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## Abstract

The study investigated effects of computer assisted drill and practice instruction on pupils' achievement and retention in English Language spelling and word-formation in Niger State. The study adopted quasi-experimental design. Purposive sampling was used to select four schools from 2,603 schools in the seven educational zones of Niger State. One hundred and twenty pupils were drawn as study sample from a population of 135,245 primary two pupils'. The study sample comprised of 62 males and 58 females. One intact class each was randomly assigned to the four schools under study. Control group was taught with lecture method while experimental group was taught with CAI Drill and Practice package. Eight research questions and eight hypotheses guided the study. English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) was used for data collection. The CAI package and ELAT were face validated by experts while the reliability was established using Kuder Richardson (KR 20) analysis and the reliability coefficient was found to be  $r = 0.74$ . Treatment lasted for four weeks. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research questions while analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used in the testing of the hypotheses. Findings show that CAI drill and practice package enhanced achievement and retention of English spelling and word-formation. It is recommended that, curriculum planners should infuse CAI packages into English programmes so that primary school teachers' can use it to teach English language concepts.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the Study

The world in which we live in is a dynamic world of science, information and communication technology. Science information and communication technology has gone deep into the fabrics of any developed nation. Aniah (2004) stated that technology and science may control the environment but the solution to its problems rests upon English language as a medium of passing information and commands. Consequently, both arts and science students need proficiency in English language in order to fit into our technologically developed nations. This is due to the fact that English language is the most widely used language in the world. English has enjoyed the status of both national, international and as Nigeria official language for oral and written communication on the globe. English is very crucial as a medium for teaching and learning of all school subjects in the Nigeria educational system and is a pre-requisite for admission into nearly all programmes in the universities.

The role English language plays in the world of communication and scientific advancement cannot be over emphasized, that is why English Language is Nigeria's lingua franca and medium of instruction in our educational institutions from upper primary schools to tertiary institutions. The government of Nigeria considers English language as a core subject in the school curriculum and a major medium of communication both within and outside the school system. The national policy on education, Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) demands ability to communicate effectively at the primary school level. The policy demands that the medium of instruction at primary school shall be the language of the environment for the first three years and from the fourth year English languages shall be taught as a subject and used progressively as a medium of instruction.

The aim of teaching English language especially at primary school level of education is to guide the

child's understanding of the four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. English language teaching should prepare the learner to use language naturally in real life situations for example, in daily life transaction with people such as greetings, buying and selling etc.

The achievement of pupils' in English language at all levels of education especially at the primary school level is poor (Okoro, 2002). Pupils' terminal examination result in (2012-2013) and First School Leaving Certificate Examination (2005-2007) in English language organized by Chanchaga Local Government Education Authority in Minna, Niger State showed that pupils' performed poorly in the subject. Okoro (2002) stated that the problem of poor level of achievement of primary school children is a serious issue in Nigeria. Furthermore, Kolawole (2002) also confirmed the poor achievement of primary school pupils in English language. The author explained that the poor achievement was due to a number of reasons such as: the use of tribal language in the lower classes of primary school, some pupils do not understand the grammar because their teachers themselves do not know it and in most cases English language teachers in the senior primary schools resort to the use of mother tongue to explain English language even up to secondary school level.

More importantly, apart from these factors listed above, Adama (2009) stated that non-availability of teaching materials is one of the factors which contribute to poor achievement by pupils' in English language examinations. The author also noted that only (10%) of pupils' who go to primary school are successful in the National Common Entrance Examination.

Other factors that have been identified as responsible for the poor achievement in English language include non-utilization of audio-visual instructional materials, poor English language teaching and expression, poor knowledge of the subject by the teacher, inadequate relevant English language textbooks and use of cell phones or handsets for text messages which have negative impact on pupils' learning because of short cut in spelling of words among others. Hence, the poor achievement of pupils' in the subject may be related to pupils' inability to retain what has been taught in class since the mode of communication outside the school is their local language.

Retention is the ability to reproduce the learnt concept when the need arises (Damiral, 2004). Retention involves the ability to recall the content that has been given within a specific period of time. It is the ability to demonstrate what the learner has learnt and being able to demonstrate his/her cognitive skills in the subject (Wushishi, Danjuma & Usman, 2013). However, pupils' ability to reproduce the learnt material could be through the use of appropriate instructional methods like innovative teaching strategies in teaching. Learning could be made more effective, lasting and enjoyable and topics that are abstract to students could be made clearer, easier and meaningful for better achievement of concept learnt. The researcher observed that in our present day schools, most teachers do not carry on diction in their teaching of English language and this affects students' knowledge of spelling.

National Teachers Institute Kaduna (2006) in its' Manual for Retraining of Primary School Teachers stated that spelling involves associating some letters with certain sounds or words. Spelling can also be defined as an act of forming words correctly using letters of alphabets. Spelling is a serious problem among learners particularly in primary and secondary school level; this problem is largely due to the fact that dictation which was a very vital tool in word-formation or learning of words has been relegated to the background. Wise (1992) defined word-formation as an aspect of language learning which prepares an individual for language use during the primary school years. In other words, it is an act of acquiring new words to equip an individual

for effective communication orally or in written form. Word-formation is very important in a child's learning because it increases pupils' acquisition of new words and also enhances flexibility in their expression and communication both within and outside the school. Pupils' ability to form words using various learning activities thereby expanding the breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge e.g. the use of cross-word puzzles is very important in any learning process.

Lecture method of teaching is the most widely used method employed by teachers in our institutions of learning. In this method of teaching, students are encouraged to sit quietly, listen and perhaps take down notes. Adeoye (2002) describes lecture method as one which involves the lecturer talking according to pre-planned, structured scheme while the students listen and make notes. Adeoye (2002) explained that it might not be easy to write off lecture method stressing that this method of teaching is not ideal for immature learners especially primary school pupils. It makes learners considerably passive and does not cater for individual differences in learners.

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