

RE-ENVISIONING ENGLISH STUDIES' TEACHING THROUGH THE JIGSAW LEARNING STRATEGY

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of jigsaw learning strategy on students' achievement in English. The study adopted quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group research design. The population of the study is all the JS One students in the 12 public secondary schools in Anyigba Education Zone of Kogi State. The sample of the study is 120 students drawn from four intact classes using the multistage sampling technique. The schools were assigned to treatment and control groups through balloting. The instrument for data collection was researchers-made English Studies Achievement Test (ESAT). The instrument was validated by three experts from Kogi State University, Anyigba. Using the Kudar-Richardson formula 20, the reliability co-efficient was obtained through the trial – test technique and it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.85. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that jigsaw learning strategy enhanced students' achievement better than the conventional method. The hypothesis also showed that jigsaw strategy has significant effect on students' achievement as the experimental group achieved higher than the control group. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended, among others, that government should organise training for teachers of English studies to acquaint them with the technicalities involved in the use of jigsaw strategy.

Introduction

The aim of any teacher in a classroom should be to manipulate and control the learning stimuli in ways that will result in maximum student's knowledge acquisition. This implies that the behaviour of the teacher more than any individual sets the climate in the classroom. Teaching perse does not cause learning but rather creates (or fail to create) the conditions in which learning can occur (Aunga & Neema, 2019). Teachers are unquestionably responsible for the performance of their duties to create desirable classroom

atmosphere, to plan various learning activities and to utilize the materials of instructions effectively in line with current realities. There is no doubt that the needs of the 21st century students are different from the needs of the last century students (Omachonu, 2018). Current education should therefore, focus on developing the next generation to be able to acquire the skills and knowledge to mobilize the virtue of critical thinking in broadening their opportunities. Additionally, 21st century education should furnish students with the skills they can work with to become successful in the globalized world (Sirgar, Fanzati & Marmanto, 2020).Ginting and Kuswando (2020) opine that the education that is relevant to today's world is one that equips the learners to become effective thinker. Hence, one of the education challenges to anticipate future job markets is providing spaces to develop critical thinking skills in schools. This can only be achieved if teachers employ diverse methods, techniques and strategies to reflect current realities. In other words, teachers have great impacts in leading students to become successful learners through the adoption of relevant learning methods and strategies.

There are many methods, techniques and strategies in impacting knowledge and critical thinking skills to learners but there is no denying the fact that not all the methods of teaching adequately promotes learners' interest and understanding (Adams, 2013). Due to individual differences, teachers owe it a duty to employ varieties of techniques in teaching and learning in order to enhance learners' understanding of what is taught. Unfortunately, many teachers of English studies stick to the lecture method and most times dictate notes to learners to copy. Learners hardly get opportunity to engage in collaborative leaning. Omachonu (2018) strongly condemns the practice of teaching English that has not been able to address current socio-cultural realities. He argues that the methods of teaching English currently in use have failed to nurture the diverse experiences of learners. Alebiosu (2003) note that the traditional teacher-as-information-giver or text book- guided classroom has failed to bring about the desired outcome of producing thinking students. To this end, it is imperative to re-envision our pedagogical approach from teacher-dominated classroom to student-centered using the jigsaw learning strategy.

The jigsaw strategy is a method of organizing classroom activity that makes students dependent on each other to succeed. It breaks classes into groups and breaks assignment into pieces that the group assembles to complete. The jigsaw strategy is a research-based cooperative learning technique invented and developed by Elliot Aronson, an American Social Psychologist, in 1971. It was originally designed to break down stereotypes, prejudices, and to reduce racial conflicts among classmates. Aronson (2008:

280) explains that “in the cooperative classroom, the students achieved success as a consequence of paying attention to their peers, asking good questions, helping each other, teaching each other and helping each other teach.” Students are not pitted against one another in competitions to earn the teacher’s limited time and attention. Instead, they are encouraged to embrace the knowledge from individuals all around them.

The jigsaw method could also improve the quality of teacher instruction. Students are not so reliant on listening to every word the teacher says. Instead, they enjoy a higher sense of ownership themselves and greater trust in their peers. Teachers do not have to teach every detail they want students to understand. Rather, teachers can put the responsibility for learning on the students (Wyk, 2015). In cooperative learning, such as the jigsaw, students work in small groups on a structured activity. They are individually accountable for their work and the work of the group as a whole. Adams (2013) defined cooperative learning as students working together to attain group goals that cannot be obtained by working alone or competitively. It is a process which requires knowledge to be discovered by students and transformed into concepts to which the students can relate.

There are several benefits of jigsaw strategy as a cooperative learning technique. One of the benefits is that the teacher is not the sole provider of knowledge because most of the work is done by the students themselves which make it an efficient way to learn. Students take ownership of the work and achievement and therefore are held accountable among their peers (Wyk, 2015). Students are active participants in the learning process and thereby help build inter-personal and interactive skills. While there are empirical evidences on the relative efficiency of the Jigsaw learning strategy in a variety of subject areas (Aronson, 2008; Adams, 2013 & Wyk, 2015), its effect on teaching English in Anyigba Education Zone, to the best of the researchers knowledge, is unknown. This study, therefore, sought to determine the effect of Jigsaw learning strategy on students’ achievement in English studies.

The following research question and hypothesis were raised to guide the study

- What is the difference in the achievement of JS one students exposed to Jigsaw learning strategy in English and those exposed to the convention method?
- There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of JS one students taught English using Jigsaw learning strategy and those taught with the conventional method.

Method

The research design for this study is the quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group design. Specifically, it is a non-randomized control group design. The population of the study is all the JS One students in the 12 public secondary schools in Anyigba Education Zone of Kogi State in the 2019/2020 academic session. The sample of the study is 120 students drawn from four intact classes using the multistage stage sampling technique. The schools were assigned to treatment and control groups through balloting. The instrument for data collection was researchers-made English Studies Achievement Test (ESAT). The instrument was validated by three experts from Kogi State University, Anyigba. The reliability co-efficient was obtained through the Kuder-Richardson formula 20 which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.85. The instrument was administered as pre-test two weeks before treatment. The experimental group was taught using the jigsaw learning strategy while the control group was taught using the conventional lecture method. Using the lesson plans prepared by the researchers, the regular English Studies' teachers taught their classes as research assistants. They teachers were earlier trained by the researchers on how to carry out the experiment. After four weeks of teaching, the instrument for data collection was re-administered as posttest. Data collected was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and analysis of variance (ANCOVA). Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question while analysis of covariance was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance ($P < 0.05$).

Results

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Achievement Score of Students Taught English using Jigsaw Learning Strategy and those Taught with the Conventional Method.

Group	N	Pretest		Posttest		Gain Score
		X	SD	X	SD	
Experimental	58	26.52	8.92	42.58	14.61	16.06
Control	62	22.46	4.62	28.46	5.59	6.0

The results on table 1 revealed that the experimental group obtained a pre-test mean of 26.52 and a standard deviation of 8.92 and a post test mean of 42.58 and standard deviation of 14.61 with a gain score of 16.06. On the other hand, the conventional group obtained a mean of 22.46 and a standard deviation of 4.62 and a posttest mean of 28.46 with a gain score 6.0. A gain score difference of 10.06 was obtained in favour of the experimental group.

This results indicate that the jigsaw learning strategy is more efficient in enhancing students' achievement than the conventional method.

Table 2: Summary of Analysis of Convenience of Students' Achievement in English

Sources	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sign.
Corrected model	11332.930 ^a	8	1416.616	25.945	.000
Intercept	2347.979	1	2347.979	43.003	.000
Method	3718.308	1	3718.308	68.100	.000
Error	5951.443	109	54.600		
Total	168060.000	120			
Corrected total	17284.373	117			

The result on table 2 revealed that the F-value for method is 68.10. This value of F is significant at 0.00 ($P=0.00$; $P<0.05$). Since 0.00 is less than 0.05, there is a significant difference between the achievement of the students taught English using the jigsaw strategy and those taught with the conventional method. The hypothesis of no significant difference is therefore rejected.

Discussion

The study revealed that students taught English with jigsaw learning strategy achieved higher than those taught with the conventional method as the experimental group had a higher gain score in the post test than the conventional method. This is in agreement with Adams (2013) who did a study on the use of jigsaw technique as a way of promoting cooperative learning among primary school pupils in Fijai, Ghana and found that jigsaw is a very useful technique in promoting pupils' interest in learning. The study also collaborates Wyk (2015) who did a study on the use of jigsaw teaching strategy for the advancement of Economics teachers' acquisition of knowledge and found, among others, that jigsaw strategy promotes collaboration and natural concern among teachers.

It also showed a significant difference in the achievement of the students taught English with jigsaw and those taught with the conventional method in favour of the experimental group. This is in agreement with Tran and Lewis (2011) who investigated the effect of jigsaw strategy as a cooperative learning on students' achievement in Giang, Vietnam and found that jigsaw strategy has significant effect on students' achievement.

The higher achievement of the students exposed to jigsaw learning strategy in this study could be attributed to the fact that the students in the

experimental group worked with one another, improving learning skills, facilitating mutual help, and improving confidence and social relationships in an enjoyable learning environment. Therefore, the use of jigsaw learning strategy would produce better results when used for a longer period. This is in line with Johnson and Johnson (2005)'s argument that learners need a longer period to develop their personal and social skills in groups. This will help them to recognize the extent of the individual accountability in learning.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that jigsaw learning strategy enhanced students' achievement better than the conventional method in English. Through the use of the strategy, students developed a lot of interest working with their classmates and learn from each other and hence learnt better.

Recommendations

1. Teachers of English should adopt teaching strategies that are student-centered and activity filled like the jigsaw strategy to enable the students understand the concepts taught in class.
2. Government should organize in-service training on the use of jigsaw strategy for English studies teachers to acquaint them with the technicalities involved in the use of jigsaw strategy.
3. Jigsaw strategy should be incorporated into the English studies curriculum across all the levels of Basic Education in Nigeria.

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