

Learners' Characteristics as Correlates of Effective English Language Teaching in English as a Second Language Classroom

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Abstract : Various factors have continued to bedevil the effective teaching and learning of English Language in Nigeria and prominent among these factors are learners' characteristics. Unfortunately, these particular factors seem to have recorded paucity of research efforts by scholars and the problem of lack of proficiency in the target language continues to linger. This study therefore investigates the relationship between specific learners' characteristics and effective teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) in senior secondary schools in Nigeria. To this end, Self-Determination, and Integrative Motivation Theories were applied to investigate motivation, language learning, learners' characteristics and its relationship to language proficiency. A survey of 500 students and 100 English Language teachers across 20 schools was conducted. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data and findings revealed that; specific learners' characteristics such as learners' age, learning style and motivation significantly determine the performance of students in English Language. Specifically, students with appropriate school age, visual learning style and intrinsic motivation, demonstrated English Language proficiency; as they performed better than students with extrinsic motivation, audio and kinaesthetic learning styles. Moreover, teachers related factors such as teaching experience; teaching strategies and teachers' extrinsic motivation also emerged as essential correlates of effective language teaching. The findings conclude that learning characteristics are significant factors that should be considered by the teachers and education planners for adequate, sequential and effective implementation of the ESL curriculum in Nigeria.

Keywords : senior secondary school, English as a second language, intrinsic motivation, Kinaesthetic learning style

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