



Impact of Reader Oriented Approach on the Students' Written Discourse of Selected Senior Secondary School Students in Bogoro L.G.A, Bauchi State

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated the Impact of Reader Oriented Approach on the Students' written Discourse of Selected Senior Secondary School Students in Bogoro L.G.A, Bauchi State. This research covered SS2 students of Government Secondary School (G.S.S) Bogoro (450), Government Day Secondary School Bar Arewa (350) as the target population for this study. G.S.S Bogoro, G.D.S.S Bar Arewa, and P.M.S.S Mwari served as experimental group, while students from G.D.S.S Boi served as control group. Experimental research design was adopted and simple random sampling technique was used for the selection of the sampled students while intact class was used for the research sample size. Paired sample t-test was used to analyse the data collected. The result indicated that there is significant difference between the students who are exposed to narrative and descriptive written discourse and those who are not. Therefore, the result is rejected. The recommendation recommended that there is need of incorporating ROA into educational teaching approaches for the enhancement of students 'outcomes in both narrative and descriptive written discourse.

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INTRODUCTION

Reader oriented approach (ROA) is officially known as reader-response approach. It is an approach got going in the late 1960s, when a group of critics including Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser and Norman N. Holland started asking questions about reader response to a literary text. The roots of reader-response approach can be traced back to 1938. That is the year that literature as exploration, a book by Scholar Louise Rosenblatt, was polished. In this book, Rosenblatt deals at length with how written materials is fundamental to understanding of a literary work. Reader Oriented Approach (ROA) is a literary approach used in literature (Abankin, 2020). It means that literary works has no meaning by itself, it has no real existence until it is read; its readers can only discuss its meaning. Different interpretations happen because the readers' ways of reading are different. A silent piece of writing is activated once a reader (Mary, 2003) reads it. Reader Oriented Approach (ROA) can

also be referred as Reader Response Approach (RRA). It believes that reader is actually as important as the author is.

The impact of reader-oriented approach in the field of teaching cannot be over emphasized. It is an approach in field of literature, because English and Literature are inseparable, they are like tube and tire, they walk (go) together. One adage says, "Iron sharpens iron". In addition, a reader is always a writer (Mary, 2003). Reading is a receptive language process, which involves recognition, interpretation and perception of written symbols on paper (Ogochukwu, 2014). Reader-oriented approach is the student-centered approach. It motivates the students to learn on their own. The main characteristics of reader-oriented approach (ROA), is an interactive approach between the reader and the text (Stanley, 1970). It also means that literary work has no meaning by itself, because it has no real existence until it is read. Based on this, it is believed that the learner maintains active

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control of the learning process. By implication, the teacher should first engage the students in reading different materials such as passages in textbooks, literary materials and magazines, guide them to understand the format of each discourse, whether it is expository, narrative, descriptive or argumentative, and later engage them in writings within the four types of written discourse in line with parameters used for assessing written discourse.

“Discourse” is concerned with the study of the relationship between language in use and the context in which it is used (McCarthy, 1991:1 in Usman, 2015) yet Wale (2003) posits that discourse is a term use to explain the transfer of information from one person to another. It includes the use of words and sentences in context for conveying meaning. It is also referred as “language in use” (Brown and Yule, 1985:3 in Usman, 2015) notes “there is no single discipline which concerns itself with the study of interaction”, thus suggested that discourse analysis is the intersection of many other fields including philosophy, sociology and anthropology, among others. Discourse is also an organization of language above the sentence or above the clause (Stubbs, 1989:3 in Usman 2015). Mary, (2001) says discourse is a language in context: that is, language as it is out to use in social situations, not more idealized and abstracted linguistic forms that are the central concern of much linguistic theory.

Consequently, terms like “text” and “discourse” are used almost interchangeably, taking the former to refer to as the linguistic product, while the latter implies the entire dynamics of the process (Usman, 2015). Cook (1990:7) in Usman, (2015) notes that novel as well as short stories or conversations might be equally referred as discourse

Discourse is more than just language in use. It is a language, whether spoken (speech) or written, or as a type of social practices (Fairclough, 1995:28 in Usman 2015). It is often described socially situated text and talk (Cook, 1989 in Usman, 2015:10). Assured there are two types of discourse (Olaofe, 2013). Written discourse is a transfer of information, but as its name suggests, it involves the written words, while oral or spoken discourse as it sounds, it is communication or transfer of information from one person to another. It implies the use of

words and sentences in context for conveying meaning (Osisanwo, 2003).

However, this study centered on written discourse because it is aimed at studying the impact of readers’ oriented approach on the students’ written discourse. Written discourse refers to written words that have a specific subject or structure for the purpose of the **written statement**. It is well known that there are four (4) basic types of written discourse: narrative, descriptive, argumentative and expository written discourse. For the purpose of this study, the research narrows itself to only types of written discourse such as narrative and descriptive. Narrative discourse is typically a written work that tells a story, often with a basic structure that includes a beginning, a middle, and an end (Adeyinka, 2017). Most forms of written discourse are presented in a prose style, though poetry can be used effectively in some situations. Descriptive writing is also quite common and, as the name suggests, describes a particular item, scene, or event. This type often uses sensual language that appeals to a reader’s perceptions, such as smell and sight. A writer using this form of discourse typically tries to paint a mental image for a reader that allows him or her to more closely connect to what is described.

The achievement of educational targets has been a different thing all over the world and the problem is not that the educators are not doing well, the curriculum are inadequate or the school environments are not conducive; rather the teaching approaches have been featured as one of the major factors contributing to the low level English achievement. For example, Williams (1993) in Hamisu (2015) indicated that the dominant traditional teacher centered approach to teaching English did not produce effective results and make it possible for learners to acquire the level of competency required for success.

Learning and examination failures in English language have particular bearing on written discourse abilities especially in narrative and written discourse.. Student’s inability to write effectively leads to the total failure in not only English language paper but also in the general learning performance. Constant student’s mass failure in West African Council Examination (WAEC) in English language could

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often be attributed to their low performance in written discourse.

Writing is such an important skill that students are encouraged to acquire. The demand of writing is peculiar, given the nature of its necessity in all stages of learning. This is supported by the fact that not only secondary school students encounter problems, even undergraduates often spill over for one or more academic session because of their incompetency to write effectively. Therefore, the approach of reader-oriented approach would be of great benefit for this category of people. It is on this ground Stanley (1970) posits reader oriented approach (ROA)

Frankly speaking, the low performance in written discourse of English among the students of senior secondary school students in Bauchi State is attributed to teachers' improper habit of clinging to traditional approaches of language teaching. Traditional teacher-centered approaches are largely blamed for the low English achievement (Williams, 1993 in Hamisu, 2014). This is why the present study will explore the impact of reader-oriented approach on the students' written discourse of schools to see whether better achievements could be achieved.

Thus, the present study will motivate to conduct an action school-based research in order to explore the impact of reader-oriented approach on the students' written discourse performance as well as suggesting some helpful approaches to promote learner autonomy. The specific approaches adopted include encouraging students to set their own goals for personal development and instructional improvement, and planning ways to achieve these goals. Consequently, many students have been encountering series of problems with writing. Despite the fact that they are always motivated and encouraged to learn written discourse, they write with much difficulty, and as a result, the achievement is low (Brent, 2001 in Hamisu, 2015). This study focuses on the mass failure of secondary school students in West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). A study of students' written discourse ability from the perspective of reader oriented approach (ROA), whether could aid find effective ways of enhancing language proficiency in the area of reading and writing.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore "The impact of reader oriented approach on the student's written discourse". This means the impact of the use of reader-oriented approach on the student's written discourse would be investigated. Specifically, this means the researcher sought to:

1. Ascertain the difference between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach in narrative written discourse and those that are not.
2. Find the difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

1. To what extent is the difference between the performance of students who are exposed to reader-oriented approach in narrative written discourse and those who are not?
2. What is the difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse and those who are not.
2. There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted the use of experimental research design because according to Ahukannah & Ugoji, (2008), experimental research design requires two major groups; the experimental treatment and the control group. In this research, there are two (2) groups; treatment and control groups in which the treatment are those group who are exposed to reader-oriented approach and the control group are those group who are exposed to traditional approach. In addition, the researcher subjected the experimental group

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students to pre-test, treatment and post-test.
Table below:

Table 1: Experimental Group Students

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental Group	01	X1	02
Control Group	03	-	04

The researcher used all the SS2 students of two selected Senior Secondary Schools in Bogoro L.G.A, Bauchi State. Intact class was used for the research sample size. The intact class sampling is a kind of non-probability sampling used to produce result that can be generalized only by making strong assumes about the sample. It is an already-formed group that does not require any

selection procedure. The researcher used probabilistic sampling technique by using random sampling in order to give equal treatment for the selection of the sampled schools. The sampling is therefore considered sufficient (Nworgu, 1992 and Gay, 1992). Paired sample t-test was used to analyze the data.

Table 2: Sample of the Study

Schools	No. of Students
G.S.S Bogoro	350
C.D.S.S Bar Arewa	350
Total	700

RESULTS

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between the performance of students that are exposed to

reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse and those who are not.

Table 3: Paired sample t-test comparing posttest between experimental and control groups

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	P
Experimental	350	87.12	24.344	8.121	348	.025
Control	350	30.00	10.414			

The results of this finding revealed that, mean experimental group =30.00, mean control group =87.12, t-value =8.121 and p=.025 which is less than .05 level of significance. This means there is significance differences between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse and those who are not. Thus, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference

between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse and those who are not is rejected.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse.

Table 4: Paired sample t-test comparing pretest and posttest of experimental groups

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t	df	P
Pretest	350	34.05	7.055	10.007	349	.028
Posttest	350	87.12	24.344			

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The results of this finding shows that, mean pretest =34.05, mean posttest =87.12, t-value =10.007 and p=.028 which is less than .05 level of significance. This means there is significance effect of reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse. Thus, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse is hereby rejected.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The result of the analysis showed that;

1. The basic postulates of the reader-response theory and reader-response approach in class emphasize the crucial role of the reader on the literary and aesthetic experience when reading a literary text.
2. The reader's way of understanding and perceptions of a literary text, as well as the experience of the reader, influence the interaction between the reader and a text.
3. The interaction contributes to the development of interpretation of the text and reconstruction of the ideas expressed in the text.
4. It examines the possible ways of implementing the reader response theory in a literature class, including written assignments, personal responses to a literary text and in-class discussions.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Student responses from these assignments were analyzed in terms of the stages of the developmental model presented by Thomson (2017). The aim of the study and analysis of these activities was to provide a clearer picture of students' attitudes, observations and personal reactions when interacting with a literary text. Students' responses were analyzed in terms of the level reached according to the developmental model, which start from the most basic literal understanding of a text, through empathy, analogy and reflection/interpretation, to the highest level of personal response to the text, which includes evaluation and recognition. In total, the responses of 8 students out of 22 in class were analyzed and evaluated.

According to the analysis and the notes of student responses of the in-class discussions, it can be concluded that 8 out of 8 recorded and analyzed student responses understood the text at level 1. This means that all of them understood the text at the level of literal understanding. The students' contributions to in class discussions showed that the students could follow the plot of the novel, understood the novel at the most basic level of text understanding and the events described. From their responses, it can be concluded that the majority of them (7), understand the text on the level of empathy, analogy and interpretation. The students are able to link the text with their personal experience and opinion, to interpret the text from their standpoint of view and to rethink their own values through in class discussions. In addition, 2 out of 8 students respond to the text at the levels of evaluation and recognition. They are able to evaluate the text and the characters in the text, comparing the values and the norms expressed in the text with their own. They are also aware of the reading process and their own reactions to the text, thus increasing self-understanding.

The character analysis was a written assignment that the students had to submit two weeks after the in-class analysis and discussions were conducted. Their task was to choose one of the characters in the novel and to evaluate the character in terms of behavior, relationships with other characters in the novel, norms and the values that the character displays during these interactions and the overall evaluation of the character. Similarly, to the first part of the research, the written assignments of the same students (8) were analyzed and compared to the levels of developmental model presented by Thomson (2017). From the analysis of the assignments, several conclusions can be drawn. The findings show that all of the participants (the students) understand the text at the level of literal understanding. From their assignments, it can be concluded that the majority of them (6 assignments in total), respond to the text at the level of empathy, analogy and interpretation. Excerpts from the character analysis assignments illustrate the previous findings.

Both the in-class discussions and the character analysis assignments response

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analysis showed that students are more interested in literary texts when the texts can be discussed via prompts/ discussion questions which facilitate personalization of the discussion. As a result, the in-class discussions were perceived to be more relevant to the students. The reader-response approach implemented via critical questioning and writing, required from the participants/ students, to provide answers based on their personal perceptions, opinions and point of view. Thus, the participation and interest was facilitated and reinforced. Both groups of responses (discussions and character analysis) showed that the students understood the texts on the majority of the levels, starting from the level of literal understanding. In addition, the majority of the students/ participants respond to the text at the level of empathy, analogy and interpretation.

After the data were collected and analyzed. Here, the researcher discussed about what strategies applied by the teacher when conducting RRT-based reading process and how the students' responses reflected their feelings, opinions, and background knowledge. Based on the observation checklist adapted from Beach and Marshall cited in Sari and Inderawati (2014), it could be said that the teacher conducted seven strategies, which are Engaging, Describing, Conceiving, Explaining, Connecting, Interpreting, and Judging.

The teacher used the engaging strategy to draw the students' interest toward the story. She did it by playing games and asking questions toward the students. She often made the students predict what was going to happen next in the story to keep them engaged with the text. After that, describing strategy was used by asking the students to describe the characters and the setting in the story. This was usually done by listing the adjectives used to describe the characters, the time, or the places in the story. The teacher also asked some questions regarding to the information that was not explicitly showed in the story, for example, The famous Noah's Big Ark and The Big Flood disaster that were connected to the story of The Last Unicorn, The Green Knight that disguised as Lord Westfall, and why Loreng the tiger's mouth was bloody. In this case, the teacher had applied the conceiving strategy. Next, the connecting strategy was applied when the

teacher asked the students to connect what they read with their own background knowledge, like whether the Unicorn was described in the story matched with what they usually see on TV or comic books. The interpreting strategy was used by the teacher whenever she asked the students about their thoughts or opinions about the events in the story, like what they would do if they were Shem, what they think about Sir Gawain's action, and what their opinions about parents letting a tiger to look after their baby. Lastly, the teacher used the judging strategy to make the students decide whether the story was good or not by asking them about the moral values within or by analyzing the plot to know whether the story was interesting and whether the students liked what they had read.

However, the strategies that the teacher had applied was not usually did in the form of the activities showed in Beach and Marshall cited in Sari and Inderawati (2014). For example, in the table, the connecting strategy was done in the form of Treeing or Conferences. However, here the teacher applied the strategy in the form of Question-Asking activity. The teacher did not change the connecting strategy's principle but she changed the activity. It shows that the activities could be changed adapting to the teacher's need.

The second finding indicated that the students have generated interpretive, affective, associative, reflective and queries response. In Picture 1, the teacher asked, "What do you feel about the story" and "Why do you feel like that?". Then, a student answered, "I feel nothing because the story is so flat". In another picture (Picture 3), another student answered, "I feel entertained, because the story is interesting". From the example, it could be known that the students were able to involve their feelings in the reading process. Therefore, this kind of responses belong to the affective type of response.

In Picture 8, the teacher questioned, "Do you think the Wife was guilty of Loreng's death too? Why?". And a student answered, "Yes, because she didn't prevent her husband when he killed the tiger." Another example, in the spoken form, the teacher asked, "Why do you think Sir Gawain refused Lady Westall's offer?" A student answered, "Because Sir Gawain did not want to break his promise to the

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Green Knight.” These kinds of responses belong to the interpretive type of response because, from the example, it could be seen that the students were able to interpret the characters in the story and the events happening in the story.

In Picture 1, the teacher questioned, “Have you ever heard the story about Noah and his big wooden ark to save the people and the animals from the Big Flood? Do you believe it?” Then a student answered, “...I haven’t read it yet I don’t believe it” Yet, in Picture 2, another student answered, “Yes, I ever heard the story and I believe it.” These kinds of responses belong to the associative type of response, because they associate their literary background with the story. Hence, the subcategory is literary background. Moreover, in Picture 8, the teacher asked, “Did you ever wrongly accuse an animal or someone for something they did not do? What did you do after that?” then the student answered, “...I do apologize for someone and don’t repeat my mistake.”

Here, the student associated her or his personal experience with the story. Hence, the subcategory is personal experience. Furthermore, in spoken form, when the teacher asked, “Did you ever read a similar story like this? Or a story that has similar character...?” (referring to A Legend of the Knights of the Round Table story), the student answered, “Yes, I know the same character like Sir Gawain in Timun Mas: Buto Ijo. They [are] both green.” The answer indicated the association to another work, hence the subcategory is other works. Thus, from the examples, it could be said that the students were able to associate the story with their personal experiences, other works, and literary background.

In Picture 7, the teacher questioned, “What is the tensest event in the story for you? Why?” the student answered, “When the Green Knight [struck] Sir Gawain. I [was] afraid Sir Gawain [would] die.” This answer reflected the student’s reading process. Hence, the subcategory is reading process. Moreover, when the teacher orally asked, “Was the story similar to the story about knights that you have read before?”, the student answered, “No, [it is] different. Usually there is princess in the knight story.” This kind of answer reflected their role as a reader of literature. Therefore, the

subcategory is literature. Furthermore, when the teacher asked, “Do you agree about Shem stealing the unicorns?”, the student answered, “I disagree. Because stealing is bad. Shem should not [have tried] to steal the unicorn [even though it was for urgent matter].” This answer indicated the student’s belief that stealing is bad, even though it was done for good purpose. Hence, the subcategory of this response is personal belief. Meanwhile, all the examples of the students’ response above belong to the reflective type of response because it reflected the students’ literature, personal belief, and reading process.

Then, one time, a student orally asked the teacher, “Where is Panyalahan [village], [Ma’am]?” This question indicated the student’s curiosity regarding to the story they read. Moreover, another one asked, “[So does that mean] Shem’s father is Noah [the Messenger]?” Different from the previous example, this one indicated that the student wanted to confirm his or her understanding regarding to the text. These kinds of responses belong to the queries type of response. However, according to Garzón and CastañedaPeña’s (2015), there are six types of responses in the RRT based reading process. The sixth response, which is inferential response was not found. In inferential response, the students are required to analyze the literature aspects of the text, such as dictions, themes, symbolisms, tones, et cetera. With the consideration of the grade and the students’ English proficiency level compared to the other subjects in other researches regarding to RRT application in EFL, it was possible that the teacher did not ask the students those aspects regarding to the said reasons. Nevertheless, it is encouraged that the students accept different interpretations in Reader-Response reading process (Rosenblatt as cited in Yilmaz 2013). The examples of the students’ response above indicate that they had different opinions and thoughts about the story and they accepted the varied interpretation about it. Furthermore, according to My Van (2019), it is also eminent that the responses of the students involve the readers’ feelings, experiences, and background knowledge. This could also be seen in the explanation about the students’ responses above, particularly in the affective type response.

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It is encouraged that the students accept different interpretations in Reader-Response reading process (Rosenblatt as cited in Yilmaz 2013). The examples of the students' response above indicate that they had different opinions and thoughts about the story and they accepted the varied interpretation about it. Furthermore, according to My Van (2019), it is also eminent that the responses of the students involve the readers' feelings, experiences, and background knowledge, in which it could be seen in the students' responses.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals substantial differences in the performance of students exposed to the Reader Oriented Approach (ROA) in narrative and descriptive written discourse compared to those who are not. Moreover, a significant positive effect of ROA on narrative and descriptive written discourse is evident from the findings. This underscores the importance of incorporating ROA into educational approaches for the enhancement of students' outcomes in both narrative and descriptive written discourse.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Educational institutions should integrate Reader Oriented Approach into their curriculum to ensure that students receive exposure to effective narrative and descriptive written discourse from an early stage.
2. Professional Development bodies for Educators should conduct workshops and training sessions for educators to enhance their understanding and implementation of ROA in teaching narrative and descriptive written discourse. This will enable them to effectively impart these skills to students.
3. Teachers should encourage interactive reading activities that involve students actively engaging with texts. This approach fosters a reader-centric mindset, contributing to improved narrative and descriptive written discourse skills.
4. The government should ensure that schools have access to diverse and rich learning resources, including a

variety of narrative descriptive texts, to expose students to different written discourse styles and perspectives.

5. Educational administrators should ensure the implementation of regular assessments focusing on narrative and descriptive written discourse skills, with feedback emphasizing the incorporation of reader-oriented elements. This iterative feedback loop can help students refine their narrative and descriptive written discourse abilities over time.

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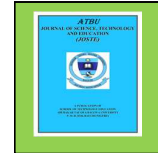
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