IMPACT OF O'CONNOR ICT TOOL ON PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE WORDS AND MOTHER TONGUE ACCENT IN COMMUNICATION, TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES AMONG JUNIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN OVUNGWU SECONDARY SCHOOL, UMUAPU, ABIA STATE

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Abstract
The study was carried out to determine the impact of O'Connor ICT tool on pronunciation of English language words among Junior Secondary School students. Three research question were raised for the study: Would there be any significant effect of O'Connor ICT tool on Mother Tongue accent? Is there any significant effect of ICT tool on students' observance of syllable break among JSS students ? Would there be any significant effect of O'Connor ICT tool on observance of word and sentence stress? Quasi experimental research design was used with a population of 120 students. Simple Random Sampling technique was used to group the students into experimental group and control group respectively with thirty students in each group. Group A, the experimental group were taught with the O'Connor ICT tool on syllable break, word and sentence stress and mother tongue while group B, the control group were taught without any ICT tool. T-test of significance, standard deviation and mean were the statistical tools used in answering the research questions. The study findings revealed that those students taught with O'Connor ICT tools showed significant improvement. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to use recorded pronunciation passages like O'Connor ICT tool in teaching pronunciation.
Keywords: *Pronunciation, Mother Tongue Accent, English language, O'Connor ICT Model*

Introduction
English language is the mother tongue of Britain and other countries like Canada, United States of America, etc. It is used in every day interaction and communication in schools, churches, mosques, markets, judiciary, business setting, etc. In Nigerian, English language is used as a second language and it is spoken widely as it is the official language of Nigeria and medium of instructions in schools. It is recognized in all most all the fields of human endeavours like,education, commerce, journalism, medicine, engineering, agriculture, judiciary, politics. among others. It is generally accepted in Nigeria as the lingua franca. As a result of the level of utilization of the language, teachers are encouraged to source out modalities of teaching English language so as to make teaching and learning an interesting experience.

The article aims to determine, if teachers utilize O'Connor ICT tool in teaching pronunciation and to assist students to utilize recorded pronunciation passages in learning pronunciation and other aspects of learning too. Also, mother tongue, which is a language that a person learned as a child from the parents which he uses to establish the first long-lasting verbal contact, needs to be looked into in the teaching and learning activities. The statement of the problem: It has been observed that some teachers are not utilizing recorded pronunciation passages like O'Connor ICT in teaching pronunciation. If this is not checked properly it will affect the learning outcome of students and may reflect in their communication with other students and the society generally. Also, some students do not pronounce some English language words correctly even those who are not studying English as a full course of study. If English language words are not pronounced correctly, communication will be affected seriously. The theory used to back the study is the Cognitive Theory of Motivation which according to Cooper, (2007), talks about individual minds and normally manifests at the accomplishment of assigned tasks or achieving a set goal. When learners are motivated it affects their learning. Motivation is even one of the factors that affect learning. Hence, the need to source out means of motivating students/learners in their academic pursuit. Using ICT tool to teach for example, pronunciation is motivating enough.

In the rapidly changing world, basic knowledge of technology and Information Communication Technology tools are necessary for the teachers to enhance teaching and learning functions. The study used quasi-experimental design to determine how O'Connor Information Communication Technology tool can enhance students' learning outcomes in pronunciation. Pronunciation is an important aspect of English language and teachers are encouraged to teach this aspect of English language with care so that students can become competent in the usage of the language both in the school and when they graduate. Utilizing recorded pronunciation passages like O'Connor ICT model is beneficial for teachers to use as an aid in teaching pronunciation. Recorded pronunciation passages should be given to students in the classroom and even as take-home packages for practicing at homes. Pronouncing words correctly is very important in the teaching and learning experience. English language teachers are to have mastery of pronunciation before they can impart the skill to the students (Jibowo, 2005). Words and sentences must be stressed correctly. Proper sounds should be given to letters, words, syllables etc.

Priorities should be given in the teaching and learning of pronunciation. This is because, when words are pronounced wrongly, it poses problem in understanding and interpreting the words. Recorded pronunciation passages will assist teachers and students in ensuring mastery of pronunciation aspect of English language. There are varieties of English language which could cause confusion in pronunciation if not properly handled. So it behooves own teachers to rise up to their responsibilities in ensuring that pronunciation aspect of English language is taught properly. O'Connor ICT model on pronunciation is designed to teaching students observance of syllable breaks, word stress, sentence stress and guides students and teachers in ensuring that their mother tongue accent does not affect correct pronunciation of English words by continuous repetition of words that may pose difficult to master due to mother tongue influence in language teaching and learning. Mother Tongue interference in the teaching of pronunciation could be handled by constant practice of using recorded pronunciation passages in the practice of repetition of correction pronunciation of words. If this is done over and over, learners will begin to have mastery of the correct pronunciation.

Pronunciation
Pronunciation is important in the study of English language. Teachers are to be well equipped in the teaching of pronunciation and have mastery of the correct pronunciation before they can impart the knowledge to students. To this end, teachers are to ensure they engage in workshop attendance, seminars, further studies etc to get well equipped in the teaching of pronunciation. There should be clear enunciation as some students battle with not being sure or lack confidence in speaking . This causes students to speak quietly or unclearly and in this case, using audio tapes is recommended to aid the

teaching and pronunciation of words. Repetition of correct pronunciation of words assist students a lot. So teachers are to ensure that students are aided with recorded pronunciation tools so as to enable them engage in intensive repetition of words. Practice they say, makes perfect, if students engage in repetition and practice of English language words, they will become bold in the pronunciation of words. English language words, when wrongly pronounced, affect automatically the meaning of words.   The understanding of words starts with pronouncing them correctly.

Syllables
In pronunciation aspect of English language, words have syllable or syllables. This means that there is no word in English language that does not have at least one syllable. A syllable may be defined as a vowel sound that is connected or unconnected to consonants that form a unit of pronunciation (Christopher, 2019). Syllables, play vital role in phonological aspect of English language. It determines the rhythms of language, that is the poetic metre, prosody, and stress patterns. If a word has a single syllable like bath, it is referred to as a monosyllable which could be said to be monosyllabic. A word of two syllable like money, is referred to as disyllable or bisyllable/bisyllabic words. A word of three syllables is referred to as trisyllable and when it is more than three syllable, it is referred to as polysyllable. There are short and long vowel sounds in English language. The short vowel sounds are characterized with weak sounds, while long vowels are characterized with strong sounds.

Learning syllable rules is very germane in the study of English language. This is because failure to learn the rule will amount to encountering difficulty in reading, speaking, writing, spelling among others. Dividing Words into Syllables**:** There are rules guiding how English language words are divided. Brendan (2019) submitted the underlisted as some of the rules guiding how words are divided: All Syllables have at least one vowel: There is at least one vowel. So, the number of syllables in a world is actually the number of vowel sounds expected from that word.   The word, watermelon which is a four syllable word sounds so because it stresses the middle syllable, wa-ta-ME-lon and has four syllable words. The word towel has two vowel sounds and two is a two syllable word.

The second rule is to separate two consecutive consonants between vowels. For example rabbit (rab-bit), dessert (des-sert) etc. this means that if there are two consonants together, they should be divided with a dash between them. But if the consonants make a new sound (digraphs), they need not be separated, sounds like th, ch, sh etc. The third rule is to keep digraphs (two letters that combine to make a new sound) together. Digraphs as stated earlier are consonants that combine to form new sounds. This include words like - shampo (sham-po), theme (th-eme) etc. The forth rule is to keep vowel teams (two letters that combine to make a new sound) together. Some of the vowels teams include: oe, ea, ai, ee, ue, oo, oa etc. To keep them together for example water (wa-ter). The fifth syllable rule of dividing words is that if it is not a known vowel team, care should be taken to split up the vowels. Some example of words in this category include poem (po-em), lion (li-on) etc. Rule six is to separate prefixes and suffices from their root words. Prefixes are always attached at the beginning of words example predetermine (pre-determine). Suffix are added at the end of words for them to have different meaning, for example calculation (calcula-tion). Rule seven is to divide any compound word for example, waterside (water-side) line could also be used to separate them, (water|side). Rule eight and nine deal with long and short vowels. Long vowels are normally seen at the end of a word or syllable. In some situations, it can pair with silent or other words example, fro-zen,etc When consonants surround a long vowel, a divider is placed before the second consonant, for example, ti|ny and when consonants surround a short vowel, they there the division will be after te consonant. For example ri|ver. With these, it is not cumbersome to notice when the words are said aloud or seeing where they are separated. In rule nine, some words like buckle or fickle should be separated .There should be a separation by observing the 'le in ckle' in such words. Dividing such words should be before the 'le in ckle' for example, buckle. Ultimately, words that end with vowel and - le are not divided at all because they have only one syllable, example is file, tile etc

Examples:

One syllable words: thank, door, love, fish, ring, go. Two syllable words: Towel, manure, market, letter, dinner, love. Three syllable words: admission, absolute, celebrate, committee, chocolate, computer. Four syllable words: anticipate, application, irregular, January, undemanding, identical

Five Syllable words: Photosynthesis, Pennsylvania, California, alliteration, intimidating, abomination. Six syllable words: verisimilitude, responsibility, circumnavigation, discontinuity, incomprehensible, Word Stress: In a word or sentence, each syllable is not said with same force or strength with another. One syllable receives more emphasis than the others. So a syllable is always accentuated, that is one syllable is always said louder than others in a word or sentence. Stress is a relative emphasis placed on certain syllable in a word or sentence. Word stress is the stress placed on a syllable in a word. Ruben (2018) defined stress as emphasis placed on a specific syllable of a word when pronouncing it. Syllable in English words that have more than one word are not pronounced with same weight as each syllable could be stressed or unstressed. Syllables that are stressed are always louder than unstressed ones. This is because air comes out of the lungs with more power when such syllables are pronounced. In the following words, stress is identified differently: photograph (PHO-to-graph) the stress is on the first syllable, watermelon (wa-ter-ME-lon) the stress is on the third syllable, teacher (TEACH-er) the stress is on the first syllable, above (aBOVE) the stress is on the second syllable, conversation (converSAtion) the stress is on the third syllable, interesting (INteresting) the stress is on the first syllable, demand (deMAND) the stress is on the second syllable etc. It is important to state that one word will always have only one stress. Also, the syllable that is not stressed is a weak syllable. Word stress assist learners of English language in improving pronunciation, reading and comprehension aspect of English language.

Sentence Stress: If stress is placed on syllables within words, it is referred to as sentence stress. Sentence stress according to Rubens (2017) is the emphasis that certain words have in utterances. Examples of sentence stress:

He is **happier** here. The **footballer** played roughly. He is very **correct** in that response. The goat ran across the **expressway.** What a view from the **rooftop.** To whom is the **memorandum** addressed**?** There is an **oasis** in the desert. A slippery **tile** cause the damage. Ensure the **umbrella** covers the baby.

Mother tongue accent: Mother tongue plays a vital role in the language acquisition and learning. Due to its importance, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1999, designated February 21 of every year as the International Mother language Day). This is to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by diverse people of the world. In Nigeria for example, a child born to a Yoruba parent, who speaks the language will automatically have Yoruba as his mother, native or first language (L1). If the child goes to school, because English language is the medium of instruction in schools, he will now acquire English language as a second language (L2). Although many parents speak English language to their children at home, in most cases, it is always a second language. But if a Yoruba parent who lives in United Kingdom or America gives birth to a child and speaks only English to the child, and the child attends school where English language is the language of instruction, the child's first and second language becomes English language (L1 & L2).

Therefore, a language that a person learned as a child from the parents which he used to establish the first long-lasting verbal contacts, is always referred to as the person's native language, mother tongue or first language (L1). Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Thesaurus defined Mother tongue as the first language that one learns when one is a baby, rather than a language learned at school or as an adult. From this definition, a child who grew up from a bilingual home or homes could have more than one mother tongue.

First language according to Ute (2020) does not have to be one. This is because there are bilingual families where parents of a child speak different languages. The tendency is that the child growing up in

such bilingual or multilingual home, will be exposed to more than one language from infancy which will automatically become the child's first contact languages.

Mother tongue accent affects most English language learners. Often times, learners of English language forced themselves to sound like the native speakers of English language by intensifying effort to reduce their mother tongue influence or accents on the second language. According to Sarah (2015) many learners of English as a Second Language, feel that Mother tongue accent which they grew up with will vanish overnight by engaging in learning English language phonetics. This can only get reduced with constant learning and engaging in pronunciation of words regularly. Repetition of correct pronunciation of words has been found to be easier with recorded pronunciation passages. Mother tongue or first language of any child has a powerful influence on the child. In most cases, it has lasting influence on the child in his bid to have mastery of the second language. Most pronunciation errors are due to mother tongue accent and influence on the acquisition of second language. Words (2019) submitted that mother tongue accent or influence manifests in the form of incorrect pronunciation. This happens mostly when the mother tongue accent interfs with the pronunciation of Since pronunciation in communication in the class or outside the classroom is very vital, there is need for regular practice of correct so that learners will have mastery of the correct pronunciation of words.

English language
Modern English metamorphosed from the earliest from of English referred to as old English or Anglo-Saxon around c.550-1066 CE. Old English originated from West Germanic dialects often classified as North Sea Germanic. The language was spoken by the Angles, Saxons and Jutes. When the Roman economy and administration collapsed around the 5th century, the Anglo-Saxons settled in Britain and by the 7th century, the Germanic language of the Anglo-Saxons gained dominance in Britain and replaced the languages of the Roman Britain (McCrum R, MacNeil R, Cran W. 2003). Old English was made up of the Anglian dialects and the Saxon dialects. The Anglian dialects include the Merciana and the Northumbrain while the Saxon dialects comprises the Kentish and the West Saxon. As a result of the reforms brought about by King Alfred in the 9th century, coupled with the influence of the kingdom of Wessex, West Saxon dialect became recognized as the standard written variety. The grammar of old English was similar to modern German difficult for mastery by modern English speakers who did not study old English. Some literatures written in Old English include epic poem written by Beowulf and others (Mair, 2006)

As a result of language contact, around 8th - 12th century, old English started transforming into middle English. This was during the period of the conquest of England by William the Conqueror in 1066. This gain more prominence from 1200 to 1450. From the 12th century, Middle English had grown and was spoken until its translation to early Modern English around 1500.   Some literatures of Middle English include The *Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer and others (Northrup 2013). The usage of Early Modern English began around 1500 -1700. Around 1430, during the reign of Henry V, English started gaining recognition and prestige. The Court of Chancery in Westminster started to use English in the official papers and documents. Printing industries were introduced to England around 1476 by William Caxton which utilized the Modern English in printing and from there wider spread of early modern English continued. Literatures written in the Early Modern English include William Shakespeare and the translation of the Bible by King James I. Still Early modern English had some modifications evident in the fact that some grammatical features of Shakespeare writings and even the Old King James version of the Bile were not modern enough (Labov 2012)

Modern English evolved explicit norms for standard usage. This got spread by the late 18th century when the British Empires had dispersed English all through the regions they have colonized. Modern English became used in commerce science and technology, formal education etc. As at 2016, over 400 million people could speak modern English as their first language and 1.1 billion could speak it as a second language. Countries in the world with many speakers of English language used the international standard

of English. English does not belong only to descendants of English settlers nor to only one country. It has become an international language of communication especially among the anglophone countries (Hickey 2005). English language is fast becoming the global language due its usage by many countries of the world. It is the language of the Britons, Americans etc. In some countries, English language is used as a first language and in some countries, second language or foreign language. It is used in attaining numerous functions and recognitions. English language is the official language and lingua franca of Nigerians (Olabode 2012). It is accepted in Nigeria as the language of the judiciary, government, commerce, education, politics among others. Since it is used as medium of instruction in schools, teachers are to be encouraged to devise means of teaching the language to learners so that they will be fluent in the use it. Ademowo (2016) re-iterated that despite the fact that language policies in Nigerian support the use of indigenous languages, it is still English language that is used in almost every field of human endeavour in Nigeria.

O'Connor Information Communication Technology Tool
Joseph Desmond O'Connor (December 10, 1919- July 15, 1998) was a British Linguist and Professor of Phonetics at University College, London. He designed an ICT tool on pronunciation which has aided teaching and learning. His ICT pronunciation tool centered majorly on: word stress, sentence stress, syllable break among others. Continues use of his ICT tool on pronunciation has been found to be useful in arresting the challenges teachers and students face in mother tongue interference of pronunciation of English words. The teaching and learning of observance of syllable break, sentence stress and word stress has been made easy for the students to cope with their study of Pronunciation in particular and English language generally.

Communication: The whole essence of learning pronunciation is to communicate effectively at home, school and other places. There is hardly anything anyone can do without effective interaction and communication with one another. When English language words are pronounced correctly, it will definitely lead to effective communication. Teachers in every discipline need to ensure that students pronounce words correctly to ensure smooth communication experience. The teaching and learning activities cannot take place effectively except words are pronounced correctly. This is the only way to ensure that classroom interaction between teachers and learners are effectively done.

Objective of the Study
The objective of this study, shall be to:
i.   ascertain the impact of O'Connor ICT tool on mother tongue accent and pronunciation of English language words
ii.   determine the impact of O'Connor ICT tool on students' observance of syllable breaks in pronunciation
iii.   to determine the impact of O'Connor ICT tool on students observance of word and sentence stress

Research Questions
1.   Would there be any significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communicatio Technology tool on mother tongue accent on English language?
2.   Is there any significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology   tool on students' observance of syllable breaks?
3.   Would there be any significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on observance of word and sentence stress ?

Methodology
The study adopted quasi-experimental research design. The reason for using this design is to ensure the respondents engage in practicing with the ICT tools where they will be observed on how they pronounce

with the tools. The study investigated the impact of O'Connor ICT tools on observance of syllable breaks, mother tongue accent and word/sentence stress in pronunciation.

The population of the study comprised of One hundred and Twenty Students (120) Junior Secondary School students from Ovungwu Secondary School, Umuapu, Isialangwa, Abia State. Purposive Sampling Technique was used to select Ovungwu Secondary School, Umuapu, Isialangwa South Local Government Area, Abia State out of the three Government Secondary Schools in in the Local Government Area. This is because Ovungwu Secondary School, Umuapu, Abia State Umuapu, Isiala Ngwa is one the oldest secondary school and has all the facilities that is needed like constant electricity, computer devices etc for the study. Sixty (60) Junior Secondary Students (JSS) who are in year two (JSS2) in the stated school were used because their syllabus and scheme of work cover the area of the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to place the students into experimental group and control group. Students in group A (thirty students) were taught with O'Connor's ICT tool/recorded pronunciation passages while group B (thirty students) were taught without any ICT tool. They were taught with textbooks on pronunciation only. Group A is the experimental group while group B students is the control group.

Instrument
Recorded pronunciation passages from O'connor ICT tool was administered to group A, that is the experimental group, while group B students were taught without any recorded pronunciation passage. They were taught by using only the English language text book on pronunciation. At the end, students were given test on pronunciation passages where their abilities on syllable breaks, mother tongue accents, word and sentence stress were tested and ascertained.

Data Analysis
Data was analysed using mean, standard deviation and t- test of significance.

Results
Research Question 1:
Would there be any significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on mother tongue accent and pronunciation of English language?

Table 1: O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on mother tongue accent and pronunciation of English language

Parameters	N	Mean	STD	T-cal	P	Remark
Experiment	30	9.69	5.08	7,76	.<0.05	Significant
Control	30	21.23	3.01			

From the table one above, the result shows that there is significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on mother tongue accent and pronunciation of English language on the experimental group with mean of 9.69, standard deviation of 5.08 with t-test of 7.76 at 0.05 level of significance

Research Question 2
Is there any significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on students observance of syllable breaks in pronunciation?

Table 2:O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on students observance of syllable breaks in pronunciation

Parameters	N	Mean	STD	T-cal	P	Remark
Experiment	30	10.69	4.51	2.63	.<0.05	Significant
Control	30	13.58	0.62			

From the table 2 above, the result shows that there is a significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology model on Junior Secondary students' observance of syllable break in pronunciation of English language words on the experimental group. The mean of 10.69, standard deviation of 4.51 and t-test of significance of 2.63 at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 3
Is there any significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology   tool on students observance of word and sentence stress?

Table 3: T-test analysis of effects of O'Connor's ICT Model on Word and Sentence Stress

Parameters	N	Mean	STD	T-cal	P	Remark
Experiment	30	4.78	2.91	8.18	.<0.05	Significant
Control	30	12.06	1.91			

From the table above, there is a significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Model on word and sentence stress with mean of 4.78, standard deviation of 2.91 and 8.18 test of significance at 0.05 level of significance.

Findings of the Study
Findings of the study revealed that students taught with O'Connor's ICT tool showed significant improvement in the pronunciation of English words in the area of syllable breaks, word/sentence stress and mother tongue accent. While Group B students taught with only textbook on pronunciation performed lower that the Group B. Therefore, O'Connor's ICT tool has significant impact in teaching and learning including pronunciation in English Language for effective teaching and learning.

Discussions
Based on the findings of the study, Junior Secondary School students of Ovungwu Secondary School, Umuapu, Isialangwa South Local Government Area, Abia State showed improvement in their study of pronunciation in the areas of: syllable breaks, mother tongue accent and word/sentence stress. O'Connor's Information Communication Technology Model has great impact on students' performances:
There is a significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on Mother Tongue accent and pronunciation of English language words
There is a significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on word and sentence stress.

Conclusion
The study was carried out to ascertain the impact of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on Junior Secondary students' performance in English language pronunciation in Ogun State. The results of the study show that there is a significant effect of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool on syllable breaks, word and sentence stress and mother tongue ascent in English language pronunciation. Which assist in general education attainment of learners and in teaching too.

Recommendations
Teachers are encouraged to use recorded pronunciation devices like O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool in teaching pronunciation aspect of English language. School authorities in collaboration with the Government should supply computers in secondary schools to help use these devices in teaching and learning. Students are encouraged to welcome the use of O'Connor's Information Communication Technology tool in learning English language pronunciation. Parents are to encourage their wards to use ICT tools and devices at home so as to have mastery of their utilization in learning.

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