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EFFECT OF KWL ON READING COMPREHENSION OF PUPILS IN ENGLISH STUDIES IN ANAMBRA EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AUTHORITY, ANAMBRA STATE

Prof. F.E. Anyachebelu & Nwankwo Chinyere Juliana
fe.anyachebelu@unizik.edu.ng; nwankwochinyere20201@gmail.com
Department Of Early Childhood and Primary Education
Faculty Of Education
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State

ABSTRACT

English is not only a subject of study but also a medium through which other subjects are taught which made the subject indispensable. This study was necessitated by the persistent unsatisfactory pupils' achievement in English studies. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of Know, Want to Know and Learned (KWL) strategy on reading comprehension achievement of primary school pupils in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State. Three research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. The study adopted a quasi-experimental design that employed a pre-test, post-test non-randomized control group. The population comprised 1,700 (862 males and 838 females) primary four pupils in the 48 government-owned public primary schools in Anambra East LGEA. A total of 186 (96 males and 90 females) primary five pupils from two out of 48 government-owned public primary schools in the study area were sampled using simple random sampling technique. Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT) was the instrument used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by three experts; two experts from Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education and an expert from Measurement and Evaluation Unit from the Department of Educational Foundations, all from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Kudder-Richardson Formula 20 was used to establish a reliability coefficient of 0.87. Data was collected with the help of research assistants who are English studies teachers in the sampled schools. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05vlevel of significance. The findings revealed that that KWL strategy significantly enhanced pupils reading comprehension in English studies in Anambra East LGEA. It was concluded that KWL strategy is a cooperative learning strategy which enables pupils to learn reading passages in English studies which in turns improve their reading comprehension in the subject area. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that School authorities and educational administrators should integrate KWL in the school system since it will help the pupils in becoming problem solvers than competitive learners. This will also equip them to face real life problem situations with positive solutions to the problems.

Keywords: KWL; Reading Comprehension; Pupils; English Studies

Introduction

It is generally believed that education in Nigeria is an instrument "par excellence" for effecting national development. Therefore, there is need for a functional education for the building of: a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens. These national developmental goals can be achieved with education as a tool. Hence, education is very important in any given society. It is a process by which abilities and capabilities of individual are developed. These abilities might be physical abilities, emotional abilities, social abilities and intellectual abilities. Education does not only deliver information, but for developing complete personality of a child ranging from the primary school through secondary to tertiary institutions.

Primary schools are the initial point of formal education for young learners aged five to twelve in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority. The primary education system aims to provide children with basic literacy, numeracy, and social skills, setting them on the path towards further learning and future success. The objectives of primary education are multifaceted and encompass various aspects of a child's growth and development. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (2013), these objectives include: (i) providing a solid foundation in literacy and numeracy; (ii) fostering social and emotional development; (iii) developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills; and (iv) promoting a love for learning.

Achieving the objectives of education involves equipping learners with the cognitive and social tools necessary for personal development and societal contribution. Language plays a central role in this process, as it is the primary medium through which knowledge is conveyed, and communication is facilitated. Without language, the goals of education would be unattainable, as learners would struggle to access, comprehend, and engage with educational content (Ehuemumo and Nwikpo, 2020). In the context of Nigerian primary schools, the English language holds a unique position. English language occupies a high place in the Nigerian school curriculum, it is being taught in schools from pre-nursery down to the tertiary institution. As the official language of instruction in most schools, English is not only a subject of study but also the medium through which other subjects are taught (Mardiana, 2016). This dual role of English as both a language and a tool for learning underscores its significance in the educational system, reading is therefore one of the four primer skills in language learning.

Reading involves active thinking throughout engagement with the text (O'Shea, Bright and Harword, 2016), It analyses that reading is a dynamic process of catching words meaning and getting information from the text. Operationally, reading is a skill that help learners to increase knowledge. In addition to decoding skills, pupils need vocabulary that tracks their

understanding and reflects on their reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension is a crucial aspect of language proficiency, directly influences pupils' ability to succeed in their studies. As Ogbu (2018) pointed out, a strong foundation in reading comprehension is essential for academic achievement, as it enables pupils to understand and process written information across all subject areas. Furthermore, reading comprehension is not just about understanding texts; it is also closely linked to other language skills, such as writing, speaking, and listening. When pupils struggle with comprehension, it affects their ability to construct coherent sentences, write meaningful essays, and understand spoken instructions or discussions (Ezokoli and Ezeagu, 2019). For instance, a pupil who cannot comprehend a passage may find it challenging to answer questions related to it, affecting their performance in exams and continuous assessments.

The KWL strategy is a metacognitive reading strategy developed by Ogle (1986) to improve pupils' comprehension of texts. It is designed to engage pupils in active reading by encouraging them to think about what they know (K), what they want to know (W), and what they have learned (L) from a text. This strategy promotes a deeper interaction with the material, making reading a more purposeful and reflective activity; (i) Know: pupils are encouraged to think about what they already know about a topic before reading; (ii) Want to know: pupils then list what they want to learn from the text; and (iii) Learned: after reading, pupils reflect on what they have learned, comparing it with their initial knowledge and questions. It is one of strategies used mainly for information text (Ajayi and Fagunwa,2022).

The KWL strategy is a method of teaching reading that involves three stages: activation of prior knowledge, setting a purpose for reading, and reflection and synthesis (Alsoudi, 2017). The activation stage encourages pupils to think about their existing knowledge, enabling them to relate new content to existing knowledge. The "Want to know" stage guides pupils to focus on specific questions or topics, enhancing comprehension. The final stage involves pupils summarizing their learning, identifying key points, and integrating new information into their already acquired knowledge.

The KWL strategy has been shown to be effective in improving reading comprehension, particularly among struggling readers. But research has shown that male and female pupils may respond differently to instructional strategies due to various cognitive, social, and emotional factors (Aseeri, 2020; Babah, Ayamah, Asase and Odei, 2023). Males tend to prefer goal-oriented tasks and find the "Want to know" stage motivating, as it provides clear outcomes and objectives. This strategy aligns well with their learning style. Female pupils, however, may benefit more from the reflective aspect of the KWL strategy, as they engage more deeply with texts when they relate content to their experiences and emotions. The "Learned" stage, which involves reflection and synthesis, may be particularly effective for female pupils. Despite these differences, the KWL strategy

is effective for both genders, and the inclusion of gender as a moderator variable in this study will provide insights into how to tailor the strategy to maximize its effectiveness for all pupils. It is therefore against this background that this study seeks to determine the effect of KWL strategy on reading comprehension achievement of primary schools in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the effect of KWL strategy on reading comprehension achievement of primary schools in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State. Specifically, the study seeks to determine:

1. Difference between mean achievement scores of primary school pupils taught reading comprehension with Know-Want-Learn (KWL) and those taught with conventional strategy in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State.
2. Difference between mean achievement scores of male and female pupils taught reading comprehension with (KWL) strategy in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State.
3. Interaction effect of instructional strategies (KWL and conventional) and gender on pupils' mean reading comprehension achievement scores.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the difference between mean achievement scores of primary school pupils taught reading comprehension with Know-Want-Learn (KWL) and those taught with conventional strategy in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State?
2. What is the difference between mean achievement scores of male and female pupils taught reading comprehension with (KWL) strategy in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State?
3. What is the interaction effect of instructional strategies (KWL and conventional) and gender on pupils' mean reading comprehension achievement scores?

Methods

This paper adopts quasi-experimental design. Specifically, it used pre-test post test non-equivalent control group design. Non-equivalent control group design was used because the pupils were not randomly sampled. Rather, intact or pre-existing classes was used which were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups (Nworgu, 2015).

This study was carried out in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority. Anambra East Local Government Area Education Authority (LGEA) is located

in the southeastern part of Nigeria, within Anambra State

The population of this study comprised all the 1,700 pupils (862 males and 838 females) primary four pupils in 48 public primary schools in Anambra East LGEA. (Source: Anambra State Universal Basic Education Board, ASUBEB, Awka as at 2024.

The sample for the study was 140 primary four pupils. The procedure used in obtaining the sample was simple random sampling technique specifically, toss of a coin and lucky dip. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw two schools in Anambra East LGEA. Also, with a flip of coin, one of the schools was made the experimental group while the other becomes the control group. The various arms of the primary four class in both groups were listed out in a piece of paper and folded. A teacher from the two schools was asked to pick any of the piece, the first and second pick formed the arms for both control and experimental group schools. The researcher used the first school as the experimental group school while the second school was used as the control group school. From the experimental school, the whole intact class were used while the whole intact class were also used in the control group school.

Two instruments were used for data collection namely; Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT). The RCAT is developed by the researcher using two comprehension passages in accordance to the FSL standardized tests. The instrument is divided into two sections. Section A elicited the name and gender while section B is made up of 20 multiple objective test items with four different answer options. The researcher administered the test at first to the pupils. This is called the pre-test. After the experimentation, the test was re-shuffled and re-administered to the pupils. This is called the post-test. Pupils in both control and experimental groups responded to the same questions both in pre-test and post-test exercises. All the questions have marking schemes developed by the researcher.

To develop the instrument, a test blue print was designed and used in guiding the construction of the test. The guiding principles for developing the test blue print was based on each aspect of the content on primary four scheme of work drawn from the English Language curriculum.

The instrument; RCAT, answers to RCAT, Test blueprint, lesson plans and table of specification were given to three experts, two from the Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education and one from Measurement and Evaluation Unit of the Department of Educational Foundations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The instruments were subjected to face and content validity. The validation was mainly based on clarity of expressions, none ambiguity, relevance and ability of the instruments to measure what they are expected to measure. Corrections and suggestions made by the validates were effected before the final copy was approved and printed for this study.

Reliability is concerned with the degree of consistency of the measuring instrument. The RCAT was administered to 20 primary four pupils in two selected

primary schools in Anaocha Local Government Education Authority outside the research area which has a homogenous culture as the research area. The scores for RCAT obtained from trial testing exercise carried out were used to estimate the reliability coefficient of the instrument using Kudar Richardson Formular (KR-20) which yielded a reliability of 0.87 (computed using SPSS). Kudar Richardson (KR-20) was used because the test items are dichotomous in nature. This value was considered acceptable by the researcher as this was in agreement with Nworgu (2015) that any value above 0.70 is an acceptable reliability value.

The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the teacher and introduced the concept of KWL strategy. The researcher gave out the prepared lesson plans on KWL strategy. In the control group school, it is assumed that the teacher is familiar with the conventional teaching method, where the teacher explains almost every concept to pupils.

Data obtained through RCAT were analyzed with the descriptive statistics of arithmetic mean to answer the research questions. Inferential statistics of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test all the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

In the test of hypothesis using ANCOVA, F ratio value was used to determine the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses. The null hypothesis was rejected if p-value is less than the level of significance (0.05), if p-value is greater than or equal to 0.05, null hypothesis was not rejected. SPSS version 24 was employed as the software for data analysis.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the pre-test and post-test mean achievement scores of primary school pupils taught reading comprehension with Know-Want-Learn (KWL) strategy and conventional teaching strategy in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State.

Table 1. Mean achievement and Standard Deviation Scores of Primary School Pupils Taught Reading Comprehension using KWL Strategy and those taught using Conventional Method

Group	N	Pre-test Mean	SD	Post-test Mean	SD	Mean Gain
Experimental	70	36.19	8.86	50.33	7.84	14.14
Control	70	34.49	11.49	34.61	8.87	0.12
Mean Difference		1.7		15.72		14.02

The data in table 1 shows the pre-test and post-test mean achievement scores of primary school pupils taught reading comprehension using KWL strategy to be 36.19 and 50.33 while their mean gain score was 14.14. On the other hand, their counterpart taught using conventional strategy had 34.49, 34.61 and 0.12 as mean pre-test, post-test and mean gain score respectively. Both the mean post-test score and mean gain score of pupils taught reading comprehension using KWL strategy were

greater than that of pupils taught using conventional strategy.

Research Question 2: What is the difference between mean achievement scores of male and female pupils taught reading comprehension with (KWL) strategy in Anambra East Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State?

Table 2. Mean achievement and standard deviation scores of male and female pupils taught KWL and conventional teaching model

Source of Variation	Gender	N	Pretest Mean	SD	Posttest Mean	SD	Gained Mean
KWL Strategy	Male	33	37.33	8.34	51.24	7.52	13.91
	Female	37	35.16	9.20	49.51	8.13	14.35
Mean Difference			2.17		1.73		-0.44

As displayed in Table 2, male pupils taught reading comprehension with (KWL) strategy had 37.33 and 51.24 as mean pretest and posttest scores. Their standard deviation scores were 8.34 and 7.52. On the other hand, their female counterpart had 35.16 and49.51 as mean pretest and posttest scores. Their standard deviation scores were 9.20 and 8.13. The male pupils had a mean gain score of 13.91 while their female counterpart had 14.35 with a mean difference of 0.44 in favour of the female pupils.

Research Question 3: What is the interaction effect of instructional strategies (KWL and conventional) and gender on pupils' mean reading comprehension achievement scores?

Table 3. Mean interaction effect of instructional strategies (KWL and conventional) and gender on pupils' mean reading comprehension achievement scores

Source of Variation	Gender	N	Pretest Mean	SD	Posttest Mean	SD	Gained Mean
KWL Strategy	Male	33	37.33	8.34	51.24	7.52	13.91
	Female	37	35.16	9.20	49.51	8.13	14.35
Conventional Strategy	Male	33	36.00	8.50	36.70	10.62	.70
	Female	37	32.51	11.89	33.38	9.12	.87
Mean Difference			-0.97		-1.83		0.27

Table 3 shows the pre-test and post-test and mean gain scores of male pupils taught reading comprehension with KWL strategy to be 37.33, 51.24and 13.91 while their counterpart taught using conventional method had 36.00, 36.70 and .87 as mean pretest, posttest and mean gain scores. This shows that male pupils taught using KWL strategy were greater than their counterpart taught using conventional method.

On the other hand, the female pupils taught KWL strategy had 36.16, 49.51and 14.35 as their pre-test, post-test and mean gain scores while their counterpart taught using conventional method had 32.51, 33.38 and 9.12 as mean pretest, posttest and mean gain

scores. This shows that female pupils taught using KWL strategy were greater than their counterpart taught using conventional method.

Discussion

The discussion of findings was done in line with the following subheadings as contained in the purpose of the study, research questions and hypothesis tested.

Pupils in the KWL achieved more than pupils in the conventional groups. The result of the data shown in Table 1 clearly shows that the control group which was taught with lecture method. The analysis of hypothesis one using ANCOVA Table 1 showed that KWL had the highest mean gain followed than conventional method. This shows that the experimental group achieved more than the control group. In addition, the analysis obtained using ANCOVA as shown in table 4 shows that there is significant main effect of treatment in the posttest achievement of pupils in the experimental and control group.

Conclusion

KWL strategy is a cooperative learning strategy which enables pupils to learn reading passages in English language as a group. It improved their reading achievement in English language after they had been taught with the technique. In this regard, there was a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of pupils taught with KWL and those taught with lecture method. It was concluded that pupils taught with KWL achieved better than those taught with peer tutoring and lecture method. Therefore, there is a significant main effect of treatment in the posttest achievement of pupils in the experimental and control group.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and taking into cognizance its educational implications, the following recommendations were made.

1. Teachers training institutions should incorporate KWL in their curriculum so that prospective teachers will be acquainted with the basic skills of designing instructional materials for use and implementation of KWL in their respective classroom.
2. School authorities and educational administrators should organize seminars, conferences and workshops where teachers would be trained on the skills and effective implementation of KWL on male and female pupils since it facilitates achievement.
3. School authorities and educational administrators should also integrate KWL in the school system since it will help the pupils in becoming problem solvers than competitive learners. This will also equip them to face real life problem situations.

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