

## **EFFECT OF PEER TEAM GRITTY METHOD ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE OF PRIMARY PUPILS IN ABIA STATE**

**Umunna Chioma Gloria**

Department of Educational Psychology/G&C  
Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri, Imo State.

&

**Amazu Ngozi Anthonia PhD**

Department of Education Foundation  
University of Uyo, Akwa-ibom state

### **Abstract**

*The study focused on the effect of peer team gritty method on English language performance among primary school pupils in Abia state. The study was carried out in two primary schools in Aba North Local government Area of Abia State. The study is a non-randomization quasi-experimental control design. A total number of sixty pupils who scored less than 30 percent out of the Researcher made English Reading Test [RMERT] were used for the study. The experimental group was taught reading comprehension using the Peer Team Gritty method while the control group was taught the same comprehension using conventional methods of reading. Both groups were pre-tested and post-tested using the same instrument. The treatment was done twice a week for nine weeks after which reversed versions of the questions were administered to the pupils. Two research questions were answered with mean and standard deviation and two hypotheses were tested with ANCOVA @ 0.05 level of significant. The results of the study showed that the pupils taught with Peer- Team Gritty method have higher scores than their counterparts taught with conventional method of teaching comprehension. It was recommended that Peer Team Gritty method should be used in teaching pupils English Language and teachers should be trained to master the skills in the [PTGM] in teaching pupils reading at early stage.*

### **Introduction**

One of the causes of school drop-out, truancy, poor school enrolment; and low retention of learned materials could be attributed to inability to read and write on the side of the learners, Okwara-kalu (2013). It is embarrassing and shocking that some students in the tertiary institutions in the Nation cannot read well and make meaning out of the read material. Some of the students can speak English language but cannot pen down correct spellings in

English language. One wonders what will be the fate of such students in schools that are zero free tolerance for exam malpractice and sorting system. If the deafening grammatical blunders are left unchecked, it means that the future of the youths is at bleak and the society stands the risk of receiving bunches of half-baked teeming population of the youths who cannot compete knowledge-wise with their counterparts in other Nations of the world in the labour market, Umunna (2017).

The reason for this ugly scenario could be the negative effects of the use of two or more languages on students in developing countries like Nigeria. The learners are fraught with two or more languages of different phonemic disparities, as the sound systems of the second language and that of the mother tongue tend to be a huge challenge to the growing child as they struggle to learn the alphabets, phonetic sounds of their mother tongue and that of the second language. This drops the learners at the crossroads as it becomes difficult for some of the children at early stage to prime their brain to make a connection between the brain and other sense organs in a split second during reading activities. According to Uche (2014) inability to expose the child enough on focused reading methods, poses a challenge to the child who cannot built strong reading skills for the simple reason that the brain pattern of the child was not charged at early stage to match the sound system of the language with the letters. In this case, the child cannot hug his brain and thus may face unpleasant experience reading texts Nwosu (2015). Kang (2006) portends that exposing children early enough to rhyme system of their immediate environment helps the beginner reader to make sound differentiation with the mother tongue and the language of reading and learning in the school. The clash of two languages with different phonological and morphological differentiations, compound the challenge of struggling readers where the second language is used for teaching and learning (Ebenebe, 2015). Quinghua (2013) sees reading as a complex task as no one part of the brain can do the work.

A child who cannot read or make sense out of a read material could lose interest in learning and may gradually drop out of school if the solution to his problem is not proffered or if the child feels that the school has nothing to offer to him to overcome his challenges (Onyishi & Eze, 2016). The conventional method of teaching pupils in primary schools English language may not have helped to build the necessary foundations needed to carry the load of reading experiences that will avail the child, the opportunity to access information from the texts and also to raise their grades in reading comprehension in the class (Nwosu, 2015). The progressive minded teachers are saddled to captivate on method of teaching English Language that will put

the learner at the center of learning experience (Umeano, 2013, Ebenebe & Nwosu, 2014; Umunna, 2017). Duckworth (2014), Found that Gritty method is a learning method of overcoming challenges of learning from mistakes instead of being defeated by them. It is a method that inculcates persistency, determination and resilience, dragging alongside with it, self-regulation and qualities of working hard as part of learning experiences. The conventional method of teaching may not have afforded the child the resilient or fortitude to tackle the intricacies to comprehend texts written in the second language of the reader.

The researchers now thought of a method of teaching that will involve the brain, hand and mind of the reader. The method that arouses the curiosity of the readers, excites their interest, an environment that creates active participation both for the learners as well as the teacher; sees struggling and perseverance as important elements in learning. (Angela 2014). Ngwoke (2015), Was of the opinion that students learn best in student-centered classroom that actively involve the learners not only with subject matter but also with their classmate and their teachers. Duckworth (2014), the inventor of Gritty learning method submitted that helping a child build positive mindset have strong effects on the pupils demonstration of perseverant behavior, as they have value for the work they are doing; feel sense of belonging in the classroom context in which they are working, feel capable of succeeding and believe they could master challenging materials with efforts; with these they are much more likely to engage in difficult task and see it through completion.

Caroll (1963) submitted that a teacher during class activities should provide appropriate amount of scaffolding on a particular assignment given to the pupils so that the child feels he/she is capable of being successful as he adds vigor to class work. Carson (1996) added that giving the pupils the pictures of people who made it through hard work also make the learners to persevere when difficulties occur during learning process. Noble and Henderson (2011) found out that high quality interaction with peers is vital to academic success as students involved in such interactions feel valued and having a bond already established. The students see success as more of team work as well as individual responsibility. They are more apt to seek and find support which enhances the likelihood of their success. (Nwosu, 2015).

The Peer Team Gritty method is slightly different from peer team method or peers tutorial. Peer Team Gritty Method has to do with peer interactive method of learning whereby both the slow, fast, introverts and extroverts are made to learn together in a small group in the class. It involves group work, paired and individual work, learning in a jocularly way. In a Peer Team Gritty Class, the pupils work as a team, communicate with one another

in the same group with written and spoken forms of communication. Individual team members identify errors in spellings of team members, work together to correct their identified errors and submit their findings to the class. In peer group Gritty class, there is no 'super boss learner', each member contributes meaningfully in the learning experiences in class. On the other hand, the teacher stands as a guide besides the students, but not as 'a sage on a stage' (William, 2002). The teacher uses positive statements, smiles as a strong motivational tool to ignite the zeal of perseverance on the students. (Maryellen & Olinger, 2016). Peer team Gritty method is interwovenly intertwined with cooperative and collaborative method of learning where peers are encouraged to interact and exchange ideas in small groups and have the ability to facilitate not only academic achievement but also social skills (Nwosu, 2014, Miriogu, 2016).

It is on this premium of seeking out more convenient way of teaching the pupils reading to read with understanding that necessitated the investigation on the effect of Peer team Gritty method on English language performance of primary pupils.

The under listed questions and hypotheses posed to guide the study include:

1. What is the effect of Peer Team Gritty method in enhancing English Language performance of pupils?
  2. What is the effect of Peer Team Gritty Method on English Language performance of male and female pupils exposed to the method?
- 
1. There is no significant difference between the mean achievement scores of Peer team Gritty Method on English Language performance of pupils exposed to it and those not exposed to it.
  2. There is no significant difference between the mean achievement scores of male and female pupils taught with Peer Team Gritty method. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

## **Method**

The study adopted a pretest non-randomized quasi-experimental design. The study was conducted in primary school in Abia State. Total numbers of sixty pupils were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a Researcher Made English Language Test [RMELT] which was taken from the recommended textbook for primary five pupils. The instrument was validated by two experts in English Language department, and Measurement and Evaluation, all from Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri, Imo State. The reliability of the instrument was determined

using Cronbach-Alpha statistics and estimated value of 0.76 and 0.78 were obtained. The two groups were pretested and their grades were recorded. Then the experimental group was trained twice a week for nine weeks and the control group taught same contents with Conventional method and the reversed version of the questions were administered to the two groups after the treatment. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while Analysis of Covariance was used to test the hypothesis @ 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

Table 1: summary of students achievement

GENDER	METHOD	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
MALE	EXPERIMENTAL	74.76	15.31	34
	CONTROL	54.09	12.49	21
	Total	4.90	17.62	55
FEMALE	EXPERIMENTAL	73.63	15.37	33
	CONTROL	55.20	17.34	25
	Total	62.93	19.37	58
Total	EXPERIMENTAL	76.22	15.31	67
	CONTROL	56.52	14.60	46
	Total	63.89	18.48	113

**RQ1.** Results in the 1 show that the mean score and standard deviations were 76.22 and 15.31 respectively for experimental group. Also the mean score and standard deviations were 56.52 and 14.60 respectively for control group. This gave a difference in mean score of 21.30 in favour of the experimental group.

**RQ 2.** Result in table 1 shows that a difference in scores of 0.5 existed between the male and female student. Apparently there was no tangible difference in their achievement scores..

**Table 2.** ANCOVA analysis on students achievement.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	16895.796 <sup>a</sup>	4	4223.949	21.326	.000	.441
Intercept	22776.875	1	22776.875	114.997	.000	.516
PRETEST	4264.634	1	4264.634	21.532	.000	.166
GENDER	49.755	1	49.755	.251	.617	.002
METHOD	12720.687	1	12720.687	64.225	.000	.373
GENDER * METHOD	17.053	1	17.053	.086	.770	.001
Error	21390.930	108	198.064			
Total	499600.000	113				
Corrected Total	38286.726	112				

a. R Squared = .441 (Adjusted R Squared = .421)

There is no significant difference between the mean achievement scores of Peer team Gritty Method on English Language performance of pupils exposed to it and those not exposed to it.

From the result in Table 2, the statement of hypothesis 1 is rejected; implying that there is a significant difference between the mean achievement scores to peer team Gritty Method on English language performance of pupils exposed to it and those not exposed to it. This is because  $P < 0.05$  ( $F = 64.225$ ;  $< 0.05$ ).

There is no significant difference between the mean achievement scores of male and female pupils taught with Peer Team Gritty method.

From same table 2, the statement of hypothesis 2 is accepted; implying that there is no significant difference between the mean achievement score of male and female pupils taught with peer team Gritty method.

## Discussion

The findings of this study showed that, Peer team gritty method is effective in enhancing pupil's achievement in English language. This was demonstrated through the high mean achievement gains of pupils in the experimental groups as against those in the control group. Also the ANCOVA analysis showed that, a significant difference exists between the mean achievement scores of those taught using peer team gritty method and those

taught conventionally. Also there was no gender difference in the achievement score. Wigfeild 2002, found that higher amount of motivation and peer interaction yield more optional academic success and students tend to do well when they work collaboratively: Additionally, this study reveal that there is no gender differences among the male and female students exposed to peer gritty method.

This finding is in consistent with the contention of Nwosu (2014) and Miriogu (2016) who found that collaboration and co-operative learning is a sure – way for effective teaching and learning as the methods are not gender bias.

### **Conclusion**

The study revealed that peer team gritty method enhanced the reading ability of the pupils and the method also favors both the male and female pupils. It therefore becomes imperative that this method be used to teach pupils who are struggling readers and to be effective in handing the method, the teachers need to be trained and retrained. This method needs more dedication and perseverance on the side of the teacher. It needs a gritty teacher to make a gritty student.

Using this method to teach the pupils will help to curb the numbers of school dropout which is caused by inability to read and write. A child is emotionally fulfilled when he is able to learn in school.

### **Recommendation:**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made;

1. Peer team gritty strategy should be used in teaching English language concepts in primary schools.
2. Primary school English teachers should be trained through intensive seminars, workshops and in-service trainings on the use of peer team gritty as an effective tool.
3. Educational psychologists should be posted to schools to train and retrain teachers on the skill imbedded in peer-teen gritty method.

### **References**

Amaka, I.I. & Onyia B.N (2016); Skill training needs of secondary school teachers for management of indiscipline in classroom in Enugu Metropolis, Enugu State; *Journal of Educational psychologist 10(1): 150-157.*

- Angela, D (2014), Making Pupils grittier: Retrieved August 7th, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/teaching\\_method](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/teaching_method).
- Berk, R.A (2005). Survey strategies to measure Teaching effectiveness.
- Ebenebe, R.C (200) Empowering students to become effective learners: A psychological Approach to managing Knowledge Explosion, *Journal of the World Council for Curriculum and Instruction (WCCI) Nigeria chapter Vol, 1, 40-48.*
- Ebenebe, R.C & Nwosu K.C (2017), *Mediating Critical thinking skills among Nigerian Students*. *Educational Psychologist* 9(1), 172-197.
- Ebenebe, R.C (2017), *Qualitative Teaching and Learning Environment. Lead paper presented at the 28th Nigerian Academy of Education, Annual Congress in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Akwa 4th-8th November.*
- Ezenwosu, W.E,(2017), *The effect of collaborative teaching approach on student's academic achievement in English Language*. Book of reading in Education, Edited by Esomonu N.P.M, Nnamdi Azikwe University, Akwa.
- Ezeobi C.U, & Obiehi O.N.D (2015), Discovery Learning: An Approach to enhance student's teaching and learning outcomes. *Journal of Educational Psychologist* 9(1), 180-186.
- Leikin R & Zaslasky, O. (1997), Facilitating Student Interactions in mathematics in cooperative learning styles: *Journal of Research in mathematics education*. 28(3), 331-354.
- Mirrogu, E.A (2016), Effect of mind mapping instruction strategy on the student's achievement in mole concept. *Journal of Educational Psychologists* 10(1), 246-248.
- Ngwoke D.U& Mbaogbu A.N (2015), Teaching for Creating Positive Classroom climates for student's. *Journal of Educational Psychologist* 9 (1), 215-225.
- Ngwoke D.U & Mbaogbu (2016), *Techniques for creative positive classroom climate; Educational Psychologist* 10(10); 215-225
- Okwara Kalu, C.E (2013) *Effect of cognitive Apprenticeship and Reciprocal Teaching on Reading and Unity Writing Performance of pupils*. A PhD Dissertation Submitted to the faculty of Education, Imo State University Owerri Imo State.
- Sterberg, R.J.S & William W.M (2013), *Educational Psychologist: A person Education Company*, 75 Arilingto Street United States of America.
- Onyishi C.N & Eze N. (2016) *Effect of peer assisted learning on academic on self concept of low achieving students*. *Educational Psychologist* 10 (1); 139-149.

- Umeano, E.C (2013), Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation of Cognitive and non-cognitive Learning outcomes in UBE Program. *Journal of Educational Psychologists* 7(1), 1-8.
- Umunna, C.G (2017) *Padagogical problem solving skills and positive classroom climate*. A book of reading in education honour of Professor R.C. Ebenebe, Edited by Esomonu, N.P.M.