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Phonics Charts Approach in the Teaching of Phonology in the New Academic Weather

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Abstract

This study investigate the phonics charts approach and it's effective in teaching on senior secondary school students' achievement in oral English in Ilorin Metropolis,Kwara State.The target population for this study was all SSII students in public schools in llorin Emirate,287 students were sampled in their intact classes.The Phonics English Achievement Test(PEAT)with a reliability coefficient of 0.69 was used to gather the data for the study.The data collected were analyse during descriptive and inferential statistic methods-mean and standard deviation and the Analysis of Covariance(ANCOVA).The initial findings obtained from this study revealed that the general achievement level of students (both the experimental and control groups)in Oral English was low in the pre-test.Based on the findings of the study,it was recommended among others that necessary attention

should be accorded use of phonics charts approach in the secondary schools,especially for teaching Oral English.Teachers,textbook writers and curriculum planners should emphasize the use of phonics charts approach for teaching and learning-of Oral English in Secondary schools in Kwara State.

Introduction

Effective teaching of pronunciation is not possible without the teacher having equipped himself with some background knowledge of phonetics and phonology.Sounds used in a language are distinctive.It is this fact that enables us to distinguish them from each other.Thus,'cap'is distinguished from'sap',and'sap'from'sop'.This difference of sound is called phonemic difference.The phonemes involved here are,/s//æ//p//T/.Spoken English involves meaningful use of English speech sounds.Therefore,student in Nigeria is expected to have a good knowledge of the sound system of English.The study of these sounds helps him to learn the correct pronunciation of the words,besides helping him to stress words and sentences correctly (Gangal,2012).

Phonics heightens the relationship between the letters in written language and the sounds in spoken language.Successful phonics instruction is dependent upon the development of phonemic awareness.To perform phonics skills requires the understanding of alphabetic principle (Lai,2003).The Federal Government of Nigeria

(2011)posited that phonics allows students to have a guess at the spelling of a word,making reading and writing a simpler task.It also allows teachers to practice pronunciation in minimal pair activities.A good higher-level example would be practicing changes in sounds due to adding a final'e'(pope/pop;pipe/pip;tap/tape).

The main aim of teaching English in Nigeria lower basic and upper

basic schools is to make students become good speakers of EnglishLanguage.This indicates that students should be able to speak and-write English effectively and develop ability to understand the basic patterns of the culture of the English-speaking people.It is possible for these aims to be

realized if we successfully cope with the problems of-teaching English as a second language in Nigeria.So,learning it is not-as natural to us as it is to the native speakers.The native speaker ofEnglish has imbibed the language with his mother's milk.He has become familiar with the components of English in the natural process of growing up(Verghese,2007).This cannot be so with Nigerian speakers.Learning English is essentially a deliberate effort at developing a command and control of the different components of the language,its phonology (the sound system),morphology (the patterns-and parts of word)and syntax (the pattern of phrases and sentences).Deficiency in grammar,lexis and structure and spoken English can-be a great limitation to anyone that needs to survive in an environment where English is the tool of politics,llorin Metropolis cation,commerce,religion,and information (Omojuwa,2014).

The achievement of students in English language on the basis of-gender is another essential part of this study.Admittedly is the fact that women are hypercorrect in speech.They also use succulent words while their male counterparts are coarse and husky.Gender is the-term used when referring to men and women,boys and girls as social groups.Therefore,gender is a social-psychological concept.It is the different cultural and social

roles which societies around the world ascribed to male and female in order to depict the differences between them(Bibire,2010).

Parley(1972)asserted that no differences in general intelligence have been reported between the sexes.Although,there are some evidences that males score higher than females in Mathematics ability.In terms of difference in aptitude,boys were found superior to girls

not only in physical strength but also in speed and coordination ofmovement.Girls on the other hand,are superior to boys in manualdexterity.With regards to verbal aptitudes,girls have been found tobe superior to boys in every respect and this superiority is observedfrom infancy through adulthood.

Henterly(2002)conducted a quasi-experimental study with 38kindergarten students to determine if daily phonemic awareness activities impacts students' developmental spellings.The treatment and control group received similar instruction during September toFebruary of their kindergarten

year on alphabet recognition and symbol-sound correspondence.Students in the treatment group received additional training in phonemic awareness over a five month period.The post-test measures found that the students in the treatment group scored significantly higher than the control group on assessment measures.

However,Kutigi,Gambari and Gana (2010)carried out research on the effect of digital audio instructional package on the performance of senior secondary school students in Oral English in Minna,Nigeria.Their findings revealed that there were significant differences in the-mean achievement scores of students taught Oral English using digital audio instructional package and those taught with the lecture method.

Kodae and Laohawiriyanon (2011)also examined the efficacy of intensive explicit phonics instruction on reading and spelling attainment of Thai English language learners with reading difficulties.Forty one fifth graders in a primary school in Thailand participated in-this study.The training was given one hour per day for 8 weeks.A one group post-test and retention test design was used to collect data.The results suggested that both middle and low achievers benefited from-the program specifically in relation to word recognition ability.

From the foregoing,it could be observed that none of the previous research works cited herein paid attention to the effect of phonicscharts approach on senior secondary schools students' achievement-in Oral English,especially in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State.This has therefore created a researchable gap,part of which this study intends-to fill.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of phonics charts approach on senior secondary school students' achievement in Oral English in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State.Specifically,the study looked into:

a.the general level of achievement of senior secondary school students in Oral English in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State.

b.the effect of phonics charts on senior secondary school students achievement in Oral English in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State.

c.the interactive effect of phonics charts and gender on the achievement of senior secondary school students in Oral English in Ilorin Metropolis,Kwara State.

Methodology

The quasi-experimental research design was adopted in this study.This design is a non-randomized pre/post-test groups (experimental and control groups)design and was used in this study to determine the effect of phonics charts approach on senior secondary school students' academic achievement in Oral English.The performance of the pre-test was used to obtain the entry behavior or previous knowledge of the groups involved in the study.The post-test was used to assess the knowledge gained after the treatment.

The design involved students from intact classes.The experimental group was taught with the use of phonics charts,while the control group was taught without it.

In this study,the design entails the 2x2 modes implying the teaching at two levels Experimental (with phonics charts)and control (without phonics charts);and gender(Male and Female)

Table 1:2x2 Design on the Effect of Phonics Charts Approach

Keys:

O,and O_4 -represent pre-test.

Groups	Pre-test	Gender	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental Group (with	O_1	M/F	x	O、

Groups	Pre-test	Gender	Treatment	Post-test
phonics)				
Control Group (without phonics chart)	O_3	M/F	=	O_4

M/F-represents male and female.

(X)-represents phonics charts

(-)-represents without phonics charts.

O_2 and O_4 -represent post-test.

The population for this study comprised all the Senior SecondarySchool students in Ilorin Metropolis,Kwara State.The target population was all (SSS 2)students in public senior secondary schools in llorin emirates Emirate.Senior Secondary School (SSS 2)students at intact classes in public schools were sampled using multistage sampling technique.

At the 1st stage,simple random sampling technique was used to select two public schools (one for experimental and the other for control group)within llorin emirates Emirate,Kwara State.At the 2nd stage,purposive sampling was used to select SSS2 students at intact classes.These students were selected because they were at the stage/period(SSS II class)when they started to be introduced to the aspects that are more complex in oral English curriculum which required to be taught with phonics charts for effective teaching and learning to take place.

At intact class,forty six (46)students constituted the experimental group while forty one(41)students formed the control group thereby making a total number of eighty seven(87)students that were sampled for this study.

The main instrument used for data collection for the study wasPhonics English Achievement Test (PEAT).The instrument contained two sections.Section A was used to elicit the background information of the respondents;while section B consisted of 50 items drawn from past WAEC question

papers,multiple choice objective items.Each item was scored dichotomously.Topics were from vowel sounds.PhonicsEnglish Achievement Test (PEAT)was used for pre-test and post-test exercise.

To ascertain the validity of the research instrument,the instrument-was given to the researcher's supervisor and two experts in theEnglish language llorin Metropolis cation,University of llorin to scrutinize and determine the suitability and the instructional packages of the instrument while the final draft was approved by the-researcher's supervisor.All corrections made by these experts enabled the researcher to eliminate and reconstruct some items in the instrument.

Afterwards,this instrument was administered to a set of 200students that were not part of the participating schools which also enabled the researcher to identify,reconstruct and rule out some items that seemed to be too difficult or too easy in Phonics EnglishAchievement Test (PEAT).

The reliability of the instrument was carried out using split half method of reliability.Then their scores in the two halves were subjected to reliability using Cronbach Alpha Method and the-reliability coefficient of 0.69 was therefore obtained.This indicatedthat the instrument is reliable.

The participants (the schools and the students)were assured oft heir safety and secrecy of their results and names being what is in the acceptance letters signed by the researcher and the principals.The

researcher visited the selected schools and sought the permission from the appropriate authorities.The study covered a period of six weeks.1st week-pre-test

2nd-3rd-4th-5th week-treatment and control

6h week-Post-test.

Data Analysis and Result

Research Question One:What is the general level of achievement of senior secondary school students in Oral English in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State?

The general level of achievement of students taught Oral English with phonics charts (Experimental group)and those taught without the phonics chart (control group)was subjected to mean and standard deviation analysis and the statistics is presented in Table 3.

Table 3:Achievement of Students Taught Oral English with PhonicsCharts and Those Taught without phonics chart before and after the Treatment in Ilorin Metropolis,Kwara State

Groups		Mean score	S.D	Min score	Max score	Remark
Experimental	pre-test Post-test	13.38 32.00	13.38 32.00	7.00 20.00	23.00 38.00	Low High
Control	pre-test Post-test	11.81 24.78	2.97 3.16	6.00 15.00	18.00 31.00	Low Average

As revealed in Table 3,the mean scores 13.38 and 11.81 were obtained in the pre-test for the experimental and control groups respectively,while the mean scores 32.00 and 24.78 were obtained in the post-test for the experimental and control groups,respectively.This implies that the general achievement level of students (both the experimental and control groups)in Oral English was low in the pre-test.However in the post test,the general achievement level of students that were taught Oral English with phonics charts was relatively

high(32.00)while that of students taught without was of average (24.78).

Hypothesis One:There is no significant effect of phonics charts on senior secondary school students' achievement in Oral English in Ilorin Metropolis,Kwara State.

Table 4:Analysis of Covariance Showing the Effect of Phonics Chartson Senior Secondary School Students'Achievement in OralEnglish in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Corrected Model	7070.221[a]	2	3535.111	284.375	.000	
Intercept	2594.150	1	2594.150	208.682	.000	$H0_1$:
Pretest	14.055	1	14.055	1.131	.291	Rejected
Treatment	6554.762	1	6554.762	527.286	.000	
Error	1044.216	84	12.431			
Total	59288.000	87				
Corrected Total	8114.437	86				

a. R Squared = .871 (Adjusted R Squared = .868)

*Significant at p<0.05

Result in Table 4 reveals that the F-value of 527.286 is obtained with a p-value of 0.00 computed at 0.05 alpha level.Since the p-value

(0.00)is less than alpha level (0.05),the null hypothesis one is not

accepted.Thus,there is a statistically significant effect of phonics chartson senior secondary school students'achievement in Oral English inllorin Metropolis,Kwara State (Fnsn=527.286,p<0.05).

The Multiple Comparison Analysis is depicted in Table 5 to showthe actual effect of the treatment on students'performance(meandifference in the achievement of those taught with Phonics Chartsand those taught without)

Table 5:Pairwise Comparisons Analysis Showing the Effect of theTreatment on Students'Achievement in Oral English

Treatment	Mean	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.[b]	95% Confidence Interval for Difference[b]	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental(I)	32.00[a]	7.22*	0.77	0.00	2.12	5.20
Control (J)	24.78[a]	-7.22*	0.77	0.00	-5.20	-2.12

Grand Mean = 28.39

Based on estimated marginal means

*the mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

b.Adjustment for Multiple Comparisons:Bonferroni

Table 5 reveals that students in the experimental group had highermean score of 32.00 than those in the control group with a mean score

of 24.78.This implies that students taught Oral English with phonics

charts performed better than those taught without it in PhonicsEnglish Achievement Test (PEAT)with mean difference of 7.22.Hypothesis Two:There is no significant interactive effect of phonics nics charts and gender on the achievement ofsenior secondary school students' achievement inOral English in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State.

Table 6:Analysis of Covariance showing the interactive effect of phonics charts and gender on senior secondary school

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Corrected Model	7180.001[a]	4	1795.000	157.517	.000	
Intercept	1973.685	1	1973.685	173.198	.000	
Pre-test	27.907	1	27.907	2.449	.121	
Treatment	4771.136	1	4771.136	418.684	.000	
Gender	6.259	1	6.259	.549	.461	
Treatment * Gender	80.210	1	80.210	7.039	.010	
Error	934.436	82	11.396			
Total	59288.000	87				
Corrected Total	8114.437	86				

a. R Squared = .885 (Adjusted R Squared = .879)

students' achievement in Oral English in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State

As shown in Table 6,the F-value of 80.210 is obtained with a

p-value of 0.01 computed at 0.05 alpha level.Since the p-value (0.01)is-less than alpha level (0.05),the null hypothesis two is not accepted.Thus,there is a statistically significant interactive effect of phonics charts and gender on senior secondary school students' achievement Oral English.This implies that there is a significant difference in the achievement of male and female senior secondary school students that were taught Oral English with phonics charts and those taught without phonics chart in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State (Fas_2 =7.039,$p<0.05$).

Mean scores are therefore depicted in Table 7 to show where the statistical difference lies between male and female students that were taught Oral English with Phonics Charts and those taught without it.

Table7:Achievement of Male and Female Students Taught Oral English with Phonics Charts and those taught without

Gender	Groups	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Male	Experimental	30.303[a]	.794	28.582	31.743
	Control	26.164[a]	.950	12.775	17.554
Female	Experimental	33.700[a]	.617	31.795	34.251
	Control	23.391[a]	1.301	12.319	14.904

As shown in Table 7,female students in the experimental group-had the higher mean score(33.700)than their male counterpart (30.303)followed by male students in the control group with the mean score

26.164 which was higher than their female counterpart.This implies that both female and male students (with the highest mean score)in-the experimental group performed better than those in the control group.

Findings obtained from this study were summarized as follows:

1.The general achievement level of students (both the experimental and control groups)in Oral English was low in the pre-test.However,in the post test,the general achievement level of students that were taught with phonics charts in Oral English was relatively high(32.00)while that of students taught without theaid was average (24.78).

2.There was a statistically significant effect of phonics charts on senior secondary school students' achievement in Oral English in

llorin Metropolis,Kwara State (F,sn=527.286,p<0.05).

3.There was a significant difference in the achievement of male and female senior secondary school students that were taught with phonics charts and those taught without it in Oral English in llorin Metropolis,Kwara State (Fa.gz=7.039,p<0.05).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the Findings obtained from this study,it could be concluded that phonics charts strategy is an expository teaching strategy that has a positive effect on students'word recognition and pronunciation,thereby resulting in students 'higher achievement in Oral English,even though female students taught with phonics charts performed better than their male counterpart.This is an indication that phonicscharts has positive effect on both female and male students,but mostespecially on female students.

1.Necessary attention should be accorded phonics charts in the secondary school setting,especially for teaching Oral English inKwara State.

2.There is the need to give orientation to teachers and students on-the significance of the course.Teachers should be encouraged to attend workshops,seminars,refresher courses and the like in order-to update their knowledge and improve on their teaching methodology.

3.Government,private organization or individuals should assist in providing necessary facilities as teaching aids such as phonicscharts,television sets,radio,tape recorder,flash cards and other related facilities that will help in facilitating easier understanding of the course.

4.Provision of relevant text books on oral English should be made-available to the learners either by the government or through individual's efforts.

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