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EFFECT OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING METHOD ON SECONDARY STUDENTS' INTEREST IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TENSES

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of collaborative learning method on secondary students' interest in English language tenses. One research question was posed and one null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. Non-equivalent pre-test, post-test control group quasi-experimental research design was used. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw the schools used for the study. Simple random sampling was used to draw 217 senior secondary two (SS2) students used for the study. The experimental groups were taught using the lecture method. The instrument used for data collection was the English Language Interest Inventory (ELII). The instrument was face validated by experts from University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The data was analysed using mean, standard deviation and analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA). The result showed that collaborative learning method increased the students' interest in English Language tenses more than the lecture method. The study provided an empirical evidence of the efficacy of collaborative learning method in enhancing students' interest in English language tenses. It was recommended that teachers should adopt and practise the method in their different schools.

Introduction

Interest is an important variable in the achievement of language learning because when one is interested in a language, one becomes eager to learn it. Lack of interest therefore inhibits learning. According to Chukwu (2002), interest is a persisting inclination to be attentive and enjoy some activities or contents; interest has been viewed as emotionally oriented behavioral trait which determines a student's urge and vigor to tackle educational programmes or other activities. Bakare, (1991) stated that

interest is useful in predicting the success and the satisfaction which an individual is likely to obtain from engaging in certain activities now and in future. Once developed and consolidated, interest tend to attain some degree of stability. It is therefore important that adequate teaching methods should be used to increase students' interest in learning English language tenses.

The dominant method used in teaching English language tenses in schools is the lecture method. The students are arranged in straight lines down and across the classroom. The teacher assumes that all the students in the class have equal knowledge or that they know little or nothing. He stands in front of the class and delivers his lessons. Students work individually and are assessed individually. Only the best students are rewarded which force students to work against each other so as to be the best. The lecture method makes the students to be passive listeners while the teacher monopolises the teaching/learning activities. The students' interest in the lesson becomes very minimal.

Collaborative learning is a teaching method where the learners are heterogeneously placed into groups. They interact synchronously and solve a given academic problem or produce a project. Each group works as a team, coordinated by a leader and produces a unanimous result. Collaborative learning represents a significant shift away from the typical teacher centred or lecture centred milieu in school classrooms. Individual performance is de-emphasized while team work is promoted. Groups plan learning activities together, carry out their action plans and present a complete project, display or report to the class and are graded on their work as a team (Galvin, 1996). In collaborative learning situations, students are not simply taking in information or ideas, they are creating something new with the information and ideas. These acts of intellectual processing of constructing meaning or creating something new are crucial to learning. This study sought to investigate the effect of collaborative learning method on student's interest in English language tenses. The study was guided by one research question and one null hypothesis.

Statement of the problem

Secondary school students experience a lot of problem in formation and correct usage of English language tenses. Many of them cannot use appropriate tenses to construct sentences both in their essay writing and speech. This contributes to the students' persistent poor academic

achievement and use of communicative skills in English language. Donald and Modeline, (1992) postulate that more than half of the errors made in English mostly occur because of confusion in the use of the present tense, the past tense and the past participle (principal parts of the verb). Since interest is an important variable in the achievement of language learning, the problem of this study therefore posed as a question was: How would the use of collaborative learning method influence students' interest in English language tenses.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of collaborative learning method on secondary school students' interest in English language tenses. The study specifically aimed at:

- Finding the difference in interest of students taught English language tenses using the collaborative learning method and those taught using the lecture method.

Research question

- *To what extent does the mean interest scores of students taught English language tenses using the collaborative learning method differ from those taught using the lecture method?*

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean interest score of students taught English language tenses using the collaborative learning method and those taught using the lecture method.

Method

Quasi-experimental, non equivalent pre-test, post-test control group research design was used for the study. The study was conducted in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. The schools – City Girls Secondary School, Enugu, Colliery Comprehensive Secondary School, Ngwo from where the students were drawn were sampled using stratified simple random sampling. The stratification was based on gender and location. Colliery Comprehensive Secondary School (Boys) is in the rural area while City Girls' Secondary School (Girls) is in the urban area. In each school two intact SS2 classes were randomly sampled and balloting was used to assign the classes to experimental and control groups.

Instrument for data collection

English Language Interest Inventory (ELII) was constructed by the researcher and used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by three experts in the field of English Language from University of Nigeria Nsukka. The instrument was trial tested using twenty representative sample from another school (University of Nigeria Secondary School, Enugu Campus) apart from those sampled for the study. The stability/relationship index of the ELII was calculated using Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient. The coefficient was 0.60.

Control of extraneous variables

The following steps were taken to control extraneous variables that might constitute a threat to the validity of the findings of the study.

Experimenter's bias

Experimenter's bias was avoided by using the students' regular English teachers in the schools sampled for the study to teach both the experimental and control classes.

Teacher variable

The researcher controlled teacher variables by making sure that a uniform standard in conducting the treatment was enhanced. The researcher prepared two sets of lesson notes, one for the experimental group and the other for the control group. The lesson notes covered both the content and duration of the study. The researcher organized training period for the teachers involved in the study. During the training the teachers were lectured by the researcher on what collaborative learning method is, how to place the students in their various groups and appointment of a leader for each group to oversee the activities of the group. The procedures involved in using collaborative learning method and lecture method to teach the tenses were also taught to the teachers. The contents of the lesson plans were extensively discussed with the teachers and they were advised to adhere to the contents of the lesson plans. The teachers were also taught how to administer the pre-test and the post-test using the English Language Interest Inventory (ELII).

Instructional situation variables

The teachers were instructed by the researcher to follow strictly the lesson plans prepared by the researcher to ensure uniform instructions and content.

the schools' regular time table for English language was used. The pre-test and the post test were administered to the students on the same day and at the same time in the various schools used for the study. Secondly all the 100 students in the particular schools used for the study were given the pre and post tests but the data for the study were restricted to the classes sampled for the study. This minimized Hawthorne effect, which is when subjects take behaviour or response because they are aware that they are subjected to novel conditions or experiment.

Treatment implement

Collaborative learning method was used to teach English language tenses to the experimental groups while the lecture method was used to teach the control groups. The treatment in both groups lasted four weeks. The student's regular English language teachers in the schools sampled for the study were used to teach both the experimental and control groups under the guidance of the researcher. The researcher trained the teachers who taught the experimental groups on how to conduct the collaborative learning before the experiment started.

Method of data collection

The EII was administered as pre-test before the experiment started. The instrument was re-shuffled and administered as post-test to the students. The pre-test scores were used to compare with the post-test scores which helped to assess if the treatment has effect on the students' interest in English Language tenses.

Data analysis

The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA). The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results of the study are presented in line with the research question and hypothesis that guided the study.

Research question

- To what extent does the mean interest score of students taught English language tenses using the collaborative learning method differ from those taught using the lecture method?

Table 1

Pre/Post interest mean scores of students taught English language tenses using the collaborative learning method and those taught using the lecture method.

Groups	N	Pre-interest	Post-interest	Gain Score
Experimental	105	52.20	70.15	17.95
Control	112	52.43	58.92	6.49

Table 1 indicates that the experimental group had a pre-interest mean score of 52.20 and a post-interest mean of 70.15. The control group has a pre-interest mean score of 52.43 and a post-interest mean score of 58.92. The experimental group has a mean interest gain score of 17.95 while the control group has a mean interest gain score of 6.49. This means that the experimental group has a higher mean interest gain score of 11.46 more than the control group.

Ho₁ There is no significant difference in the mean interest scores of students taught English language tenses using the collaborative learning method and those taught using the lecture method.

Table 2

Analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA) of students' post-interest score in English language tenses. (Treatment X Method).

Source	Type III SS	DF	Mean Square	F	Sign
Corrected Model	7248.426a	4	1812.107	38.351	.000*5
Intercept	19890.078	1	19890.078	420.943	.000*5
Pre-interest	.012	1	0.12	.000	.987* _{ns}
Experimental	6186.615	1	618.615	130.930	.00*5
Error	10017.251	212	47.251		
Total	915981.000	217			
Corrected total	17265.677	216			

The result presented in table 2 shows that the treatment has significant effect on students' interest in English language tenses. This is because the F-value of 130.930 in respect of the treatment and interest is shown to be

significant at .000 levels. This means that at 0.05 levels, the F -value of 130.930 is significant. The result implies that the students taught with collaborative learning method had significantly higher interest more than those taught with the lecture method. The null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean interest scores of students taught English language tenses using collaborative learning method and those taught using the lecture method is therefore rejected.

Discussion

The results of this study also showed that collaborative learning method increased the student's interest in English language tenses. This result agrees with Chukwu, (2002), Onyejekwe (1997) and Omeje, (2002) that suitable teaching methods increased students' interest which leads to higher achievement. The findings of this study support the assertion by Chukwu (2002) that effective teaching method which involves students' active participation increases the students' interest and achievement.

Conclusion

The results of this study reveal that collaborative learning method is more effective than the lecture method in enhancing students' interest in English language tenses.

Recommendation

As a result of the findings of this study, it is recommended that

- Teachers should be sensitized on the necessity for the adoption and practice of collaborative learning method in their different schools. This could be done through workshops and seminars organize by Education Authorities.
- English text books authors should include a lot of exercises that will encourage collaborative learning by students.

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