



## Research Article

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## Oral Record Form and Students' Achievement in Supra-Segmental features among Senior Secondary School Students in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State

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**Abstract:** The title of this paper is oral record form and students' achievement in English supra segmental features on Senior Secondary School II students in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. The study was an experimental study of pre-test – post-test of non-equivalent control group. The population of the study consisted all the senior secondary two students in the Abakaliki Education Zone. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 4 intact classes comprising 112 students – 58 for treatment group while 56 intact students class were used as control group. The treatment group comprised of 30 male and 28 females. The instrument for data collection was Oral English Record on Supra-Segmental Feature English Achievement (ORESAT). The instrument comprised questions from supra segmental features in English on word list, stress, word and sentence phrasing, intonation and oral composition. The instrument was validated by experts in the English Language Education and the Science Education Department in the Faculty of Education. The instrument was further subjected to reliability test in a test retest using 20 students who were not part of the study. An index of 0.748 was realized and this warranted the use of the instrument. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while analysis of covariance ANCOVA was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Result indicated that oral record form on supra segmental features of English greatly improve students mean achievement scores (2). No significant difference existed in the mean achievement score male and female students. Based on the findings, it was recommended that (1) Since ORASAT improve students achievement greatly in oral english, teachers should adopt its usage in teaching supra segmental features (2) Male and female should be taught using the ORASAT in supra-segmental features (3) Government should train and retrain teachers in the production and use of oral record forms on the supra-segmental features in English through seminars and workshops.

**Keywords:** Supra-Segmental features, English, Oral Record Form, Achievement, Syllable, Teachers..

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## INTRODUCTION

Good pronunciation of English words is essential in the study of English language and it serves as part of the English language skills which students must learn and use effectively. Borden (2003) is of the view that supra segmental features of English are important in both accurate production of language sounds and perception of speech, Collins *et al.* (2008) explain that supra segmental features are concerned with those elements of speech that are not individual phonetic segments but with properties of syllabus and larger units of speech such as intonation, stress, rhythm which contribute to linguistic functions in utterances. Supra segmental may reflect in various features of a speakers utterances which include the emotional state of a speaker. The form of an utterance made can be a statement, question or command. Example

- Beatrice seemed a nice girl to me (falling tone) ↓
- I saw him today and invited him for dinner (Rising tone) ↑
- Although tired he went on with his work (Rising and falling tone) ↑↓
- The students are happy Aren't they (falling and Rising tone) ↓↑

In making a word or a sentence to be clearer, stress which is the force placed on a word while speaking can be used. English language has stress on the content word such as verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs while Adjectives determines, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, conjunctions and pronouns are not stressed (Miller *et al.* 2008). Stress is important in speech. Ashby & Maidment (2005) are of the view that stress functions as a means of making syllabus prominent. Example CUP, PainTER, River, telePHONE, agGRESSIVE, instiTUTE, speCIALLY, graduATION. Stress as in above can be monosyllabic, syllabic multi or syllabic word and from syllabic word supra segmental features of English language seem to be difficult to teach and learn, yet, are very important in the study of English language for students achievement and language learners to master. Stress rhythm and intonation differentiate the language learner from the mediocre second language speaker and it results in a native-like accent. Instructors usually aim at a native – like pronunciation and expect a near perfection style to native and non native speakers which may not necessarily be native – like. This approach does not aim for perfection because it is too ambiguous and

perhaps seems unattainable for most learners (Chung, 2005). This is conventional method which does not use any instructional support to lead to students' participation and this seems to lead to poor achievement in English. Oral record form seems to fill this gap.

Oral record form is a recorded instruction which assists students to gain deeper knowledge and insight in the comprehension lessons, featuring supra segmental features. The students are meant to receive their normal lessons and then the lesson is assisted through playing of oral record form on the lessons received. The oral record form has oral English lesson recorded. A well packaged taped oral English language instruction would likely lead students to good performance in English. This package consists of word list, stressing, phrasing and intonation (reading test) and oral composition. These would enable the students to excel in all aspects of English as the teacher makes the students to listen to the cassette after teaching them. Word list helps them to listen to the correct pronunciation of sounds in word stressing and phrasing and it helps them to correctly pronounce words in group and single utterances while intonation helps them to listen to the tune and meanings of words and sentences in statements, questions and lists of items. Oral composition would enable them to present other thought and ideas through speech on a chosen topic which provides them with the opportunity to apply what they learnt in the oral package support instruction. This is believed would improve students' academic performance.

Unfortunately, the oral record forms are not used in most schools. Teachers adopt the conventional teaching method without support. The focus of this paper is to find out if Oral Record Form would enhance the students' mean academic achievement scores as against the conventional teaching method.

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Most second language learners use their first language tone to learn pronunciation and use of English language and most teachers seem to avoid teaching of this aspect – supra segmental features in English. Both teachers and students seem to find supra segment aspect of the English language difficult because they only depend on the teacher's teaching without support (Onigbo, 2000). Use of oral record form seems would help both teacher and student not only to enhance learning but would also help the teacher to evaluate self and improve on weak areas of instruction. Oral record which is a recorded instruction that is well packaged on the areas of supra segmental aspect of English such as listening comprehension, dialogue, discussion depicting syllables and stress, tone, intonation, and rhyme help to support teachers instruction and draw students to deeper insight on supra segmental features.

Unfortunately most teachers of oral English do not use oral record form to boost students understanding of the lessons and this no doubt lead to students' abysmal performance in this aspect of the English language. The oral English constitutes 25% of the total scores in the overall English and students perform poorly in it and this also affects their overall performance in English negatively. Use of oral record form therefore seems necessary and it is believed would boost students' performance. It is on the basis of this that this paper is directed to find the effect of oral record form on supra segmental features of English on students' mean achievement scores.

## Purpose of the Study

The study leads to investigate the effect of oral record form on supra segment features on students mean achievement score in English. Specifically, the study tends to investigate.

- Effects of oral record form on students' mean achievement scores in supra segmental features.
- Effects of oral record form on male and female students' mean achievement scores in English supra segmental features.

## Research questions

The study is guided by the following research questions.

- What is the mean achievement score of students taught supra segmental features in English using oral record form and those taught using conventional teaching method?
- What is the mean achievement score of male and female students taught supra segmental features using oral record form?

## Hypotheses

The following were null hypotheses formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H01:** There is no significant difference in the mean achievement score of students taught supra segmental features using conventional teaching method oral form.

**H02:** There is no significant difference achievement score of male and female students taught supra segmental features using oral record form.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Oral record form with its record easel measures expressive language, requiring the examinee to answer questions, finish sentences and generate sentences in response to visual and oral prompts. The oral record form evaluates the four language processes on form separate scale, listening comprehension, oral expression, reading expression and written expression (Woolfolk, 2016). This can be used to provide a complete and integrated picture of oral and written language skills across a wide age range, (Woolfolk,

2016). This record form leads to students being enhanced as it serves as a support to the teachers teaching Smith (2008) states that use of Oral Record Form is a fascinating exploration of a complex topic. She explains that real personal engagement with the topics are clearly learnt – a great deal about the subject (Edexel, 2008). This helps to support teachers' instructional lesson delivery and makes it easier for students.

Oral and written language scales identify students with learning disabilities, language disorders and related difficulties. These language difficulties identified can help the teacher to discover areas to emphasize especially in supra segmental features of English <https://www.pearsonassessments.com>.

Oderinde, (1998) states Oral Records are indeed vital in teaching listening comprehension one can play several times, stops why he/she likes to rewind and play back. Natural voices must be part of the pupils experiences (Oderinde, 1979).

The oral record form is an instructional aid which help a teacher assess lesson content delivery in areas such as listening comprehension and it contains aspects of segmental features. Just like textbooks. Nwoke (1987) states that the overall aim of language is to in steal in the learner the skills to communicate in the target language, this is what the oral record form does. Adeediran (1979) and Olabisi (2002) states that teaching of the English language does not provide enough opportunities for learners to develop communication competence skills especially in mastery of supra segmental features but with support of the Oral Record Forms in listening comprehension which tests all the aspects in supra segmental features, its learning becomes easy. The form of language skills can be mastered especially the speaking skill which comprises more of the supra segmental features in English through involving learners in hands on communicative activities and giving students the opportunities to listen to the speakers in the English language as that would give students the opportunity to imbibe correct English nuances (Naziratta-Alla, 2012). This is what the oral record form is meant to achieve.

Studies show that gender affects students' achievement in English especially in speaking skills, which pertains listening comprehension <https://globallisteningcentre.org>. The study depicted that gender difference in listening has little evidence to no evidence suggests that members of one gender are better listeners than members of the other. Men and women can listen equally well. Listening abilities appears to be more due to individual differences and circumstances than due to gender. Carin Jansez Global Listening Board 2019 global listening centre.

Jie & Tenglan (2003) found that female performed better than male in listening comprehension. The study showed that gender has a significant relationship with students attitude to listening <https://www.liste.org/article>.

<https://pdf.semanticscholar.org>. Also Z sobhani 2018 find no relationship between gender.

Whitemore (2015) carried out study on the roll of culture and gender in listening and it indicated that women are better listeners than men and also discovered that this is as a result of nurture rather than nature (study.com). Amin (2003) established that gender influences aural pragmatic understanding and that women outperformed men in answering inferential comprehension questions of aural proficiency tests. Gruber (2019) rated male and female speakers equally effective in listening comprehension and public speaking. Tavakoli & Karimnia (2017) studied on types of discourse markers (DMS) used in the spoken language of Trainman Advanced EFL learners and the possible impact of gender on participant use of DMS indicated that female significantly used more DMS compared with the males.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was an experimental design of pre-test post-test of non-equivalent group. In this study two intact classes each for the treatment and the control group were used. One group was 8exposed to treatment while the other group did not receive treatment. Students in the treatment group were to listen to the oral record form which contains different types of reading that test different aspects of the supra segmental features of the English language which includes syllable stress intonation and rhyme. The study was carried out in the Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State students in the contract group were taught using the traditional method. The sample population consisted of 112, 58 for treatment group and 54 for controlled group. The 58 treatment group consisted of 30 males and 28 females. The instrument for data collection comprised of 20 word lists which carried 1 mark each and was equalled to 20 marks, 10 stressing and phrasing were assigned 4 marks each which equalled to 40 marks, 5 intonation test was assigned 4 marks each and equalled 20 marks and oral composition test was assigned 20 marks. In the tests, candidates were expected to pronounce each word correctly in the emphasized sound marked out in the word list. In the stressing and phrasing, the students were instructed to listen and pick out the correct word(s) that received the stress. In the intonation, students were required to listen and mark correctly the tone on the listed word rise, fall, rise fall, fall rise.

In the oral composition test, the students were required to speak on a chosen topic of their choice from the 4 options provided (a) Road Accident (b) Girl or Boy which is more important, (c) Environmental

cleanliness (d) Youths Unemployment. Each candidate was required to speak fluently on any of the topic. The instrument was validated by English language experts. Students that were not part of the study and outside the area of study were made to answer the questions in a test rest and an index of 07.38 was realized as the reliability index and this warrants the use of the instrument. Research assistants were trained by the researcher on the use of the Oral Record Form but the test itself was conduct and marked by the researcher. The teachers taught their normal lessons only to the control group while the experimental groups were taught their normal lessons in addition to the use of the oral record form. This lasted for four weeks at the end

of which, the 9 test was conducted. The researcher collated, compared and analysed the scores. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Covariance ANCOVA.

## PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

### Research Question 1

What is the achievement mean score of students taught English supra segmental features using oral record form and those taught without the package?

**Table 1.** Achievement Mean Score of Students Taught With Oral Record Form and Those Who Taught Using Normal Lecture

Methods	No	$\bar{x}$	SD
With Oral Record Form	58	37.21	3.33
Without Oral Record Form	54	22.59	2.78

Results in Table 1 indicated mean of 37.21 for students on use of Oral Record Form against 22.59 for those who were not taught using Oral Record Form.

### Research Question 2

What is the achievement mean score of male and female students taught oral English using Oral Record Form?

**Table 2.** Achievement Mean Score of Male and Female Students Taught using Oral Record Form

Variable	Gender	No	$\bar{x}$	SD
With Oral Record Form	Male	30	38.25	29.67
Without Oral Record Form	Female	28	38.92	3.68

Results on Table 2 indicated that male have mean of 38.25 and SP of 29.67 while female have 38.92 and SD of 3.68.

**Table 3.** ANCOVA Result on Teaching Methods

Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig of F	Alpha level
Covariates	998.122	1	998.112	116.679	.000	
PRETEST	998.122	1	998.112	116.679	.000	
Main effects	2046.047	1	2046.047	239.180	.000	
METHODS	2046.169	1	2046.047	239.180	.000	0.05
Explained	3044.169	2	1522.084	177.929	.000	
Residual	453.385	53	8.554			
Total	3497	55	63.592			

Significant at  $p < 0.05$

**Table 4.** ANCOVA Result Based on Gender

Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig of F	Alpha level
Covariates	.717	1	.717	.069	.795	
PRETEST	.717	1	.717	.069	.795	
Main effects	40.556	1	40.556	3.913	.059	
METHODS	40.556	1	40.556	3.913	.059	0.05
Explained	41.273	2	20.637	1.991	.157	
Residual	269.485	26	10.365			
Total	310.759	28	11.099			

Significant at  $p < 0.05$

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the analysis of data on table 1 and 3 revealed that the experimental group on the oral record form performed better than those of the control group. The mean score of students in the experimental group indicated that their score on the supra segmental features on word list, stress and phrasing, intonation and oral composition performed better than those in the control group. The results of this study as illustrated statistically from the table shows that the 177.929 is higher than the significance of F..000 at 0.05 level of significance.

The findings are in line with those of Smith (2008) who discovered that the use of the oral record form is a fascinating exploration of a complex topic. She` showed real personal engagement with the issue clearly learnt a great deal about the topic. The significance of the findings indicates that oral record form plays a great role in students learning and in their performance.

From the data on table 2 and 4 it is quite clear that the oral record form used in teaching the Oral English supra segmental feature did not show any gender difference. This finding is in line with Guber who rated male and female equally effective in listening comprehension and public speaking. This is against the findings of Amin (2003) who discovered that women out performed men in answering inferential comprehension questions of aural proficiency tests. The findings is also at variance with the findings of Tavakoli & Karimnia (2017) who established that female significantly used DMS compared to the male on spoken language in Iran.

Again, the study implies benefit accruing from the use of oral record form. The study revealed that oral record form provided a fascinating and motivating instructional aid in oral English. This understandably leads students being enhanced as it serves as a support to teachers' lesson delivery.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Supra segmental features is a crucial part of the oral English as it gives meaning and leads to complete comprehension of global use of the English language and all aspect of the English language skills. Most students find this aspect of the oral English difficult to learn and it leads to student poor academic achievement. It discovered that most teachers teach this aspect without support which makes the lesson boring and it leads to poor students achievement. Oral Record

Form is discovered to support students' understanding of the teachers' lessons. It is a support that re-emphasized teachers lesson and tests their ability

in the lesson taught and also provides students with better insight on the areas they find difficult. The implication is that both boys and girls are given the same opportunity using oral record form and that non will be educationally disadvantaged.

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that, English Language teachers, stakeholders in education and school administrator should endeavour to sponsor procure oral record forms on topics in both supra segmental features and the segmental aspects of the oral English lessons. Teacher should always use Oral Record Form as a support to lessons in any topic.

The government should also train teachers on this aspect of the English. This will make the lesson more interactive, interesting and achieves better in oral English and the English language generally.

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