

**EFFECT OF REPEATED STRATEGY AND READING COMPREHENSION**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the effect of Repeated Reading Strategy and Reading Comprehension of pupils in public primary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The study adopted a quasi-experimental non-equivalent group design. The population of the study was 46,071 primary four pupils of public primary schools. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw four schools and the sample size was 200. Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT) was used as instrument for the study. The instrument's validity was determined by experts. Kuder Richardson Formula 20 was used to determine the internal consistency of Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT) which yielded a coefficient index of 0.70. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypothesis. The study revealed that pupils exposed to repeated reading strategy performed better in their ability to answer questions, find main ideas, follow directions, comprehend word meanings and make summary from a passage than those exposed to the conventional reading strategy. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended among others that emphasis should be made on the use of repeated reading strategy by the teachers to enhance pupils' ability in reading comprehension. Teachers should acquaint themselves with the skills and principles of this method and use them to enhance effective teaching and learning process. This should be achieved through attending seminars, workshops, conferences and other in-service training programmes organized by the Federal and State Ministries of Education and other professional bodies.

**KEYWORDS: Repeated, Strategy, Reading and Comprehension**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Reading is fundamental to meaningful living. In the educational system, reading is the principal instrument used to help pupils to learn. According to Webster Dictionary of English Language (2016), reading is the art of studying and understanding written characters and symbols. Similarly, Tiwalwu (2017) view reading as a form of communication in which the decoder (reader) endeavours to interpret the mind of the encoder (writer). Reading is significant among school activities in being both a subject of instruction and a tool for the mastery of other subjects of the school curriculum. Learning of any subject in the school curriculum depends largely on the reading ability of the learner (Eze, 2017). Reading is required on a daily basis by adults if they are to participate in modern day society. When we teach children how to read, we are preparing them to be abreast of social, cultural, economic and political changes in the society. The goal of reading instruction at the primary school level is that each child should be functionally literate and be able to communicate effectively. Functional literacy means an individual can read with learning, think

critically and utilize efficiently problem solving skills, which are crucial for effective and successful living. The achievement of this child to read and to learn, it also ensures that a child that terminates his or her education at this level will not slip back into illiteracy (Omogjuwa, 2015). In recognition of the significance of reading in a child's life, the National Policy on Education (2014:11), stipulates "the inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively". There are certain skills an individual should acquire in order to ensure mastery of comprehension. They should have ability to answer questions from a selection or passage, find more ideas from a passage, follow directions from a passage and comprehend word meanings and ability to summarize a passage. The ability to answer questions directly from a story or passage is an indication that the child comprehends the story or the passage that he or she has read. Answering questions from a passage helps pupils to develop the ability to formulate significant questions for themselves.

Another aspect of skill a child should acquire for effective reading comprehension is learning to follow directions. Following direction involves repeating directions, drawing a picture from directions, observing written directions, drawing a picture from directions given. Developing reading comprehension skills in words meanings is equal in child's reading ability. This skill involves finding the meaning of words through class discussion, studying the word written in context on the chalk-board, invoking up words in a dictionary before reading a story of a passage (Eze, 2017).

All these reading comprehension skills can be developed effectively in the children through the use of appropriate instructional strategies. Instructional strategies are the overall plan for the orderly presentation of learning material. It is procedural and in consonance or view assumptions dealing with the nature of the reading act and the nature of teaching and reading (Omojuwa, 2015). Etuk (2015), Ene (2014) and Ikonta (2014) blame the inability of pupils to read effectively on the wrong use of instructional strategies by teachers. Omojuwa states that pupils fail to read because of poor teaching methods employed by the teacher in teaching reading.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The high rate of reading comprehension failures owing primary school pupils has continued to be a source of concern to all stake-holders in the education of children in this level. This is because of its implications for the quality of education of the higher level. The poor performance of pupils in reading comprehension in Nigerian primary schools has been attributed to the use of poor instructional strategies by teachers. It is evident that the last majority of pupils have difficulties comprehending what they read. This disturbing phenomenon is not without its many negative ramifications especially given the fact that reading comprehension correlates academic achievement.

The slow and poor performances of pupils in reading comprehension have been attributed to the use of conventional instructional methods and poor strategies by instructors. Parents and the society at large blame poor comprehension of pupils on teacher's poor instructional strategies. The frequent use of conventional method of instruction regardless of modest achievement made, has not really mitigated the problem of poor reading comprehension and link between oral and written language. Therefore, it is based on the blame of pupil's poor reading comprehension on teachers use of conventional method of instruction that the researcher seek to determine the effect of repeated reading strategy and reading comprehension of pupils in public primary schools in Uyo Local

Government Area.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

- i. Determine the difference in pupils' ability to answer questions from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and taught using the conventional reading strategy.
- ii. Examine the difference in pupil's ability to find the main ideas from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and taught using the conventional reading strategy.
- iii. Ascertain the difference in pupil's ability to follow directions from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and when taught using the conventional reading strategy.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- i. What is the difference in pupil's ability to answer questions from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and taught using the conventional reading strategy?
- ii. What is the difference in pupil's ability to find the main ideas from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and taught using the conventional reading strategy?
- iii. What is the difference in pupil's ability to follow direction from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and taught using the conventional reading strategy?

### **RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

- i. There is no significant difference in the ability to answer questions from a passage by pupils taught using repeated reading strategy and taught using the conventional reading strategy.
- ii. There is no significant difference in the ability to find the main ideas from a passage by pupils when taught using repeated reading strategy and taught using the conventional reading strategy.
- iii. There is no significant difference in the ability to follow directions from a passage by pupils taught using repeated reading strategy and taught using the conventional reading strategy.

### **CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

According to Dorathy (2016) reading is a total integrative process that starts with the reader and includes the following domains: the effective, the perceptual and the cognitive. In the words of Sisulu (2014) reading is one of the fundamental building blocks of learning. Becoming a skilled and adaptable reader enhances the chances of success at school and beyond. Reading is not just for school, it is for life. Reading in all its variety is vital to being better informed, have a better understanding of us as well as others. It makes man to be a thoughtful and constructive contributor to a democratic and cohesive society. Leading world nations pride themselves on their promotion of reading. They see a high level of literacy as a major source of their competitiveness and social maturity. The absence of a reading comprehension ability in the case of Nigeria acts as an effective barrier to our development and international competitiveness. The economic, social and political health of our nation today depend on building literate citizens that are able to read widely and apply it practically for development. It is therefore a necessity to make the present generation more aware of the benefits and importance of reading and ensuring that they have the literacy skills required in

the modern society.

Reading according to Hornby (2014) means, to look at and understand the meaning of written or printed words or symbols. Reading is a unique human activity that is characterized by the translation of symbols or letters into word and sentences that communicate information and mean something to the reader. The reader seeks to understand the meaning of the written text, evaluates its significance and uses what he or she has read to enhance his or her knowledge, effectiveness or pleasure, voluntary reading is important not just for personal use and life-long education, but even for learning in schools. It requires a lot of reading to become a fluent reader. In its broad meaning therefore, Ogbonna (2014) states that reading literally refers to the ability to recognize and understand characters or speak words that may be printed or written on paper and other formats of recording human knowledge.

Reading is the ability to obtain meaning from words. The ability to read and write is called literacy and a person who can read is said to be literate, while a person who lacks the ability to read is said to be illiterate. Holte (2018) remarks that a situation in which a large number of people rarely read either because they have the skill or simply because they do not care enough to take time to concentrate will pose serious problems in the future. Reading is essential to full participation in modern society. It adds quality to life, provides access to culture and cultural heritage, empowers and emancipates citizens as well as brings people together.

### **READING COMPREHENSION AND PUPILS ABILITY TO ANSWER QUESTIONS**

Reading comprehension and ability to answer questions are highly interwoven as there cannot be comprehension without ability to answer questions, contemplate between lines, words, think loud, ask, generates, and answer questions so as to avail the key point, main idea, and reason behind a passage (Yallet, 2014).

To Raphael, (2016), questioning has long been used by teachers as a way to guide and monitor pupils' learning to read. "Research shows that teacher questioning strategy supports and advances pupil's learning from reading" (Armbruster, Lehr and Osborn, 2014). "No comprehension activity has a long or more persuasive tradition, asking pupils question about their reading, whether this occurs before, during, or after reading" (Duke and Pearson, 2016). Teachers need to ask pupils questions for a better comprehension, need to ask both the teachers themselves and friends questions, for improvement in reading comprehension.

Raphael (2016) spent time observing pupils and the strategies pupils use while answering questions. She found out that many pupils fell into one or many categories.

- i. Those who relied only on the memory or prior knowledge to find answer.
- ii. Those who rely on only the text.

These observations read the importance of teaching pupils the relationship between question, answering of questions, and comprehension.

As a result, Raphael (2016) developed an approach called QACR or Question Answer

Comprehension Relationship which teaches pupils how to distinguish questions with answers that focus “in the head”. This research confirmed that when pupils are taught to use strategy, their ability to observe questions correctly improves. Therefore, QACR assists pupils in differentiating among questions based on where the answers can be found, either in the book or in the head (Caldwell and Leslis, 2015).

## **READING COMPREHENSION AND PUPILS ABILITY TO FIND MAIN IDEAS**

The ability to find or identify main idea in a text is a key reading comprehension skill (Jolly, 2014). Elementary aged children, unfortunately find identification of main ideas in expository text problematic (Baumann, 2014), in spite of a considerably alteration paid to main idea, comprehension in instructional resources suffer as pupils find it difficult to practice or find main idea in a given story (Johnson and Berrett, 2016). Researchers consequently examined the nature of main idea comprehension and discovered that pupils’ insensitive to main idea is due in part, to the character of main idea instruction in instructional resources. Certainly, Durkin (2015) reveal correspondence between basal reader manual prescriptions and teachers behaviours.

Bratt (2016) discloses that authors do not always provide complete and explicitly description of information about a topic, a character, a thing, an event or about the main idea in a passage. However, they do provide clues or suggestions that readers can use to read between the lines, thus allowing the reader to make inference about the main idea of the passage based on the information in the next and / or on the readers own background knowledge. The ability to make inference about the main idea from a story or passage by pupils has been described as the heart of the reading process. In fact, it has been showing that pupils significantly improve their ability to get meaning, draw conclusion and find main idea in a passage. It has also been disclosed that pupils are able to get meaning from reading when they are taught directly how to draw conclusion ad make inferences. Indeed, research strategy supports the value of providing even young pupils with such instructions.

Bratt (2016) also stated that in reading text passages, sometimes the main idea is stated in the opening sentence and developed with examples and evidence in the sentences that follow, or a passage may conclude with the main idea – a point that the author has been building toward throughout the passage with supporting evidence. It is suggested that readers should not mind into thinking that he or she only need to read the first and last sentences of the passage for main idea. The main idea of complex passages are not easy to identify.

## **STRATEGIES FOR ANSWERING MAIN IDEA QUESTIONS**

- i. Look for key words that identify the question as a main idea question. Pupils should be guided on ways to seek the word that identify the question as a main idea. If the question includes any of the main idea key words listed above, this will help pupils focus on identifying the authors point as they are.
- ii. Teachers are to teach pupils to read passages and make notes. This in order words means that once they identify the question as a main idea question, they should read the passage and making notes on their papers as they read.

- iii. Remember to pay special attention to words such as but, yet, again, since, only, together, however. These words signal a shift, a qualification, something pupils should note, the ideas that follow these words are usually important to the overall meaning of the passage.

## **READING COMPREHENSION AND PUPILS ABILITY TO FOLLOW DIRECTION**

Another comprehension skill a child should acquire for effective reading comprehension is learning to follow direction. Some reading passages or stories give the reader directions to follow in accomplishing a task. For pupils to follow the steps sequentially in accomplishing such a task as read from the passage, they have to understand what is written. This implies that they must have a good ability to comprehend reading. Morgan (2017) observes that children who are learning to follow direction in a reading be able to carry out the following skills: repeat direction given by the teacher, observe written directions by the teacher; such as “make one ball yellow, make the other ball blue”, answer questions about a set of direction such as “what should you do after drawing a picture?” he should be able to follow written or oral directions for making thing such as a folder for papers or producing a paper mache. He should be able to arrange in a correct order, the sentences for directions to do or make something. This ability can be improved with the use of effective strategies in teaching reading comprehension.

## **READING AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Many reading approaches are being implemented to teach reading skills, and because of its importance. These are some of the approaches.

Firstly, shared reading approach, “this is a general instructional practice that involves an adult reading a book to a child or group of children without any extensive interaction from the children, this practice allows the teacher to model fluent oral reading to pupils experiencing difficulties” (Rasinski, 2013).

Secondly, assisted doze, “in this strategy, sessions last 10-15 minutes. The teacher chooses text at the pupils’ instructional level, the teacher reads aloud while the pupils follow quietly and wave a finger. At some point, the teacher stops and the pupils are expected to read the following word in the text. The process proceeds until the whole passage has been read. After that the pupils take the teacher’s turn while the teacher takes the pupil’s turn (Rasinski, 2016).

Thirdly, choral reading, this is a reading strategy which can be implemented with pupils as individuals or in groups. Each session lasts for 10-15 minutes in which a teacher chooses a passage aloud as well, so teacher and pupils read together. In this strategy, teacher encourages pupils to read expression (Miskal, 2016).

Fourthly, duet reading, in this strategy, the teacher picks a passage at the pupil’s instructional or independent level. During reading the teacher and the pupils take turns to read one word at a time, while the teacher follows in the passage with an index finger. When the pupils become more fulfilled, the teacher can change the ratio to move more responsibility to the pupils: for instance, if the teacher reads a single word aloud, the pupils read three words aloud in advance (Gallagher, 2018).

Fifthly, echo reading, in this strategy, to improve pupils' reading fluency, the teacher chooses a text at the pupil's instructional level. The teacher begins by reading small part (e.g, one or two sentences) while the pupils track silently. The pupils then read the same short part aloud and the read-aloud action continues, substituting turns between teacher and pupils till the end of the passage.

Sixthly, look and say method is another strategy. Look and say method is made part of the pupils' everyday life. This is done through the use of initial contact of a child with any written word is through labels which the child is familiar with either at home or in the classroom. Label could be a piece of paper or any other material that is printed to an object and it gives information about the object. Labels should normally be written as sentence e.g, this is a table, this is a desk. The advantage of using sentences is that the learners are made to know how to express themselves in complete sentences rather than using isolated words. The teacher makes use of labels for many objects by pinning them to objects, drawing, ect., (Rasinski, 2016).

### **REPEATED READING STRATEGY**

Repeated reading is reading of selected text for a set number of times or until a fluency criterion is met, is the fluency development tool of interest to this study. Repeated reading is the most used method of developing reading fluency (Meyer and Felton, 1999 and Samuel, 1979) are connected to respected theory (LaBerge and Samuels, 1974).

Samuels (1976), wrote the classic work on repeated reading which initiated a significant line of research documenting the success that the technique has had on improving fluency and subsequently comprehension. He wrote that repeated reading was designed to be a supplement to the core curriculum. It was a useful technique for pupils with learning difficulties; however, it could also be a useful strategy for normally developing children.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted a quasi-experimental research design. Specifically, it is a pretest, posttest nonequivalent control group design. Quasi-experimental design is a design in which random assignment of subject to treatment and control groups is not possible.

The population of the study consisted of 2,071, (SUBEB, 2016) primary four pupils in 48 public primary Schools in Uyo Local Government Area. Multi stage sampling techniques was use in selecting schools from the target population. The Instrument use for the study is titled "Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT) and content validation of the instrument was carried out by an expert from measurement and evaluation, one from Curriculum Studies (English Language) and one from early childhood Education, Faculty of Education, University of Uyo. The reliability coefficient of 0.70 was considered to be highly reliable and useful in collecting the required data for the study Mean and Standard deviation was used in answering the research questions while analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant.

**Research Question One:** What is the difference in pupils ability to answer questions from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and when taught using conventional reading strategy?

**Table 1:** Mean Standard Deviation and Mean difference of Pupils ability to answer questions from a passage when taught using Repeated Reading Strategy (RRS)

Group	N	Pre-Test		Post-Test		Mean Difference
		X	SD	X	SD	
Repeated Reading Strategy	101	3.64	1.86	9.44	2.19	5.80
Conventional Reading Strategy	99	3.72	1.82	3.79	1.72	0.07

The result presented in Table 1 shows the pretest mean achievement scores of pupils ability to answer questions when taught using repeated reading strategy (experimental group) was 3.64 with a standard deviation of 1.86 and a posttest mean of 9.44 with a standard deviation of 2.19. The different between the pretest and protest mean for the experimental group was 5.80. The conventional reading strategy (control group) had a pretest mean 3.72 with a standard deviation of 1.82 and posttest mean 3.79 with a standard deviation of 1.72. The different between pretest and posttest mean for conventional reading strategy (control group) was 0.07 for (experimental group) and (control group), the posttest mean were greater than the pretest with Repeated reading strategy having higher mean gain. This is indicative that pupil's ability to answer questions from a passage more than exposed to conventional reading strategy.

**Research Question Two:** What is the difference in pupils ability to find the main ideas from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and when taught using conventional reading strategy?

**Table 2:** Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean difference of pupil's ability to find the main ideas from a passage when taught using Repeated Reading strategy RRS and when taught conventional reading Strategy CRS.

Group	N	Pre-Test		Post-Test		Mean Difference
		X	SD	X	SD	
Repeated Reading Strategy	101	3.12	2.06	10.12	2.35	7.00
Conventional Reading Strategy	99	3.94	1.69	4.32	2.89	0.38

The result presented in Table 2 shows the pretest mean achievement scores of Pupil’s ability to find the main ideas when taught using repeated reading strategy (experimental group) was 3.12 with a standard deviation of 2.06 and posttest mean of 10.12 with a standard of 2.35. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for the experimental group was 7.00. The conventional reading strategy (control group) had a pretest mean 3.94 with a standard deviation of 1.69 and a posttest mean 4.32 with a standard deviation of 2.89. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for conventional reading strategy (control group) was 0.38 for (experimental group) and (control group), the Repeated Reading Strategy improves pupil’s ability to find the main ideas from a passage more than those not exposed to this Strategy.

**Research Question Three:** What is the difference in pupil’s ability to follow directions from a passage when taught using repeated strategy and when taught using conventional reading strategy?

**Table 3:** Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean Difference of Pupil’s ability to follow directions from a passage taught using repeated reading strategy RRS when taught using conventional reading strategy CRS

Group	N	Pre-Test		Post-Test		Mean Difference
		X	SD	X	SD	
Repeated Reading Strategy	101	3.79	1.78	9.32	1.92	5.53
Conventional Reading Strategy	99	4.11	2.59	4.04	1.82	-0.07

The result presented in Table shows the pretest mean achievement scores of pupil’s ability to follow directions from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy (experimental group) was 3.79 with a standard deviation of 1.78 and a posttest mean for the experimental group 5.53. The conventional reading strategy (control group) had a pretest mean 4.11 with a standard deviation of 2.59 and a posttest mean 4.04 with a standard deviation of 1.82. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for conventional leading strategy (control group) was -0.07. The mean gain of (experimental group) 5.53 was greater than the mean gain of (control group) -0.07. This implies that pupils exposed to repeated reading strategy performed better in their ability to follow directions from a passage than those exposed to the conventional reading strategy.

**PRESENTATION OF NULL HYPOTHESES**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in pupils’ ability to answer questions from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and when taught using conventional reading strategy.

**Table 1:** Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) on difference in pupils’ ability to answer questions from

a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and when taught using conventional reading strategy.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F-cal	P-value
Corrected Model	1197.601	2	598.801	167.842	.001
Intercept	843.3571	1	843.357	236.391	.001
Pretest	48.766	1	48.766	13.669	.001
Method	1158.0181	1	1158.018	452.591	.001
Residual	503.038197	2.553			
Total	8074.000	200			
Corrected Total	199				

a.R Squared = .704 (adjusted R squared =.700)

= Significant at P< .05 alpha level

**Hypothesis 2:**There is no significant difference in pupils' ability to find the main ideas from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and when taught using the conventional reading strategy.

**Table 2:** Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) on difference in pupils' ability to find the main ideas from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and when taught using the conventional reading strategy.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F-cal	P-value
Corrected Model	1325.1172	662.559	107.770	.001	
Intercept	974.834	1	974.834	158.564	.001
Pretest	114.585	1	114.585	18.638	.001
Method	1315.9201	1315.920	229.072	.001	
Residual	866.855197	4.400			
Total	9790.000	200			

Corrected Total    2191.972            199

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a. R square = .605 (adjusted R squared =.599)

= significant at P< .05 alpha level

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference in pupils’ ability to follow directions from a passage when taught using repeated reading strategy and when taught using conventional reading strategy.

**Table 3:** Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) on difference in pupils’ ability to follow directions from a passage when taught using conventional reading strategy.

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Source	Type Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F-cal	P-value
Corrected Model	1018.182 <sup>a</sup>	2	509.091	149.813	.001
Intercept	1247.239	1	1247.239	367.031	.001
Pretest	17.482	1	17.482	5.145	.025
Method	1014.613	1	1014.613	417.192	.001
Residual	479.144	197	2.432		
Total	7991.000	200			
Corrected Total	1419.326	199			

a. R squared = .680 (adjusted R squared = .675)

Significant at P<.05 alpha level

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the conclusion reached were that pupils exposed to repeated reading strategy performed better overall in reading comprehension skills of ability to answer question, find the main ideas and follow directions than those exposed to the conventional reading strategy., Pupils exposed to reading repeated reading strategy performed better in their ability to answer questions from a passage than those exposed to the conventional reading strategy. There was a significant difference in pupils ability to answer questions from a passage when exposed to repeated reading strategy. The pupils exposed to repeated reading strategy performed better in their ability to find the main ideas from a passage than those exposed to the conventional reading strategy. Above all, there was a significant difference in pupil’s ability to answer questions, find the main ideas

and follow direction.

### RECOMMENDATION

- Teachers should integrate repeated reading strategy into reading activity to enhance pupils ability to answer questions, find the main ideas and follow directions
- Institutions responsible for teacher preparation in early childhood education should incorporate the use of repeated reading strategy into their reading and language curriculum so as to equip the pre-service teachers the competencies needed in the use of this method.
- Reading intervention classes should be inaugurated in every school where pupils could be intervened for, by providing appropriate repeated book reading and activities which serves as a support base to boost their performance in reading comprehension.
- Periodic monitoring of teachers to ascertain the compliance with repeated reading strategy should be carried out by school administrators.

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