how well they address students' behaviors (Digiulio, 2012). Many teachers have come into the classroom with canes that command students' attention. However, this only tenses

the learning environment and increases students' anxiety. When students are frequently told what they cannot do and punished for that, without telling them what they can do or being rewarded for it, they have a limited perception of their abilities. So they consequently lose interest totally in learning a second language. English teachers should, therefore, employ other methods of disciplining students other than terrifying them with canes.

Since the purpose of teaching and Learning of English language is to achieve communicative competence, English teachers, therefore, need to be skillful in the management of students and instructions in the language by ensuring a positive teacher-student relationship, giving adequate rewards, monitoring students' activities closely and disciplining students when required (Sunday-Piaro, 2018). These classroom management strategies would help them coordinate the classroom environment carefully so that students would be more relaxed to be motivated, and carefree to maintain attention in the teaching. This is because students' behavior, if poorly managed, could affect the teaching and learning process.

Moore (2008) reports that a poorly managed classroom would ultimately lead to low student learning outcomes. Therefore, poor classroom management by English teachers increases students' anxiety in most English classrooms in Nigeria, as Jibowo (2012) reported. Therefore, more examinations of English teachers' management skills must be continuously researched to ensure that the whole essence of teaching/learning is achieved.

There are few studies on classroom or pedagogical practices, and one such is that of Wilson (2011), which examines the pedagogical practices in English Language teaching in public secondary schools in Parker Country. The study surveyed 369 English teachers to discuss their attitude to and method of English teaching and answered six research questions. Findings reveal that most teachers emphasized Standard American English during their English lesson delivery, while few welcome students' languages. The study concluded by raising a question about the place of learners' dialects during English instruction.

Another related study is that of Mokotedi (2012), which investigated the pedagogical knowledge and teaching practices of reading among primary school teachers in Botswana. The thesis adopted the qualitative method and utilized semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and stimulated recall interviews to examine ten teachers' classroom practices. Data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using the qualitative approach.

The thesis focused on reading pedagogy and found that teachers' subject knowledge was inconsistent with their practices. Findings also revealed that teachers could not utilize diverse reading techniques and avoided phonic instructions while using activities such as reading aloud and pronunciation correction. The study concluded that teachers' classroom practices during reading instruction needed to be better as their inability to adopt phonics instruction and utilize diverse reading techniques could impact students' reading skills; hence, it was recommended that teachers should be equipped with adequate strategies for teaching reading.



#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, the classroom practices of English teachers in Akinyele Local Government are more traditional, as revealed in the teaching approach/strategies, classroom assessment practice, and classroom management practice. Findings also showed that English teachers' subject mastery, pedagogical content knowledge, and classroom assessment were average, but their classroom management was only fair. In addition, their approaches to English language teaching were more traditional. The findings of this study have implications for the teaching and Learning of the English language in Nigeria. First, the results imply that English teachers with adequate subject mastery and pedagogical content knowledge would motivate and teach successfully. This is because both variables enable English teachers to confidently teach the required knowledge to students in the appropriate manner that would encourage students to learn more and understand. The findings also imply that good assessment and management skills are needed to improve students' motivation and achievement in the English language. Therefore, it is essential that the teaching approach/strategies, classroom assessment practice, and classroom management practices in Akinyele Local government, Ibadan improves from the slightly average position to enhance students' performances in their examination.

##### *4.1 Recommendations*

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- (1) English language teachers should reflect on their classroom practices and improve them.
- (2) English language teachers should ensure synergy between their knowledge and actual practices.
- (3) English teachers should seek personal, professional growth through some postgraduate programs or attending conferences and workshops organized by the Language unit of the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, University of Ibadan, to be excellent teachers.
- (4) The government and other stakeholders in education in Nigeria should organize regular and free seminars and conferences on modern methods of teaching English to English language teachers in the country.

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