



Effects of Discussion Method on SS2 Students' Attitude in English Language Reading Comprehension in Toro, Bauchi State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to investigate the effects of discussion method on SS2 students' attitude in English reading comprehension in Toro LGA, Bauchi state Nigeria. The study adopted quasi-experimental research design specifically pretest posttest non-equivalent control group. The population of the study was SS2 students of 21 public senior secondary school in the local government. Currently there are 4,452 SS2 students. Two schools with the population of 84 students were purposively sampled. A questionnaire Students' Attitude Scale on English language Reading Comprehension Curriculum (**SASELRCC**) developed by the researchers, that was validated constructively by three experts was the instrument for data collection. The validated instrument was pilot-tested on a homogeneous population to establish its reliability. And, Pearson product moment coefficient was used to estimate the stability of the instruments. The coefficient of 0.75 was ascertained. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Data was analysed using Mean and Standard deviation to answering the research questions and Analysis of Covariance ANCOVA for testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The findings of the study revealed that discussion method has a significant effect on students' attitude as the Mean of Experimental group increased after the treatment (66.03 > 52.21) also the result indicated that there was no significant difference in the students' attitude towards English reading comprehension based on gender, as their mean result was almost the same 66.55 and 65.57 for male and female students respectively. Hypotheses tested, indicating that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest while the second hypothesis there is no significant difference in attitude of male and female students of the experimental group. The study recommended that school management should organize workshops on teaching methods regularly and teachers should concentrate on students-centred method of teaching.

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INTRODUCTION

English language reading comprehension is an important aspect of English Language at Senior Secondary School because of the role it plays in the overall success of learners. Success in all school subjects is largely

predicated on the ability of students to read and comprehend notes and textbooks in various school subjects. English language reading comprehension is the ability of a learner to read and grasp the meaning of a text efficiently. Reading comprehension as defined by Boyer

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(2017), is the ability of a reader to construct meaning through spoken or written communications. This definition connotes a lexical, contextual or applied meaning. English language is a core subject at every level of education and a compulsory subject in Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) as well as Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) for every course. Furthermore, a credit pass in English language is required for admission into any tertiary institutions in the country. In the same vein, some overseas scholarships are awarded to candidates only after passing a proficiency test on English language for non-native English language speakers. In addition, examinations like International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) are parts of the criteria for the scholarship. Moreover, some appointments, whether in government or private establishment required that students should possess a minimum of a credit pass in English language is required. Similarly, in Bauchi State, the mock examination on English language from 2017-2022 has remained the only criteria for sponsoring students to write the SSCE examination by the state government. Students who passed the examination are eligible to be paid their SSCE registration fee by the state government while those that fail are to sponsor themselves. Moreover, all the success in the examinations whether in English language or any subject is depends on the comprehension of the questions and the meaning it connotes. Therefore, the relevant of English language reading comprehension will not be over emphasised.

There are many methods employed by the teachers of English language in teaching reading comprehension in secondary schools, notably among them are; the whole language reading method, the phonic reading method, reading aloud and silent reading. However, whatever the method employed by the teacher depends on the teacher's ability to demonstrate expertise in implementing the teaching process effectively. This is because there is a connection

between the teacher and the teaching process in a teaching and learning situation. Teaching method as an official way of imparting knowledge cannot be achieved effectively without an effective pedagogy. Hence, a teacher has to incorporate a method of teaching that is equal to the students' abilities, situations and content of the subject matter. Teaching method is a procedure, technique or a way of imparting knowledge, especially in accordance with definite guidelines. Eady and Lockyer (2013) describe teaching methods as supportive devices which a teacher uses to emphasize his idea through communication and manipulation of other resources. An effective teacher is the one that has the ability of knowing the appropriate methods of imparting knowledge to the students in a way that makes learning effective (Dorgu, 2015). Choosing a specific teaching method that enhances achieving the instructional objectives is the important decision a teacher can make in a classroom situation.

Teaching methods are divided into two major categories; these are teacher-centred and student-centred methods. Teacher-centred method includes lecture method, reading method, demonstration and expository method to mention but a few. It is a method in which a teacher is looked upon by the students as an expert or authority in the classroom. Students, on the other hand are presumed to be passive and copious recipients of knowledge from the teacher. The student-centred method on the other hand, comprises of discussion, problem-solving, inquiry and fieldtrip methods among others. These methods of teaching induce the teacher and students to play active roles in the teaching and learning process. The main role of a teacher in student-centred methods is to guide and facilitate the students' learning and overall comprehension of the materials.

In teaching English language in senior secondary schools, The English language teachers make use of one of the methods of teaching language which include: grammar translation method, direct method, reading method, audio lingual method, cognitive code

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learning method, functional notional method and eclectic method (Manuel, 2023).

English language teachers are expected to use different methods of teaching that will be in cognisance with the content and context of the subject matter among which is discussion method of teaching. Discussion method of teaching is one of the student-centred methods that allow the students to discuss, synthesise, analyse and evaluate an issue, problem or event under the guidance of a teacher. The teacher in discussion method plays the role of coordination, moderation and evaluation of the opinion of the students. Students are confronted with a topic to discuss and get the relevant information that would eventually substitute to become a fact after thorough and rigorous analysis. The discussion method of teaching can be classified into four as whole class discussion, small group discussion, teacher-students discussion and panel discussion. These methods of teaching make students to become active participants in the teaching and learning process.

The outcome of learning is not restricted to the achievement of the students but include the behaviour and attitude modification. Attitude as another goal of teaching and learning process is a mental and emotional entity that characterizes students' predisposition and state of mind that precipitates through responsive expression regarding a person, place or thing. Attitude is a tendency to behave in a precise and definite way to a particular situation. Manuel (2023) posits that education as all the process of developing attitude and good behaviour that is positive to the society. Attitudinal moulding is also part of the educational objectives in any institution. It occupies the area of affective domain of Bloom's educational objectives. Affective domain emphasises changes in feelings, emotion, attitude, interest, appreciation, adjustment, and values of a learner. Behaviour has a direct influence on cognitive and psychomotor domains. Both the achievement and attitudinal changes will be achieved through a successful utilisation of methods that best suits

the content, context and psychological needs of the learner. Choosing a method in teaching a subject matter has a link with versatility and professionalism of a teacher. The attitude of students may affect the learning outcome most especially in reading comprehension. This is because if students develop negative attitude towards school subjects, the students may become reluctant and bored or hate the subject entirely.

Statement of the Problem

Reading comprehension is critical in academic achievement of students most especially in English language. However, the rate of failure in senior secondary schools' final year examination in Bauchi State has continued to generate concern from the Students, Parents, Teachers, Government, and Community leaders in the state. The WAEC results of senior secondary school students in Bauchi State from 2016-2021 where 169,040 students sat for the examination and 46,376 (27.43%) students pass the English language with credit level and above while the remaining failed. The consequences of low achievement in English language are students would find it difficult in gaining admission into any tertiary institution in Nigeria and operate effectively in the workplace. Moreover, they will not be considered for the some of the overseas scholarship.

Isaiah, Goodluck and Kadiri (2019), attributed the low performance in English language to poor teaching method used in imparting knowledge as well as the attitude of students in reading. It is for this reason that, the present study is investigating whether the discussion method of teaching will have an effect on SS2 attitude and achievement of students in English language reading comprehension in Toro LGA, Bauchi state.

Objectives of the Study

1. Determine the SS2 student's attitude towards reading comprehension before and after the treatment.

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2. Ascertain the nature the SS2 student's attitudes to reading comprehension before and after the treatment based on gender

Research Questions

The researchers raise the following research questions to guide the study.

1. What is the pretest and posttest attitude mean scores of the SS2 students in reading comprehension?
2. What are the posttest attitude mean scores of the SS2 students taught reading comprehension using discussion method based on gender?

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest reading comprehension attitudes mean scores of the SS2 students in the experimental and control groups.
2. There is no significant difference between reading comprehension attitude mean scores of the SS2 students taught reading comprehension using discussion method based on gender.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the quasi-experimental research design, specifically the pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design. Only the experimental group will receive the intervention/treatment. The design was chosen because the randomization of the participants to experimental and control groups will be impossible; considering the nature of the population and the school will not have allowed the class arrangement to be disrupted. The quasi-experimental design allows the use of intact classes (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Supporting the adoption of quasi-experimental design, Creswell and Creswell 2017, suggested that in a situation like this, where random

assignment cannot be carried out, the quasi experimental design should be used because it is a school friendly type of design that does not allowed disrupting the structure of existing classrooms.

Two schools were selected out of the 21 public senior secondary schools in Toro LGA of Bauchi State and labelled as school A and B. Purposive sampling technique was used to select public secondary schools in Toro LGA. The schools were selected on the basis of having same characteristics of being public schools, having English language teachers with B.Ed or BA.Ed certificate and being well equipped with teaching and learning facilities. Then simple random sampling technique was used to select two schools that were used for the study. Two intact classes which were randomly selected from the sampled schools served as an experimental and control groups.

The researchers used Students' Attitude Scale on English Language Reading Comprehension Curriculum (SASELRCC) as an instrument for data collection. The SASELRCC contained two sections A and B. Section A sought the demographic data of the respondent while section B contained 18 items developed by the researcher using five-points likert scale which the respondents were to respond to by choosing from the options strongly agree = SA, Agree=A, Undecided = U, Disagree=A and Strongly disagree = SD concerning their attitude towards English language reading comprehension. At the end, SASELRCC was collected, sorted, arranged and coded accordingly. The scored of SASELRCC was based on the likert scale responses: SA, A, UA, D, SD. The sorted and corded SASELRCC was used for the analysis

The validity and of SASELRCC was established by subjecting it to experts' scrutiny in terms of questions clarity, appropriateness, adequacy, proper wording of items and stability. Construct validity was applied to attitude rating scale to ensure its appropriateness and stability.

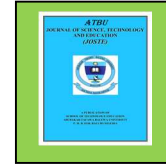
The reliability of the instrument is the consistency with which the test repeatedly measure what is intended to measure. The

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SASELRCC was pilot-tested with groups of students that will not participate in the main study, but are homogeneously related. The test-retest method used to establish the reliability of the instruments. Reliability coefficient of the instruments was determined by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to estimate the internal stability of the instruments. The correlation was done by using SPSS version 24. The results obtained from the two tests administered to the group at the interval of two weeks was analysed, and the results reached 0.75. Hence, SASELRCC was considered reliable and strong.

The data collected from the study was analysed using descriptive statistics. The research questions were answered by using means and standard deviation while, the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test all the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance with special package for service and solution (SPSS) version 24

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One: What is the pretest and posttest attitude mean scores of the SS2 students in reading comprehension?

Table 1: Pre and Post Attitude mean score of Students on Reading Comprehension for the Experimental and Control Group

Group	N	Pretest-attitude		Posttest-attitude		\bar{x} gain	Mean diff.
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Experimental	39	53.21	3.89	66.03	9.17	12.82	11.13
Control	45	53.73	3.97	55.42	3.92	1.69	

Table 1 showed the pretest and posttest attitude towards reading comprehension mean score of students in the experimental and control groups. From the result, the post-test attitude mean score (\bar{x} = 66.03, SD = 9.17) of the experimental group is higher than the pre-test attitude mean score (\bar{x} = 53.21, SD = 3.89) with a mean gain of 12.82, indicating that there was an increase in the attitude mean score of students after treatment. For the control group, the pretest attitudes mean score was 53.73 and a standard deviation of 3.97 while the posttest attitude mean score of students 55.42 with a standard deviation of 3.92. The mean gain score of the control group was 1.69. The findings revealed that students in

the experimental group had a higher attitude mean score after their exposure to discussion method than the control group who were not taught with discussion method. There was a mean difference of 11.13. This implies that students in the experimental group had a more positive attitude towards reading comprehension after treatment compared to the students in the control group.

Research Question Two: What are the posttest attitude mean scores of the SS2 students taught reading comprehension using discussion method based on gender?

Table 2: Result of Posttest Attitude of Male and Female Students on Reading Comprehension for the Experimental Group

Group	Gender	N	Mean	SD	\bar{x} - Difference
Experimental	Male	18	66.56	8.88	0.99
	Female	21	65.57	9.61	

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Table 2 showed the mean and standard deviation result of the post-attitude mean scores of male and female students in reading comprehension in the experimental and control groups. The mean scores for male yielded (\bar{X} = 66.56; SD = 8.88) and female (\bar{X} = 65.57; SD = 9.61) with a mean difference of 0.99. This implies that female students had almost same attitude mean score with their male

counterparts in reading comprehension when taught using discussion method.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest reading comprehension attitudes mean scores of the SS2 students in the experimental and control groups.

Table 3: ANCOVA Result on Posttest Attitude Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3058.811 ^a	2	1529.406	39.176	.000	.492
Intercept	190.784	1	190.784	4.887	.030	.057
Pre-test	709.775	1	709.775	18.181	.000	.183
Group	2515.634	1	2515.634	64.439	.000	.443
Error	3162.177	81	39.039			
Total	312111.000	84				
Corrected Total	6220.988	83				

a. R Squared = .492 (Adjusted R Squared = .479)

Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to determine if a significant difference exists in the posttest attitude mean score of students towards reading comprehension in the experimental and control groups. Table 3 shows that $F(1,81) = 64.44$, $p < 0.05$, since the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that there was a significant effect of discussion method on students attitude towards reading comprehension. The result further reveals an adjusted R squared value of .479, which means that 47.9 percent of the variation in the

dependent variable which is attitude is explained by variation in the treatment, while the remaining is due to other factors not included in this study. Hence, we can say that discussion method can help change student's attitude towards reading comprehension.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between reading comprehension attitude mean scores of the SS2 students taught reading comprehension using discussion method based on gender.

Table 4: ANCOVA Result on Posttest Attitude Mean Score of Male and Female Students in Reading Comprehension in the Experimental Group

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	566.383 ^a	2	283.191	3.878	.030	.177
Intercept	38.255	1	38.255	.524	.474	.014
Pre-test	556.996	1	556.996	7.628	.009	.175
Gender	7.025	1	7.025	.096	.758	.003
Error	2628.592	36	73.016			
Total	173211.000	39				
Corrected Total	3194.974	38				

a. R Squared = .177 (Adjusted R Squared = .132)

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The data were subjected to analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) having male and female students. The main effect of male yielded (\bar{X} = 66.56; SD = 8.88) and female (\bar{X} = 69.57; SD = 9.61); $F(1,36) = .096$, $P > 0.05$. Since the p-value of .758 is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was retained. This indicates that the attitude of male students towards reading comprehension do not significantly differ from that of the female students. It means that student's attitude to reading comprehension is not affected by gender.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the research question one clearly indicated that the attitude of students in experimental and control group is almost the same as indicated by the mean scores of 53.21 for experimental group and 53.73 for control group. However, a significant change occurred after the treatment within the experimental group as the mean increased with 12.82. Similarly, significant difference manifested between experimental and control group in the posttest where the mean of experimental is 66.03 while that of the control group is 55.42. This shows that attitude of students has increased when taught English reading comprehension by discussion method. The finding, therefore, conforms to what Clark (2018) and Buterbaugh (2021) found, that teaching method changes the attitude of students in reading comprehension.

Similarly, the findings of research question two the mean for both male and female is almost the same. The mean scores of (\bar{X} = 66.56; SD = 8.88) for male and (\bar{X} = 65.57; SD = 9.61) for female with a mean difference of 0.99. This clearly indicated that teaching method has significant importance to the attitude of students based on gender.

Moreover, the null hypothesis one is rejected because the results of the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) indicated that there is significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores as indicated in Table 3 shows that $F(1,81) = 64.44$, $p < 0.05$, since the

p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance, this is indicating that there was a significant effect of discussion method on students attitude towards reading comprehension.

However, the second null hypothesis is retained because the differences of gender in learning English language reading comprehension is insignificant as indicated by the results of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) in table four. The main effect of male yielded (\bar{X} = 66.56; SD = 8.88) and female (\bar{X} = 69.57; SD = 9.61); $F(1,36) = .096$, $P > 0.05$. Since the p-value of .758 is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. The findings is concomitant with the findings of Elui (2015) and Gessa (2018) where they affirmed students attitude toward English reading comprehension with discussion method is almost the same without gender bias.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to investigate the effect of discussion method on SS2 students attitude in English reading comprehension. The findings of the study revealed that using discussion method in teaching English reading comprehension has a significant benefit as students may pay raft attention to the teaching through collective cooperation between them. Also it increased the level of achievement of students

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. School management should organize workshop on teaching methods regularly.
2. Teachers should focus on student-centred method of teaching so that students may become actively participated in the teaching and learning process.
3. Students should be encouraged in developing reading habit.

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