READING INTEREST AND ATTITUDE AS CORRELATES OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL YORUBA LANGUAGE READING COMPETENCE IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

J. A. Abijo
Institute of Education
University of Ibadan, Nigeria
jaabijo@gmail.com

Abstract

Performance of students in Yoruba Language in both internal and public examinations is a serious concern which has attracted the attention of stakeholders of language education. In spite of different Research studies to investigate the cause and proffer solution, the problem persisted. It was on this basis, that this study investigated the extent to which reading interest and students' attitude account for students 'Yoruba language reading competency of Junior Secondary School Students in Oyo State. The study adopted non-experimental survey design. The sample consisted of one hundred and twenty Junior Secondary school students randomly selected within Ibadan Metropolis. Two instruments were used for data collection, namely; Reading Interest Scale in Yoruba Language (RISY) and Student Attitude Scale in Yoruba (SASY). The psychometric properties of the instrument used are: Reading Interest Scale in Yoruba Language (r = 0.8) and Students Attitude Scale in Yoruba (r = 0.8). Two research questions were generated and answered. The data collected were analyzed using correlation and multiple repressions. The significance level was set at 0.05. The result revealed that the relationship among the predictor variables and the criterion variable is low. Hence, Attitude to Yoruba Language (r = 0.061, p> 0.05) and Reading Interest (r = 0.043, p>0.05) has a negative and low correlation with students' learning outcome in Yoruba Language. This indicates a week significant and opposite relationship between the predictor variables and criterion variable. Based on these findings, it was recommended that teachers should update themselves through seminars and workshops from time to time on how to make Yoruba reading interesting to students so as to be able to correlate it with students learning outcomes. Schools, teachers and Guidance counsellors should counsel students not only to associate

reading in Yoruba Language to tests, assignments and examination but that it should be a tool for relaxation, enjoyment, pleasure, self-development and advancement.

Background to the Problem

Language is so vital in man's life that there is hardly any situation where language is not involved. It is the most valuable possession of the human race Ibionotis (1995). Every one in every walk of life is concerned with language in a practical way, for we make use of it in virtually everything we do. Language is the major vehicle of thought. Whatever their profession or involvement, people want to clarify their thoughts. Also, language permeates our thoughts, mediates our relations with others and even creeps unto our dreams. It is the greatest invention by man Ibionotisi 1998.

Languages occupy a very important position in the curriculum of any school system. This is largely due to the importance of language in human communication. It is also due to the fact that languages serve as a trial for and a key to other school subjects. It is a unique phenomenon to human beings,. Even though lower animals are known to communicate they do not do by means of the complex verbal systems known as human.

Africa is said to have one thousand distinct languages, of which Nigeria has about four hundred (Bangbose, 1981). As a result of the multiplicity of language the English languages has been adopted as the official language for government, education and mass media. English language is so important that it assumes a greater status than Nigerian languages as an official language, thus reducing the scope of Nigerian languages.

Yoruba language is one of the indigenous language in Nigeria widely spoken among people in eight states in Nigeria. These are: Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti, Lagos, parts of Kwara and Kogi States (Abijo, 2009). Yoruba language is now taught in Nigerian schools right from kindergarten to the university level. At the end of junior secondary education, students should be capable of being involved in effective speech communication in Yoruba. To accomplish this, there is a need to assess or examine students' ability on comprehension aspect of Yoruba language which enhances their ultimate route for the search,

acquisition and development of knowledge as well as basis for successful living (Ayodele, 1998).

Yoruba language students' mode of reading inside and outside the classroom is pathetic most especially in the junior classes of secondary schools. Most of the students cannot read fluently talk less of comprehending the subject matter. This has been a concern to stakeholders in Yoruba language. According to scholars, numerous factors influence students, reading comprehension. These include school quality (Obemeata, 2001), teaching quality (Popoola, 2003), school environment (Okwilagwe, 1999), poor implementation of policy on education (Olajuigbe, 2004) and provision of resources. Onukaogu (2002) believed that it was due to the poor way in which reading was taught. Other research finding have shown that individual characteristics such as anxiety, motivation, orientation, classroom environment and method of teaching are important factors influencing Yoruba language students reading performance (Adeagbo, 2005).

Despite the identified and treated factors noticed to have contributed to Yoruba language student's poor reading skill, the problem persisted. The present study sought other factors that might have correlated to Yoruba language poor reading performance of JSS two students in Ibadan Metropolis and comes up with variables such as reading interest and Attitude as Correlates of student performance in Junior Secondary School Yoruba language reading skill in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Reading is an important skill that is fundamental to our functioning in today's society. In his view, Chinelo (2010) noted that no society can develop more than the knowledge base of its citizens. According to Deavers (2000), in order for a child to know about the world and its environment, he has to help himself through reading books, newspaper and other magazines. Reading is both a physical; and mental activity. It is a physical activity because it involves the sense of sight and it is a mental activity because it requires memory and comprehension. In the view of Guthrie, Benneth and McGough (2007), reading is the act of getting meaning from printed or written words which is the basis for learning and one of the most important skills in everyday life.

Reading helps to develop the imagination and the mind because the mind is like a muscle that requires exercise. Reading helps

to discover new things from books, magazines and internet and also to understand what others believe. It accesses one to the world of great minds one may never have the privilege of meeting in one's life time. It enables an individual to develop ideas and beliefs of his own. According to Issa, Aliyu, Akangbe and Adedeji (2011), the concept of reading has its dependence on the readers' memory and experience in order to understand what is read. Poor reading skills increase the amount of time a child takes to absorb and comprehend facts in the classroom.

Every student is expected to cope with the demands of reading but nowadays reading practice and interest tend to diminish. In his observation, Chinelo (2010) decried the dying culture of reading among children as leaders of tomorrow. Nasr and Asghar (2011) noted that with the global scientific and technological growth that is occurring rapidly, there is a decline in student reading interest in science courses and careers which is a worldwide concern. Moreover, students have a key role to play for them to succeed academically. They require information and skills which can only be acquired through reading. However, observation reveal that many students tend to read to pass their examination and not for the pleasure of acquiring knowledge. According to Fapohunda (2013), the cause of massive failure in West African Examination Council (WAEC) can be attributed to students not having a strong reading spirit. Many students depend on external assistance because they felt there is no need to spend time on intensive reading and preparation. In the view of Issa (2011), the by-products of scientific and technological inventions and innovations have contributed greatly to the dwindling fortunes of reading interest among majority of the students in Nigeria. Majority of students are not given to reading for the love of doing so. The by-products of scientific inventions such as video-games, audio-CD, watching 'movies' and indoor games on the television are been preferred by students to reading theory books. According to Ilogho (2011), students use break periods to play football and other outdoor games. Those who have access to computers and internet facilities prefer to chat, browse, send email, SMS, face book, yahoo messenger and play computer games. At home, most students prefer to watch entertainment programmes such as drama, films, comedies, listen to music and watch dance competition. One reason students prefer all these activities to reading is because reading requires more thinking and imagination.

Mahor (2013) defines interest as a kind of consciousness accompanying and stimulating attention, a pleasant or painful feeling directing attention. Interest means one is favourably inclined to attend and give time to a particular activity. Interest plays a role in the decision to read, in the level of engagement with the subject matter during reading and in the result the reader creates in terms of comprehension of the subject matter. When an individual reads, he brings into his reading different levels of interest. The level of interest of a reader sometimes depends on their knowledge of the subject matter being considered. As a reader engages with the text, the effective element of interest comes into play. Interest in the view of Hidi (2001) can be triggered by visual stimuli. Moreover, in the view of Kyrids and Drosos (2011), factors such as gender and grade-level have been proven to affect student's reading interest in science or children's school achievement.

There are two stages when building interest in a learning. During the first stage, efforts should be focused on how to generate new interests in the learners that relate to the topic to be taught. Relating the new subject to something the learners enjoy doing (such as an activity) attracts the learners' attention. After the initial interest has been developed, stage two should be directed towards building the newly found interest of the learners. Following these rules will help to create and strengthen interest in learners.

Those things which arouse and sustain non-voluntary or spontaneous attention are interesting while activities which we can attend to only with voluntary effort are considered not interesting. For example, a child is interested in its food and play, also in any activities associated with pleasure or pain in the past but a boy is interested in his games and those exercises which he has connected with his own well-being. People are interested in those subjects which are connected the main occupations of their lives.

Reading interest in Yoruba language refers to a voluntary strong desire to read and comprehend passages and texts written in Yoruba language. It is factor that can be linked to academic success and is known to facilitate the learning process. A student with no reading interest is likely not to perform well in any academic work he/she engages in. According to Schunk, Pintrich and Meece (2008), reading

interest is known to correlate with other positive factors in education which can increase academic performance. Reading interest could be born out of habit, participation, experience and practice at the time of study or work. It can motivate students to learn to be independent, gain new understanding knowledge, ideas and expand their view so that, they have high intelligence in the subject matter.

Attitude and reading interest can be categorized into affective domain. Just as cognitive variables such as aptitude, intelligence, memory and reasoning can predict academic achievement so also affective variable essential for academic performance. According to Trumper (2006), the affective outcomes of science instruction are as important as their cognitive counterpart.

Attitude refers to complex feelings, desires and convictions that give a set of readiness to the behavior of an individual and are as a result of many experiences. It involves forming, conserving and modifying ideas, beliefs, opinions and intention through acquired experiences. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) defined attitude as an organized predisposition to think, feel, perceive and behave towards referent or cognitive object while Carlson (2010), sees attitude as a relatively stable overt behavior of a person which affects his status. Hence, attitude is a learnt predisposition on the part of an individual to respond positively or negatively to an object, situation, concept or another person. It indicates how an individual feels towards an object or event. It can determine the pattern of behavior of an individual. For example, this statement 'I like my job' indicates one's attitude towards one's job. From this statement it shows that attitudes has

a. Direction (an individual is either favourable or unfavourable towards an event or object).
b. Degree (how much an individual likes or dislikes an object or event)
c. Intensity (level of confidence expressed or how strong is the convictions). Attitude can also be in form of strong feelings for or against a person or object which becomes aroused when the object or person is present.

Attitude relates to all the factors of education and it can determine learners' choice of subject. Yoloye (1999) asserts that, the attitude of a learner towards science will determine the measure of the learner's

attractiveness or repulsiveness to science. Attitude can influence a student's choice and performance in a subject. Most times, attitude may not be exhibited except when there is a stimulus to provoke the individual. It can also be expressed when we speak or enact a behavior. Osborne, Simon and Collins (2003) defined scientific attitude as a multifaceted combination of desire to know and understand an inquiring approach to all statement, a search for data and their meaning, a demand for verification, a respect for logic, a consideration of premises and consequences. According to Owen, Toepperwein, Lichtenstein, Blalock, Pruski and Grimes (2008), attitude towards science affects course and choice of career of students hence measuring tools with robust psychometric properties. Poor attitude can lead to poor achievement and this can lead to not offering the subject (Yoruba language). Attitude is often used in conjunction with motivation to achieve. Attitude can predict behavioural changes that accompany different environmental influences. It can also create differences in behaviours among individuals receiving the same environmental influence.

Attitude to Yoruba language can be liking or disliking Yoruba language, desire to engage in or avoid activities of Yoruba language. It could also be a belief that Yoruba language is useful or useless. Attitudes can be learned from relations, friends, and mass media. Hence learning precedes attitude formation and change. Attitudes do not occur in isolation rather they show organization and structure. They are related and have internal consistency when drawn in circular pattern. Around the centre of the circular pattern are important values and self concept of the individual. Attitudes close to the centre have a high degree of centrality and those farther out have less centrality. Since attitudes cluster into a structure, they tend to display stability over time but they can be changed or influenced through reading, training, religious teachings and education. George (2006), identified attitude as a key factor in learning science and the development of positive attitude towards science can motivate student reading interest in science education and science related courses. Examples of positive students' attitude are confidence in learning Yoruba language perceived usefulness in Yoruba language and beliefs about appropriateness of Yoruba language as an area of study. Gender is an important variable related to student attitude to language learning.

Research studies have shown that boys have a more positive attitude to school science than girls, although this effect is stronger in physics than in Biology and girls' attitude to science is significantly less positive than boys. (Osborne, 2003).

Research findings have shown that the non-science majors do not have positive feelings towards science and the scientists. These findings are unfortunate because such attitudes may have negative effects on the entire society.

Since non science majors are potential lawyers, politicians, managers of companies and civic leaders, they will influence how research and developmental funds are spent, how scientific discoveries and technological innovations are implemented and how scientific evidence is used in court and other social organizations. An appreciation of science and a positive attitude may provide a positive influence on these decisions (Rogers and Ford, 1997).

Several reasons have been suggested for the negative attitudes of non science majors which include undesirable experiences in previous science courses and the instructors, lack of needed skills to learn and apply scientific concept, fear of science learning lack of motivation to work hard in science classes and poor reading interest.

Research Questions
1. What type of relationship exists among the independent variables (reading interest and attitude) and the dependent variable student performance in Yoruba language reading competency ?

2. Which of the two predictor variables is most influential in predicting student academic performance in Yoruba language reading competency?

Methodology
The design research adopted was ex-post facto survey design. The target population of study was all JSS two students of public secondary schools within Ibadan metropolis. Multi stage sampling technique were used in the selection of samples. Sampling proportion to size were used in choosing two local government areas from the five local government areas in Ibadan metropolis. Sampling population to size were also used to select four schools within the two local government areas. Simple

random samples were used to select thirty student from each of the four schools. The total student sampled were 120 students.

Two instruments were used to generate data for the study. They are reading interest scale in Yoruba language (RISY) and students attitude scale in Yoruba language (SAY). The instruments were constituted by the researcher. The Reading Interest Scale in Yoruba language (RISY) consisted of twenty-one items in form of Four-point Likert-type scale. The items include both positive and negative statements which require Yoruba language students to respond. The instrument was validated by administers it to forty Yoruba language students of the some characteristics but not part of the study sampled. It has reliability co-efficient of 0.8 using Cronbach Alpha.

Student attitude scale in Yoruba language (SAY) consisted of two sections. Section A comprises of information personal data such as name of school, class, age, gender. Section B consisted of twenty-two items in form of 4-points Likert-type scale. The items include both positive and negative statements which require Yoruba language students to respond it. The instrument was validated by administering it to forty students of the same characteristics to the study sample. It has a reliability co-efficient of 0.8 using Cranach's Alpha. Research question one was analysed using Pearson Product Moment correlation to determine the degree of correlation. Research question two was analyzed using multiple regression.

Result

Research Question 1
What type of relationship exists between the predictor variable (Attitude to Yoruba Language and reading Interest in Yoruba Language) and the criterion variable (learning outcome in Yoruba Language).

Table 1: Correlation Matrix of Learning Outcome in Yoruba Language, attitude to Yoruba Language Reading and Reading Interest in Yoruba Language

	Achievement	Attitude to Yoruba	Reading Interest
Achievement	1	-0.061	-0.043
Attitude to Yoruba	-0.061	1	0.561

Reading interest	-0.043	0.561	1
Mean	33.717	61.425	60
SD	6.004	10.829	9.21
N	120	120	120

Note: * Correlations are significant, P<0.05

Table 1 shows the relationship among the predictor variables and the criterion variable. From the analysis, it can be seen that the relationship among the predictors and the criterion variable is low. Hence, Attitude to Yoruba Language (r=0.061, p>0.05) and Reading Interest (r=-0.043, p>0.05) has a negative and low correlation with students' learning outcome in Yoruba language. This indicates a weak insignificant and opposite relationship between the predictor variables and criterion variable.

Research Question 2
Does the obtained regression equation resulting from a set of two predictor variable (Attitude to Yoruba Language Reading and Reading Interest) allow reliable prediction of the criterion variable (student learning outcome in Yoruba)?

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Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.062a	.004	-013	6.04406

Table 3: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	16.283	2	8.141	223	801
1. Residual	4274.084	117	36.531		
Total	4290.367	119			

The multiple regression correlation coefficient ® showing the linear relationship between the Predictor Variable (Attitude to Yoruba Language and reading Interest in Yoruba Language) and the criterion variable (learning outcome in Yoruba Language) as shown in Table 2 is 0,062, the multiple R^2 is 0.004 and the Adjusted R square value is -0.013. This means that the variation in students' learning outcome in Yoruba accounted for by the two predictor variable is approximately 1.3$% and it is statistically insignificant F(2, 117) = 0.223, p>0.05) as indicated in Table 3. This means that neither Attitude to Yoruba Language Interest in Yoruba Language can be used to predict students' learning outcome in Yoruba in SS2.

Research Question 3
Which of the two predictor variables is most influential in predicting students learning outcome in Yoruba Language?

Research Question 4
Are there any predictor variables that do not contribute significantly to the predictor mode?

Table 4: Coefficients

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
(Constant) 1. Attitude to Yoruba	36.044	3.914		9.210	.000
	-.030	.062	-.053	-.480	.632
Reading Interest	-.008	.073	-.013	-.115	.909

Table 4 shows the individual variable contribution to the prediction model to the students' learning outcome in Yoruba. The table indicates that none of the predictor variables were found to have a significant relative prediction to students' learning outcome in Yoruba. Therefore, attitude to Yoruba Language. ß=0.053, t (117) = .04780, p = 0.05 and

reading Interest, ß= -0.13, t (117) = -0.115, p> 0.05 did not contributes significantly to the prediction model.

Discussion

The result in table 1-4 shows that students' attitude has negative and linear relationship with academic performance in Yoruba language. This indicates that attitude did not influence student's academic performance in Yoruba language. The result disagreed with the findings of Adebayo (2002) who reported that student attitude towards a subject is a predictor of academic performance and that attitude is a potent factor that relates to achievement. The study however agreed with Nasr and Ashore (2011) whose research work did not show significant difference between attitude towards Biology and achievement.

Bowen and Richman (2000) in their research work discovered that a large number of students performance is affected by their attitude towards specific subject, education and academics in general. Poor attitudes such as weak commitment to the subject, hatred for the subject and teacher do not support academic performance.

The finding further reveals that reading interest has no significant influence on academic performance in Yoruba language. The correlation between reading interest and academic performance in Yoruba language in negative. The result disagrees with the findings of Schunk (2008) which states that reading interest in a subject correlates with high academic performance.

Recommendations

In line with this study, the following recommendations were made:

i.   Teachers should update themselves through seminars and workshops from time to time on how to make Yoruba reading interesting to students so as to be able to correlate it with their learning outcomes.

ii. Schools, teachers and guidance counsellors should counsel students not only to associate reading in Yoruba language to tests, assignments and examination but that it should be a tool for relaxation, enjoyment pleasure, self development and advancement.

iii. Students should be guided in the teacher and counselor that it is not enough to enjoy reading but to comprehend so as to reflect in their learning outcome.

iv. The library which is a centre of intellectual activities that house all printed materials should be well equipped with current easy to read and comprehend Yoruba language textbooks so as to enhance the reading interest and attitude of studies. Reading for comprehension show be the students target.

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