



USING PEER ASSESSMENT AND STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE ON DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS FOR UPPER BASIC II STUDENTS IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Reading is an important language of communication skill and a highly complicated act that everyone should learn especially at the young age of schooling but, because of the techniques applying by the instructors students find it very complicated, therefore the researchers deem it feet to conducted a research on using peer assessment and storytelling technique on developing reading comprehension skills for upper basic II students in Kogi State, Nigeria. Three research questions with its corresponding hypotheses were used to facilitate the study using quasi-experimental design comprises two experimental groups (A&B) and one conventional group C. The population for the study consisted of all 1,122 upper basic II secondary schools were 90 were used as sample of the study from three schools. The researchers developed an instrument for data collection entitled ‘Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT). RCAT contained 15-items on reading comprehension skills; it yielded 0.74 validity index and 0.72 reliability index. Data collected was analyses using means and standard deviation for answering research questions while One-sample t-test and One-Way ANOVA were used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. Finding reveals that, there is significant difference between pre-test and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique, there is statistically significant difference in the achievements mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM. It was recommended that, the teachers of English Language should use PA, ST technique to teach/assess students will enhance and develop reading comprehension skills among others.

Keywords: *peer assessment, storytelling technique, reading comprehension skills, upper basic II students*

Introduction

Reading is an important language skill and a highly complicated act that everyone should learn. In many situations, reading is considered an indispensable channel of communication in an ever widening world. It is the process of recognition, interpretation and perception of written or printed materials. Learning to read is one of the most important strategies learners can accomplish in schools because it is the foundation for all academic endeavors. The learner who does not acquire the necessary reading skills is likely to suffer academic failures. Indisputably, for a learner to learn any discipline he has to spend much of his time reading and comprehending information presented in text (Abu-Shamla, 2009).

Without comprehension, there is no learning because any educational system cannot neglect this skill of language and students still practice reading even it is difficult to understand every single word. Reading is not solely a single skill but a combination of many skills and processes in which the readers interact with printed words and texts for content and pleasure. Through reading, one can teach writing, speaking, vocabulary items, grammar, spelling and other language aspects. The basic goals of reading are to enable learners to gain an understanding of the world and themselves, to develop appreciation and interests, and to find solutions to their personal and group problems (Hollingsworth, cited in Abu-Nada 2013). Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from the text. The goal of all reading instructions is ultimately targeted at helping a reader to comprehend a given text. Reading comprehension involves decoding the writer's words and then using background knowledge to construct an approximate understanding of the writer's message (Kibry, 2006).

Despite, this importance attached and efforts made in the teachers of English Language toward reading comprehension in school, students' academic achievement in English Language reading comprehension does not equate with the magnitude of importance attached to it resulting to conventional teaching method (CTM). According to Galle, Ezeofor and Ofomata (2022) defines CTM is classroom-based and consists of teaching and direct instructions conducted by the teacher. This teacher-centered method emphasizes learning through the teacher's guidance at all times. Students are expected to listen to instruction and learn from them. The teacher often talks at the students instead of encouraging them to interact, ask questions, or make them understand the lesson

thoroughly. Most classes involve rote learning, where students depend on memorization without having a complete understanding of the subject. Just passing the tests, consisting of descriptions, matching, and other forms of indicators, is all that matters to complete the curriculum (Adegoke, 2011, Umar, 2011). According to Umar, (2011) and Undigwomen, (2014) the implication of this method of teaching makes the teacher active and learner passive listener in the teaching learning environment, with the poor students academic achievement.

According to Galle (2021) academic achievement is the ability to function effectively, respond quickly or perfectly to a given task. Thus to achieve is to accomplish a task successfully with a skill. Achievement describes the level of success in relation to a task that is carried out using a standardized test under planning instruction (Anikweze, 2015). He further argued that achievement test could be teacher made test or standardized tests. According to Ajaja (2011), for effective learning to take place, students must be actively involved in the learning process through physical interaction with instructional materials and engaging in varied kinds of activities. Akinleye, (2010) postulated that effective teaching and learning requires a teacher to teach the students with instructional tools and use practical activities to make learning more vivid, logical, realistic and pragmatic. Anikweze, (2015) Stated that:

One of the ways of ensuring effective learning is by making the experience real for learners. This requires using true examples that they can relate with, real life situation that they see happening around them. When these real life experiences cannot be presented, teachers need to use other materials, devices, techniques or items that closely represent them. At the end of the day, what the teacher hopes to achieve is to put across the intended message as effective and meaningful as possible to learners (P.91).

This could be achieved using Peer Assessment (PA) and Storytelling technique (ST). PA refers to the assessment of students within the same class range. PA as the process whereby students or their peers grade assignments or test based on a teachers benchmark. It is a kind of innovative and creative assessment that helps to improve the quality of learning and empower learners where the conventional method bypasses learners needs; this method actually puts learners in the centre of the learning process. According to Reinholz (2016), PA plays a very crucial role in learners, as they are assisted in gathering information about their own knowledge, skills and abilities. In addition, peer assessment gives students room to assess each other's works rather than the teacher, this in exchange improves transfer of feedback because of the use of similar language by peers, this also helps cut down the negative sentiment of

being assessed/evaluated by an authoritative (Liang, & Chin-Chung Tsai, 2010). It represents a system of learning built on the basis of that learning directed around the learner with the other in depending on effective learning, which focuses on the full integration of the student in the process of collaborative learning with peers under the supervision of the teacher at the process of reading.

Similarly, Mokhtar (2010) point out that storytelling is a technique that offers opportunities to practice organizing, categorizing, and remembering information concurrently with practice in predicting, summarizing, comparing and contrasting information on all academic communication functions and reading comprehension strategies. Otherwise, they state that reading passages are better understandable and more accurately recalled by storytelling. Phillips cited in Abu-Nada (2013) reports that storytelling technique has been forgotten in many educational environments and has an essential role in education, especially, for young learners. Also, it may inspire their imagination, and create their own visual images. According to Haven cited in Abu-Nada (2013) defines storytelling as a detailed narration of a character's struggles to overcome obstacles, and reach an important goal. He asserts that there are five core information narrative elements which are critical to story and those are presented in order for the mind. He identifies them as: character, intent, actions, struggles, and details. Barzaq (2009) considers storytelling as a knowledge management technique, a way of distributing information, targets to audiences and a sense of information. She adds that stories provide natural connection between events and concepts. Finally, she indicates that visual storytelling is a way of telling stories through images. Grace (2011) illustrates that storytelling is a unifying structure having a distinct beginning, middle, and end, which provides details in which characters struggle during time, experience emotions, take action, and discover meaning. In conclusion, the above mentioned definitions focus on common elements of narrative:

- ❖ using oral and written language,
- ❖ using actions such as vocalization, physical movement, and gesture,
- ❖ presenting a narrative with elements of plot, characters and events,
- ❖ two-way interaction between the teacher and the learners,
- ❖ sequence in time; a narrative should include a beginning, middle, and end,
- ❖ focal actors; a narrative is about someone or something,
- ❖ a narrative has an identifiable voice or perspective that it is told from, and

- ❖ evaluative frame of reference; a narrative carries meaning and cultural value often in the form of a moral.

However, several literature reveals on relate study such as Coulibal (2021) findings revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean achievement scores of students taught social studies with PA and CM. Caminotti and Gray's (2012) findings reveals that storytelling is effective for adult learners because of the chosen research approach. More comprehensive qualitative study is completed to enhance the research on the effectiveness of storytelling on adults' learning. Widyaningrum and Mubasyira (2020) peer-assisted learning strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension skill, Sidekli, (2012) peer reading technique has been influential on the students' loud reading and reading comprehension skills. Caminotti and Gray's (2012) findings reveals that storytelling is effective for adult learners. Wightman's (2011) finding reveals that both reading aloud and storytelling are significantly important for the students' comprehension of narrative text as compared while having the students read simply stories silently. Mokhtar (2010) The results of this study led the teachers to realize the need for students to have extensive opportunities to hear and produce the target language and the need for teachers to include more guided practice activities with clear instructions. Abo-Skhela's (2010) finding reveal that there are statistically significant differences in the eleventh graders' listening comprehension sub-skills due to storytelling technique. Abu-Nada (2013) also revealed that, the achievement test are statistically differences in reading comprehension skills between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group using storytelling.

Statement of the Problem

The major cause of this problem, have been identified by previous studies, to be the poor assessment and instructional techniques, insufficient instructional materials and poor assessment methods used by the teachers which could not enable the students to fully understand the reading content, paragraphs and participate in the learning process. This trend, therefore, makes the subject seemingly difficult for students to comprehend reading skills especially in upper basic classes and as a result, makes the reading of passages a little more complex to comprehend due conventional teaching method (CTM). Therefore, the study investigated PA and ST technique on developing reading comprehension skills for upper basic II students in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

- RQ1:** What are significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique?
- RQ2:** What are significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique?
- RQ3:** What are the achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study an were tested at 0.05 level of significant

- Ho1:** There is no significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique
- Ho2:** There is no significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique
- Ho3:** There is no significant difference in the achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM.

Material and Methods

The researchers adopted quasi-experimental design, non-randomized pretest-posttest control group. The study comprised two experimental groups (A&B) and one conventional group C. The selection was done based on two upper basic II secondary school students in Kogi State, Nigeria. The upper basic II secondary school students were taught reading comprehension skills using English Language textbook for upper basic II to develop reading comprehension skills. The experimental group A students were exposed to the use of PA techniques, and experimental group B students were exposed to the use of ST techniques while the control group C students were exposed to the use of CTM. The testing procedures were the same within the groups. The design is symbolically represented in fig1.

Table 1: Illustration of the Design of the Study

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Achievement</i>		
<i>Experimental Group A: PA</i>	0 ₁	X ₁	0 ₂
<i>Experimental Group B: ST</i>	0 ₁	X ₂	0 ₂
<i>Control Group C: CTM</i>	0 ₁	-	0 ₂

Where:

O_1 = Pretest with RCAT

O_2 = Post-test with RCAT

X_1 = Experimental Group A (use of PA)

X_2 = Experimental Group B (use of ST)

- = Control Group C (use of CTM)

Population and Sample

The population for the study consisted of all 1,122 upper basic II secondary schools that were taught reading comprehension skills in Kogi State, Nigeria 2021/2022 academic season. A simple 90 upper basic II students from three schools in Kogi State were selected through random sample technique. Before obtaining the sampled size, luck-deep method was employed to select sample three schools namely: Sacred Heart Secondary School, kabba 29 students were exposed to experimental group A, Local Government Secondary School Otu-Egunbe, kabba 30 students were exposed to experimental group B, and Local Government Comprehensive Secondary School, Kabba 31 students were exposed to control group C. Serial numbers of the elements on pieces of papers folded and mixed thoroughly before respondents were asked to pick at once without replacement. This technique gave equal opportunity to the respondents thereby reducing the bias effect that may interfere with the validity and reliability of the study.

Instrument for Data Collection

For the purpose of the study, the researchers developed an instrument for data collection entitled ‘‘Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT)’. RCAT contained 10-items on reading comprehension skills.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

RCAT was subjected for face and content validation. Two experts, who are knowledgeable in the skills being, measured in the reading comprehension skills from department English Language education, Nasarawa state University keffi, by checking for appropriateness, comprehensiveness and relevance of the items, clarity of expression and size of print. Items that did not measure what they ought to measure were deleted or modified, while good items were retained. The experts verified if the items were in line with the content and objectives stated in the curriculum. The consensus of the expert’s judgment rating for RCAT yielded 0.74 validity index. The Kuder-Richardson (KR_{21}) was used to determine reliability of the internal consistency of the RCAT

yielded 0.72 reliability index. The reliability results of RCAT was compared with the guidelines for interpreting alpha coefficients suggested by Galle, Ezeofor, and Ofomata (2022) that “ $\alpha \geq 0.9$ excellent, ≥ 0.8 good, ≥ 0.7 acceptable, ≥ 0.6 questionable, ≥ 0.5 poor, ≤ 0.5 unacceptable”. Therefore, the results of the reliability enabled the researchers to use the instrument for both pretest and posttest, since the correlation was considered high and significant.

Procedure for Data Collection

Three research assistants were trained by the researchers to assist in administering RCAT and teaching. The researchers’ assistants are English language teachers with years of teaching experience and the researchers monitor their activities. A week training programme was organized with the research assistants. The training programme was to acquaint the research assistants with how to use PA and ST with the experimental group A and B as well control group C. The following features were addressed during the training: the objectives of the strategy, topics, contents, duration, teaching’ and students’ activities, methods and how the test administration, scoring of tests papers were discussed and research assistants were given the opportunity to demonstrated the use of the techniques in teaching before the commencement of the treatments.

The training ensured that the teaching was comparable, applying the same teaching skills with little or no variation in their teaching effectiveness. Items for the tests lasted for one hour fifteen minutes. During the period of testing, the researchers and research assistants ensured that the students were not cheating. Test items were given to the students as a pre-test for the purpose of ascertaining the prior knowledge of the students reading comprehension before the treatment was given to the experimental groups. Students were required to read passages and summarizes, and underline the phrases, encircle the correct option out of four alternatives (A, B, C, D) provided for each question on the answer sheet. After the time allocated for the test, the scripts were collected marked and scored using a marking scheme.

The experimental group A students were taught using PA, experimental group B students were taught using ST technique while conventional group C students were taught using CTM,

At the end of the seven weeks of the treatment post-test was administered to both the experimental and conventional groups. The post-test lasted for 45 minutes. The pre-test and post-test results were compared to obtain the achievement mean gain scores for experimental groups and conventional group. Means, standard deviation were used for answering research questions and t-

test, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) using IBM SPSS version 23 was used for testing hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The results are presented in below tables.

RESULTS

Research Questions/Hypotheses

RQ1: What are significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique?

Table1: Achievement Mean Scores and Standard Deviation for Experimental Group A using PA Technique

<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Test</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev</i>
<i>Experimental Group A (use of PA)</i>	Pre-test	29	2.8276	1.33815
	Post-test	29	5.0690	.79871
	Mean Gain		2.2414	.53944

Result of question one in Table1 shows difference between achievements mean gain scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique yielded 2.2414 as achievement mean gain scores. This implies that, the post-test score is greater than pre-test scores. To test the variation effects of the treatment, the null hypothesis one (Ho1) was tested using One-Sample t-test at 0.05 level of significant and results are presented in Table 2 below.

Ho1: There is no significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique

Table 2: One-Sample t-test for Experimental Group A using PA Technique

<i>Test Value = 0</i>						
	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>	<i>95% Interval Difference</i>	<i>Confidence of the</i>
					<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
<i>Pre-Test</i>	11.379	28	.000	2.82759	2.3186	3.3366
<i>Post-Test</i>	34.177	28	.000	5.06897	4.7652	5.3728

Table 2 shows result of One-Sample t-test for significance different between pre-test and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique. Pre-test $t=11.379$, post-test $t=34.177$, df 28 and 0.00 Sig 2-tailed. This implies that, H_01 was rejected, hence there is significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique.

RQ2: What are significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique?

Table 3: Achievement Mean Scores and Standard Deviation for Experimental Group B using ST Technique

<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Test</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev</i>
<i>Experimental Group B (use of ST)</i>	Pre-test	30	2.8276	1.33815
	Post-test	30	4.8690	.79871
	Mean Gain		2.0414	.53944

Result of question two in Table3 shows difference between achievements mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique yielded 2.0414 as achievement mean gain scores. This implies that, the post-test score is greater than pre-test scores. To test the variation effects of the treatment, the null hypothesis two (H_02) was tested using One-Sample t-test at 0.05 level of significant and results are presented in Table 4 below.

H_02 : There is no significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique.

Table 4: One-Sample t-test for Experimental Group B using ST Technique

Test Value = 0

	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Lower	Upper
<i>Pre_Test</i>	10.379	29	.000	2.8276	2.3186	3.3366	
<i>Post_Test</i>	33.177	29	.000	4.8690	3.7652	4.3728	

Table 4 shows result of One-Sample t-test for significance different between pre-test and post-test achievements mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique. Pre-test 10.379, post-test 33.177, df 29 and 0.00 Sig 2-tailed. This implies that, H_02 was rejected, hence there is

significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique.

RQ3: What are the achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM

Table 5: Achievement Mean Scores and Standard Deviation for Reading Comprehension Skills Taught Using PA, ST Technique and CTM

<i>Treatment</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Pre-test</i>		<i>Post-test</i>		<i>Achievement Mean Gain</i>
		Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	
<i>Experimental Group A: PA</i>	29	2.8276	1.33815	5.0690	.79871	2.2414
<i>Experimental Group B: ST</i>	30	2.8276	1.33815	4.8690	.79871	2.0414
<i>Control Group C: CTM</i>	31	2.8233	1.33913	3.8611	.99211	1.0378

Result of question three in Table 5 shows difference between achievements mean gain scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and CTM yielded 2.2414, 2.0414 and 1.0378 as achievements mean gain scores for the three groups. This implies that, students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique gained higher achievement mean scores than their counterpart students taught using CTM as revealed in the Table 5. To test the variation effects of the three treatment groups, the null hypothesis three (Ho3) was tested using One-Way ANOVA at 0.05 level of significant and results are presented in Table 6 below.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM.

Table 6: One-Way-ANOVA for Significant Differences In Reading Comprehension Skills Taught Using PA, ST Technique and CTM

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between Groups	1.094	3	.365	.164	.020
Within Groups	191.362	86	2.225		
Total	192.456	89			
Between Groups	4.677	3	1.559	.400	.014
Within Groups	191.423	86	2.226		
Total	196.100	89			

Table 6 shows results of One-Way ANOVA for significant differences in the achievements mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills

using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM ($df=3, 89, F_{\text{value}} = .164, .400, \text{Sig}=.020, .014. p<0.05$). This implies that, H_0 was rejected, hence there is statistically significant difference in the achievements mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM.

Discussion

Result of question one in Table1 shows difference between achievements mean gain scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique yielded 2.2414 as achievement mean gain scores. This implies that, the post-test score is greater than pre-test scores. Drawing inference from null hypothesis one in Table 2 shows, One-Sample t-test for was tested at 0.05 level of significance, hence the result revealed there is significant difference between pre-test and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique. Implies that, post-test achievement mean scores is greater than pre-test scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique. This findings is in agreement with that of Sidekli, (2012) peer reading technique has been influential on the students' loud reading and reading comprehension skills, Widyaningrum and Mubasyira (2020) peer-assisted learning strategy improve the students' reading comprehension skill.

Similarly, result of question two in Table3 shows difference between achievements mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique yielded 2.0414 as achievement mean gain scores. This implies that, the post-test score is greater than pre-test scores. Drawing inference from null hypothesis two in Table 4 shows, One-Sample t-test for was tested at 0.05 level of significance, hence the result revealed that, there is significant difference between pre-test and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique. Implies that, post-test achievement mean scores is greater than pre-test scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique. This finding is in agreement with that of Abo-Skhela's (2010) finding reveal that there are statistically significant differences in the eleventh graders' listening comprehension sub-skills due to storytelling technique, in line the finding of Abo-Skhela's, buttressing by Abu-Nada (2013) also revealed that, the achievement test are statistically differences in reading comprehension skills between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group using storytelling.

Lastly, result of question three in Table 5 shows difference between achievements mean gain scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and CTM yielded 2.2414, 2.0414 and 1.0378 as achievements mean gain scores for the three groups. This implies that, students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique gained higher achievement mean scores than their counterpart students taught using CTM. Drawing inference from null hypothesis three in Table 6 shows One-Way

ANOVA was tested at the 0.05 level of significance; hence the result revealed that, there is statistically significant difference in the achievements mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM. This findings corroborated that of Sidekli, (2012) peer reading technique has been influential on the students' loud reading and reading comprehension skills, Widyaningrum and Mubasyira (2020) peer-assisted learning strategy improve the students' reading comprehension skill, Caminotti and Gray's (2012) findings reveals that storytelling is effective for adult learners, Wightman's (2011) finding reveals that both reading aloud and storytelling are significantly important for the students' comprehension of narrative text as compared while having the students read simply stories silently.

Conclusion

This study was design to establish to investigate PA and ST technique on developing reading comprehension skills for upper basic II students in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study concluded that, there is significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA technique, there is significant difference between pre and post-test achievement mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using ST technique and there is statistically significant difference in the achievements mean scores of students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique and those taught using CTM. It was also concluded that students taught reading comprehension skills using PA, ST technique achieved higher than their counterpart students in CTM.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were raise:

1. That, the teachers of English Language should use PA, ST technique to teach/assess will enhance and develop students reading comprehension skills.
2. Students should be encourage to study and read in groups as well as narrating stories that has to do with passages in English Language textbooks.
3. That, Kogi State ministry of education should consider incorporating the PA, ST technique into the teaching/learning of reading comprehension skills.

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