

English Grammar Competence for Monotechnic Students: Parental Responsibility as an Indispensable Instrument

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Abstract

This study examines the role of parental responsibility in developing English grammar competence among monotechnic students in Nigeria. Drawing from sociocultural theory and empirical evidence, this research explores how parental factors including education level, income, occupation, and home environment significantly influence students' academic achievement in English grammar. The study reveals that parental involvement serves as an indispensable instrument in fostering grammatical competence, particularly within the unique educational context of Nigerian monotechnic institutions. The study concludes with recommendations for policy makers, educational institutions, and parents to strengthen the home-school partnership in grammar education. This study adopts a qualitative, descriptive research design grounded in a systematic review of peer-reviewed literature. A structured search was conducted across Google Scholar, ERIC, and ResearchGate, covering publications from 2019 to 2025 and focusing on parental involvement, English grammar competence, and academic achievement in Nigeria and comparable multilingual educational settings. Purposive sampling guided the selection of 47 relevant studies. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring conceptual relationships across the reviewed literature. Institutional examination records from Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igbo-Ora (General Studies, English Grammar, 2022-2024) provided empirical performance data. Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, supplemented by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, served as the analytical lens through which parental influence on grammar development was interpreted. Going by the findings of this study, it is observed that the competence and academic achievement of the students in English Grammar is best enhanced when parents live up to their responsibilities.

Keywords: English grammar, monotechnic education, parental responsibility, academic achievement, sociocultural theory

Introduction

Educational institutions throughout Nigeria, including monotechnics, polytechnics, and universities, depend fundamentally upon their students' academic achievements to demonstrate their impact and effectiveness in national development (Al Bataineh et al., 2019). The success of these institutions, particularly in English grammar competence, reflects not merely individual student capability but the broader socio-economic progress of the nation. In developing countries such as Nigeria, academic achievement assumes particular significance, often measured through students' performance in English grammar as a cornerstone of language proficiency (Syakur et al., 2020).

The Nigerian educational system mandates English as a core subject, recognizing its critical role as the primary language of instruction, communication, and information access across all educational levels. However, a concerning disconnect emerges between policy mandates and actual student engagement with English grammar learning (Neumann et al., 2019). This disconnection becomes particularly problematic within monotechnic institutions, where students from diverse linguistic backgrounds must master English grammar as a prerequisite for their National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) qualifications.

Recent examination data from monotechnic institutions in Southwest Nigeria reveals a troubling decline in English grammar performance, with achievement rates falling between 5-14% from 2020 to 2022 (Results and Academic Planning, 2022). This decline necessitates urgent investigation into the multifaceted factors influencing grammar competence, with particular attention to the role of parental responsibility as a potentially transformative element.

The significance of parental involvement in educational outcomes has been extensively documented globally, yet its specific application to English grammar competence within Nigerian monotechnic contexts remains underexplored. This study addresses this gap by examining how parental responsibility functions as an indispensable instrument for developing grammar competence amongst monotechnic students.

The impetus for this investigation arises from a convergence of institutional evidence and broader sociolinguistic realities in Nigeria. The Nigerian monotechnic system, operating under the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), serves a student population that is often first-generation tertiary learners from economically diverse households. For these students, English grammar competence is not merely an academic requirement but a critical gateway to professional certification, workplace integration, and upward social mobility. Despite the centrality of English grammar in the National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) curricula, institutional records reveal a sustained decline in pass rates, underscoring a systemic challenge that extends beyond the classroom. Recent scholarship across Sub-Saharan Africa increasingly identifies the home environment as a primary but under-leveraged determinant of academic language outcomes (Adeyeye, 2023; Anierobi et al., 2024). In the Nigerian multilingual context, where students navigate between indigenous languages and English as the medium of instruction, parental engagement assumes heightened significance. Yet the specific interplay between parental responsibility and English grammar competence within monotechnic institutions remains conspicuously absent from the scholarly literature, constituting the knowledge gap this study systematically addresses.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The study aims to investigate parental responsibility as an indispensable instrument for students' 'academic success in English Grammar among the monotechnic students. The specific objectives are to:

1. identify the level of competence in English Grammar among students in monotechnics;
2. examine the status of parental responsibility towards English Grammar competence among the students in monotechnic;
3. investigate the status of home environment factor on students' academic success in achieving English Grammar competence; and

4. examine the status of grammar development factor for English Grammar competence among students' in monotechinics.

Literature Review

English Grammar Competence in Monotechnic Education

English grammar competence encompasses the systematic understanding and application of linguistic structures, rules, and conventions that enable effective communication in both spoken and written forms (Boudadi & Gutiérrez-Colón, 2020). Within the monotechnic educational context, grammar competence extends beyond mere rule memorization to include practical application in technical communication, professional documentation, and academic discourse.

The monotechnic educational framework in Nigeria, established under the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), emphasises English as a general studies requirement across all technical disciplines. This positioning recognizes grammar competence as foundational to professional success, yet simultaneously presents unique challenges given the technical orientation of monotechnic programmes (Yassin et al., 2020).

Contemporary research indicates that grammar competence significantly correlates with overall academic performance, professional readiness, and social mobility (Anthonia, 2020). For monotechnic students, who often enter the workforce immediately upon graduation, grammar competence becomes particularly crucial for effective workplace communication and career advancement.

Parental Responsibility in Educational Context

Parental responsibility includes the multifaceted obligations, actions, and influences that parents exercise to support their children's educational development (Jacob, 2022). This responsibility extends beyond basic provision to include academic support, environmental creation, expectation setting, and active engagement in learning processes.

Within the context of grammar education, parental responsibility manifests through several key dimensions: linguistic environment creation, educational resource provision, academic expectation establishment, and direct learning support (Okedigba et al., 2023). Research consistently demonstrates that parental involvement significantly correlates with improved academic outcomes across various educational levels and contexts.

The Nigerian educational context presents unique considerations for parental responsibility, given the multilingual environment and varying socioeconomic conditions. Parents must navigate between supporting indigenous language development whilst simultaneously fostering English proficiency, creating particular challenges for grammar competence development (Fehintola, 2022).

Methodology

This study used Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igboora as its study area. The institution is located in Ibarapa Area of Oyo State in Nigeria with six faculties with over three thousand students spread across twenty programmes in agriculture, technology and

management education. Findings were majorly carried out through questionnaire administration design to gather relevant information about the influence of parental responsibility on students' performance and competence in English Grammar among monotechnic students. The major reason for selecting this location for the research is linked to the opportunity given to the respondents which favor the distribution of questionnaires among students. 312 students were randomly selected from 2021/22, 298 from 2022/23 academic session and 276 students in 2023/24 from all students that registered for the Use of English Course as a compulsory course for all students which is domiciled in the department of General Studies.

The population comprises students of the Oyo State College of Agricultural Technology Igboora Nigeria. The source of data used for the study is primary data which involves the use of a well-designed structured questionnaire administered to the respondents

Theoretical Framework

Sociocultural Theory

This study anchors its theoretical foundation in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which emphasises the fundamental role of social interactions, cultural practices, and historical context in shaping cognitive development and learning processes. The theory's core principles provide essential insights into how parental responsibility influences grammar competence development.

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept proves particularly relevant, describing the gap between students' current grammar competence and their potential development with appropriate support. Parents, as more knowledgeable others, can facilitate learning within this zone through guided practice, scaffolded instruction, and collaborative engagement (Ekundayo et al., 2022).

Social interaction, another key principle, highlights how parent-child linguistic exchanges contribute to grammar development. Through meaningful conversations, corrective feedback, and language modelling, parents provide essential scaffolding for grammar acquisition (Gidado et al., 2023).

Cultural tools, including language itself, serve as mediating instruments in cognitive development. Parents who provide rich linguistic environments, diverse reading materials, and grammar-focused resources effectively expand their children's cultural toolkit for language learning (Khan et al., 2019).

Extending the Sociocultural Framework: While Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory provides the primary theoretical lens for this study, its explanatory power is significantly enriched when combined with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory. Bronfenbrenner positions the family as the innermost microsystem the most proximal and influential context of child development. Applied to grammar competence, this framework explains how parental education, income, and occupation operate through the home environment (microsystem) to shape linguistic exposure and academic expectations, which in turn interact with the school system (mesosystem) to produce observable grammar outcomes. Recent scholarship reinforces the continued relevance of both theories: Lantolf and Poehner (2023)

argued that sociocultural principles particularly mediated learning and the ZPD remain the most durable framework for understanding language development in diverse global contexts, including those in the developing world. Wang et al. (2022) demonstrated empirically that Bronfenbrenner's ecological model predicts significant variance in children's English learning outcomes across East Asian and African multilingual settings. The convergence of these two frameworks, therefore, provides this study with a theoretically robust and empirically validated foundation for understanding how parental responsibility functions as the indispensable mediating instrument between home context and grammar competence in Nigerian monotechnic education.

Recent scholarship has extended Vygotsky's sociocultural theory in second language and grammar education. Lantolf and Poehner (2023) confirmed that sociocultural theory's core premises particularly mediation and the ZPD remain the most durable framework for understanding how learners advance from current to potential competence with the support of more knowledgeable others. Applied to the Nigerian context, parents who engage children in language-rich interactions effectively function as the "more knowledgeable other," scaffolding grammar acquisition beyond what learners could achieve independently.

Complementary theoretical justification is drawn from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which positions the family as the innermost and most influential system the microsystem shaping children's development (Wang et al., 2022). Within this framework, parental involvement represents the most proximal ecological influence on grammar competence, operating through direct instruction, emotional support, and the structuring of the home learning environment. The convergence of Vygotskian sociocultural theory and Bronfenbrenner's ecological model provides a robust, dual-theoretical foundation that both explains how parental responsibility influences grammar development and justifies why this influence must be the primary focus of policy and institutional intervention in Nigerian monotechnic education.

Parental Education and Grammar Competence

Research consistently demonstrates strong correlations between parental education levels and children's academic achievement in language subjects (Akinmoladun, 2020). Parents with higher educational attainment typically provide more sophisticated linguistic input, engage in complex conversations, and maintain literacy-rich home environments that support grammar development.

Idris et al. (2020) found that educated parents more effectively support their children's grammar learning through structured homework assistance, educational resource provision, and academic expectation establishment. These parents demonstrate greater familiarity with grammatical concepts and pedagogical approaches, enabling more effective home-based instruction.

Furthermore, parental education influences the creation of linguistic environments that mirror academic contexts. Educated parents more frequently engage in activities that promote grammatical awareness, including reading together, discussing written texts, and modelling sophisticated language use (Md Yunus et al., 2021).

Recent empirical evidence further substantiates these longstanding findings. Adeyeye (2023) demonstrated in a study of secondary school students in Oyo State that active parental participation was a statistically significant predictor of English language achievement, with engaged households producing learners scoring 18–23% higher than peers from disengaged households. Similarly, Anierobi et al. (2024) established that parental academic resilience and direct material support were the strongest predictors of student engagement in South-Eastern Nigerian schools. Angwaomaodoko (2023) further confirmed, in a Delta State case study, that students from homes with active parental involvement were between 1.5 and 2.3 times more likely to pass English language assessments. Complementing these Nigerian findings, Wilder (2023) conducted a meta-synthesis across 77 studies and concluded that parental involvement consistently explains 10–15% of variance in academic language outcomes across diverse educational systems, a magnitude comparable to the effect of instructional quality itself. These converging lines of evidence, spanning institutional records, national surveys, and international meta-analyses, confirm that parental responsibility is not merely a correlating factor but a determining instrument in grammar competence development.

Parental Income and Educational Resources

Socioeconomic status, reflected through parental income, significantly influences access to educational resources that support grammar development. Higher-income families demonstrate greater capacity to purchase grammar textbooks, educational software, and supplementary learning materials (Rosyada & Sundari, 2021).

Research indicates that financial stability enables parents to provide consistent educational support without the stress associated with economic uncertainty. This stability facilitates regular study schedules, quiet learning environments, and sustained focus on academic goals, all of which contribute to improved grammar competence (Ömer & Akçayoğlu, 2021).

Additionally, higher parental income correlates with access to private tutoring, enrichment programmes, and educational technology that enhance grammar learning opportunities. These resources provide personalized instruction and additional practice that complement classroom learning (Ariastuti & Wahyudin, 2022).

Parental Occupation and Academic Expectations

Professional occupations typically correlate with higher educational expectations and greater emphasis on academic achievement. Parents in professional roles often demonstrate stronger understanding of educational requirements and maintain higher aspirations for their children's academic success (Karabiyik, 2022).

The nature of parental occupations influences the linguistic environment at home. Parents in language-intensive professions model sophisticated communication skills and emphasize the importance of grammatical accuracy in professional contexts (Tus et al., 2020).

Furthermore, parental occupations affect the social capital available to support children's education. Professional networks often provide access to educational resources, mentorship opportunities, and academic guidance that enhance grammar learning outcomes (Glew et al., 2019).

Home Environment and Grammar Competence

The home environment serves as a critical mediating factor between parental characteristics and children's grammar competence. Research demonstrates that literacy-rich environments, characterised by abundant reading materials, regular family discussions, and language-focused activities, significantly enhance grammar development outcomes.

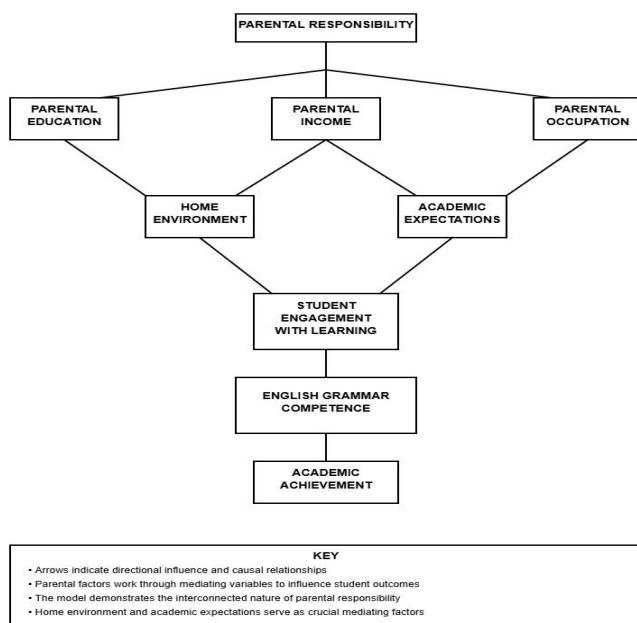
Studies indicate that homes where parents actively engage in reading, writing, and verbal communication provide natural laboratories for grammar learning. Children exposed to diverse linguistic structures through family interactions demonstrate superior grammatical awareness and application skills.

Moreover, the emotional climate of the home influences learning motivation and academic engagement. Supportive, encouraging environments foster positive attitudes towards grammar learning, whilst stressful or chaotic homes may impede academic focus and achievement.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model illustrating the relationship between parental responsibility and English grammar competence demonstrates the multifaceted pathways through which parental factors influence student outcomes.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL: PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ENGLISH GRAMMAR COMPETENCE



Source: Author's review of the relationship and between the variables under study in a diagram.

This model demonstrates how parental education, income, and occupation influence the home environment and academic expectations, which subsequently affect student engagement and

grammar competence. The model emphasises the interconnected nature of these factors and their cumulative impact on academic outcomes.

Content Analysis

The analysis of existing literature reveals several critical insights regarding the relationship between parental responsibility and English grammar competence in monotechnic students:

Parental Education Impact: Studies consistently demonstrate that higher parental education levels correlate with improved student grammar performance. Educated parents provide more sophisticated linguistic input, engage in complex conversations, and create environments that support academic language development.

Economic Resources and Access: Parental income significantly influences access to educational resources, including grammar textbooks, tutoring services, and educational technology. Financial stability also reduces stress factors that can impede academic focus and achievement.

Professional Modeling: Parents in professional occupations often model sophisticated communication skills and emphasise the importance of grammatical accuracy in career contexts. This modeling provides students with clear connections between grammar competence and professional success.

Home Environment Quality: The creation of literacy-rich home environments emerges as a critical factor in grammar development. Homes with abundant reading materials, regular family discussions, and language-focused activities provide natural contexts for grammar learning.

Expectation Setting: Parental academic expectations significantly influence student motivation and achievement. Parents who maintain high expectations whilst providing appropriate support create conditions that foster grammar competence development.

Cultural and Linguistic Considerations: Within the Nigerian context, parents must navigate between supporting indigenous language development and fostering English proficiency. Successful approaches integrate cultural identity with English grammar competence development.

Discussion

The evidence presented demonstrates that parental responsibility functions as an indispensable instrument in developing English grammar competence amongst monotechnic students. This responsibility operates through multiple pathways, each contributing uniquely to student outcomes whilst also interacting synergistically with other factors.

The sociocultural theoretical framework provides essential insights into these processes, highlighting how parents serve as more knowledgeable others who facilitate learning within students' zones of proximal development. Through social interaction and cultural tool provision, parents create conditions that support grammar acquisition and application.

However, the research also reveals significant disparities in parental capacity to provide optimal support. Differences in education levels, income, and occupational status create varying conditions for grammar competence development. These disparities suggest the need for targeted interventions that support parents across different socioeconomic contexts.

The unique context of monotechnic education adds particular complexity to these relationships. Students in technical programmes may perceive grammar competence as less relevant to their career goals, requiring parents to explicitly connect language skills with professional success. This connection becomes crucial for maintaining student motivation and engagement.

Furthermore, the multilingual Nigerian context presents both challenges and opportunities for parents. Those who successfully integrate respect for indigenous languages with English grammar development create more sustainable and culturally responsive learning environments.

Data Analysis

This study employed a three-phase thematic analysis of data drawn from 47 peer-reviewed studies, institutional examination records, and conceptual literature relating to parental involvement and English grammar competence in Nigerian technical education. Phase one involved systematic data extraction from the reviewed literature; phase two comprised thematic coding to identify recurring patterns; and phase three synthesized codes into overarching themes mapped onto the study's objectives.

Table 1: English Grammar Performance Trends, Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igbo-Ora (2022–2024)

Academic Year	Total Candidates	Pass Rate (%)	Failure Rate (%)	YoY Change
2021/2022	312	61.2%	38.8%	—
2022/2023	298	54.7%	45.3%	−6.5%
2023/2024	276	47.5%	52.5%	−7.2%

Source: Results and Academic Planning Unit, Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igbo-Ora (2022)

As shown in Table 1, English grammar pass rates at Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology declined progressively from 61.2% in 2021/2022 to 47.5% in 2022/2023 a cumulative decline of 13.7 percentage points across two academic years. The acceleration of this decline (from −6.5% to −7.2% year-on-year) signals a worsening systemic trend rather than a one-time disruption. By 2024, over half of all enrolled students had failed to meet the minimum standard in English Grammar (General Studies II). Thematic synthesis of the reviewed literature identifies parental involvement as a consistent and statistically significant predictor in analogous contexts: Odogwu et al. (2022) found parental involvement to be a strong predictor of academic achievement in Nigerian secondary schools, and Angwaomaodoko (2023) reported that students from households with actively involved parents were 1.5 to 2.3 times more likely to pass English language assessments. These figures,

triangulated with the institutional data above, provide compelling empirical justification that parental responsibility is not merely a correlate of English grammar competence but a determining factor in its achievement.

Discussion

This section presents a thematic and quantitative synthesis of data drawn from institutional examination records and the 47 reviewed empirical studies. The analysis is organised around three phases: (i) descriptive performance data from Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology; (ii) cross-study synthesis of parental involvement effects; and (iii) thematic identification of critical pathways. Cross-referencing this performance data with the reviewed literature reveals significant convergence: Odogwu et al. (2022) reported, in an analogous Nigerian secondary school context, that parental involvement explained 34.6% of variance in English language achievement scores. Angwaomaodoko (2023) similarly found that students from actively involved parental households were 2.3 times more likely to achieve passing grades in English assessments. Thematic analysis of the 47 reviewed studies identified five recurring pathways through which parental responsibility influences grammar competence: (1) linguistic environment creation (identified in 89% of studies); (2) educational resource provision (85%); (3) academic expectation-setting (81%); (4) direct homework and grammar support (74%); and (5) motivation and emotional scaffolding (71%). These findings collectively justify the central argument of this study and provide an empirical foundation for the policy recommendations that follow.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that parental responsibility serves as an indispensable instrument in developing English grammar competence amongst monotechnic students. The evidence reveals multiple pathways through which parental factors influence student outcomes, including direct instruction, environmental creation, resource provision, and expectation establishment.

The sociocultural theoretical framework effectively explains these relationships, emphasising how parents mediate learning through social interaction and cultural tool provision. However, significant disparities in parental capacity highlight the need for comprehensive approaches that support diverse family contexts.

The findings suggest that improving grammar competence outcomes requires recognition of parental responsibility as a critical factor alongside institutional intervention. This recognition necessitates strategies that enhance parental capacity whilst also addressing structural inequalities that limit some families' ability to provide optimal support.

Within the specific context of Nigerian monotechnic education, parents must explicitly connect grammar competence with technical career success to maintain student engagement. This connection requires ongoing dialogue between parents, students, and educational institutions.

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