Instructional Resources as Determinants of English Language Performance of Secondary School High-Achieving Students in Ibadan, Oyo State

Dr. Adelodun, Gboyega Adelowo   and   Asiru, Abdulahi Babatunde
University of Ibadan, Department of Special Education, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study examined the role played by instructional resources in enhancing performance of students, especially that of high-achievers, in English Language. The study is descriptive in nature and it adopted a survey design. Simple random sampling technique was used for the selection of fifty (50) SSI – SSIII students from five schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. The age range for the participants was from 13 to 18 years. Data were collected using a self-designed instrument with a reliability coefficient of 0.86. Two research questions were raised and the research lasted for four weeks. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The findings showed that instructional resources play a significant role in enhancing performance of high-achieving students in English Language   (r = -.145, N = 50, P > .05). The findings also revealed that there is a significant relationship between the use of audio, visual and audio-visual materials and performance of high-achieving students in English Language (r = .067, N = 50, P > .05). Based on these findings, the teachers are encouraged to always make use of instructional resources like audio, visual and audio-visual materials while imparting knowledge and students must as well pay rapt attention in the class whenever instructional resources are being used for them in order to maximize their performance in English Language.

Keywords: Instructional Resources, Enhancing, Performance, High-achieving

INTRODUCTION

Education, according to Charles and Coombs (2010) consists of two components. He classified the two components into inputs and outputs. According to him, inputs consist of human and material resources and outputs are the goals and outcomes of the educational process. Both the inputs and outputs form a dynamic organic whole and if one wants to investigate and assess the education system in order to improve its performance, effects of one component on the other must be examined.

Instructional resources which are educational inputs are of vital importance to the teaching of any subject in the school curriculum. Instructional material plays a very important role in the teaching-learning process. It enhances the memory level of the students. At this time, education has spread wide and the entire oral teaching cannot be the key to successful pedagogy; therefore, the teacher has to use instructional material to make the teaching-learning process interesting. The use of instructional material can enhance the learning achievement.

Chang (2009) was of the opinion that the use of instructional resources would make discovered facts glued firmly to the memory of students. Slavin (2010) also added that, a well planned and imaginative use of visual aids in lessons should do much to banish aparthy, supplement inadequacy of books as well as arouse student's interest by giving them something practical to see and do, and at the same time helping to train them to think things out themselves. Slavin (2010) suggested a catalogue of useful visual aids that are good for teaching English Language like pictures, diagrams, maps, film strips and models.

He said that selection of materials which are related to the basic contents of a course or a lesson, helps indepth understanding of such a lesson by the students in that they make the lesson attractive to them, arresting their attention and thus motivating them to learn. He suggested a catalogue of aids which could be used to teach English Language. He advocated the use of pictures which will help children in grounding their thoughts and feeling. He said that pictures are used as alternatives to real objects where it is impossible to show students the real objects, and they do serve effectively in imagined activities.

It is also very vital to have sufficient and adequate human resources in terms of teacher quality for the teaching of all subjects in the school curriculum. Without the teachers as implementing factors, the goals of education can never be achieved. In order to achieve a just and egalitarian society as spelt out in the Nigerian National Policy of Education, schools should b e properly and uniformly equipped to promote sound and effective teaching. Suitable textbooks, qualified teachers, librarians which are adequate should also be provided for schools. Scarcity of these, according to Charles and Coombs (2010), will constrain educational system from responding more fully to new demands. In order to raise the quality of education, its efficiency and productivity, better learning materials are needed.

A careful look at the studies of aforementioned people like Charles and Coombs (2010) and Slavin (2010) on the use of instructional resources in improving academic performance of students generally, gave the researcher an insight into how the use of instructional resources in specific subject can enhance student's performance in such subjects. This is a major factor that has inspired this study whose aim is to carry out an investigation on the role of instructional resources in enhancing academic performance of high-achieving students in English Language.

Several people have written on the importance of instructional resources to teaching, Oluyori (1986) while stressing the importance of instructional technology commented that if the recently introduced system (6 – 3 – 3 – 4) in accordance with the National Policy on Education is to be a success, then instructional technology has a role to play. Balogun (1971) commented that "Audio-visual materials, as integral part of teaching-learning situations help to bring about permanent and meaningful experience. He said that, they provide first-hand experience where possible or of vicarious one where only that is feasible.

In enumerating the factors that could be responsible for varying intra and inter-school/academic achievement, Coombs (1970), listed four important factors, including the acute scarcity of instructional resources which he said constrained educational systems from responding more fully to new demands. He claimed that, in order to do their part in meeting the crisis in education, educational systems will need real resources that money can buy, they will need a fuller share of the nations' manpower, not merely to carry on the present work of education, but to raise its quality, efficiency and productivity. They will need buildings, equipments and more learning materials.

The Significant Role of Instructional Resources

Generally, instructional resources or materials facilitate better learning of concepts presented. Quadri et al., (2003) are of the opinion that consents and usefulness of the instructional materials are based upon the following ideas that learning is more likely to occur in a class where there is:

- Active involvement of learners in the teaching learning process;
- Negotiation of individual learning objectives'
- Opportunities for demonstration, practice and feedback;
- Continuous evaluation of learning;
- Support for learners and teachers.

They highlight the following role of instructional resources/materials in English Language.

Interest Booster: Instructional resources help in arousing and sustaining the interest of the learners in the teaching learning process.

Knowledge Transmitter: Visual, audio and audio-visual instruments help in precise and easy dissemination of information of facts, information and data, too large audience with less effort.

Memory Stimulizer: Visual instruments assist in stimulating learning and audio instruments aid in critical thinking and improve the use of imagination.

Time Saver: Instructional materials speed up the learning process because of its prompt, easy, accurate and quick presentation of information.

In a similar development, Aremu (2007) gives a catalogue of roles of instructional resources:

- It saves time;
- It makes learning real and permanent;
- It stimulates the interest of the learner;
- It focuses attention of the learners;
- It provides authority for concepts being presented in the class;
- It enhances teacher-learner relationship; and
- It gives room for meaningful interaction in the class.

General Concept of High-Achieving Learners

Intelligence, creativity and achievement have been central to the various definitions of high achievement that have been proposed over the years. Among such definitions is the one given by a notable scholar, Short and Echevarria (2009), who recognizing the value of including special skills and talents describes such children noted for high achievement as those whose performance is consistently significant in any potentially valuable area.

High achievement can be referred to as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in such areas as intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership ability, or in the performance of visual arts.

The United State Department of Education, proposed a new definition of students with high achievement, based on a new research of cognition and assessment: children and youth with outstanding talent

(achievement), who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience or environment. These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools. Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavours.

Learning and intellectual characteristics of these persons who are considered to be high-achieving include:

- The ability to acquire rapidly and use large amount of information;
- The ability to relate one idea to another;
- The ability to make sound judgement;
- The ability to perceive the operation of larger systems of knowledge that may not be recognized by the ordinary person;
- The ability to acquire and manipulate abstract symbol systems; and
- The ability to solve problem by refraining the question and creating novel solutions.

Smith (2001), outlines the following characteristics of high-achieving children as follows:

High-achieving children are said to have good problem-solving abilities; learn rapidly; has extensive vocabulary; good memory; long sensitivity; and have compassion for others. They have wide range of interests; ability to puzzle maze of numbers; high sense of maturity; high degree of energy and excellent sense of humour. The high-achievers are also known to have preference for older comparison and perseverance in areas of interests.

Silverman (2005), identifies the following characteristics in high-achieving learners. They are believed to have intense intellectual curiosity; fascination with words and ideas; perfectionism; need for precision; learning in great intuitive leaps and intense need for mental stimulation. Moreover, their other traits include difficulty conforming to the thinking of others, early moral and existential concerns and tendency towards introversion.

Instructional Methods and Strategies for Enhancing Learner's Performance in English Language

Moughamian et al., (2009) discussed instructional methodologies that have demonstrated effectiveness in helping English Language Learners (ELLs) build second language regardless of the model (bilingual or English only). They developed three strategies primarily for use in English Language classes alone and two primarily for use in dual language and transitional classes. The strategies are Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and Special Design Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE).

CALLA was designed to improve academic achievement for post-primary level English Language learners. The SIOP method draws on and builds upon traditional sheltered instructional strategies, which encourages teachers to speak more slowly, enunciate clearly, use visuals, scaffold instruction among others. The SDAIE strategies give ELLS access to the core curriculum while promoting English Language development and the strategies and emphasize the use of manipulative, visuals, and graphic organizers, with plentiful opportunities for peer interaction.

Statement of the Problem

In recent time, there have been tales of woes and lamentations as regards the overall performance of students in English Language, especially in West African Senior School Certificate Examinations and National Examination Council results. Numerous students including high achieving ones perform poorly in the subject and the blame is often shifted on the government, teachers handling the subject and the students.

Researches have been conducted to find out factors that determine the performance of high-achieving student in English Language. Some variables like teachers qualification, usage of appropriate methods of teaching, motivation of teacher and students, stimulating environment and so on have been used in the past. Findings from the aforementioned researches have not clearly indicated the factors that actually determine the performance of high-achieving students in English Language hence the decision of the researcher to carry out the present study. Therefore the essence of this study is to find out whether or not the use of instructional resources could determine the performance of high-achieving students in English Language.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study were essentially to:

(i)   find out how various instructional resources can be used to improve the performance of high-achieving students in English Language.

(ii)   find out how audio, visual and audio-visual materials aid performance of students in English Language.

Significance of the Study

Based on the findings of this study, it is hoped that the teachers of English Language would be able to select appropriate instructional resources that could be used to teach the high-achieving students. The learners too, particularly the high-achieving ones would be acquainted with the resources that can enhance their performance in English Language.

Findings of this study will also go a long way to help the parents, the principals, the school administrators and educational planners to know the type of instructional resources to make provision for in our secondary schools in order to ease the job of the teachers.

Research Questions

This study would specifically answer the following questions:

(i)   Do instructional resources play a significant role in enhancing performance in English Language of high-achieving students?

(ii)   What is the effect of audio, visual and audio-visual materials on the academic performance of high-achieving students in English Language?

Methodology

This study is descriptive in nature and it adopted a survey design. This is because the researcher did not manipulate any of the variables of interest. The target population of this study was high-achieving senior secondary school students in Ibadan North Local Government area.

Simple random sampling technique was used for the selection of fifty (50) high-achieving students in five senior secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government area of Oyo State. Random sampling technique was used for the selection of male and female subjects who took part in the study. The subjects were drawn from five senior secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government area. The five schools were randomly picked using hat method.

A total number of 24 male and 26 female subjects were randomly selected from the five schools. The subjects were drawn from SS1 to SS3. The age range for all the children who participated in this study was from 13 to 18 years. The cumulative record of their continuous assessment right from the time all the students started Junior Secondary School one was used to discover all the high-achieving students in the five schools. Out of seventy five (75) high-achieving students discovered in the five schools, simple random sampling technique was used to select a total of 24 male and 26 female subjects used for this study.

The instrument developed by the researcher was used for the study. The instrument was a questionnaire designed to tap information on instructional resources that were available in each of the schools for the teaching of English Language to high-achieving students in order to improve or enhance their performance in the subject. It is a twenty-five (25) item questionnaire.

Five (5) of the items were designed to tap information on the quality of English Language teachers in each of the schools in terms of their qualification, teaching experience and work loads. Ten (10) of the items were designed to tap information on materials for the teaching of English Language. The ten items were of the likert type with a three point scale ranging from mostly used (MU) on the one end of the continuum, to absolutely not available (NA) on the other. The remaining ten (10) items were designed to tap information on the effect of audio, visual and audio-visual materials on the academic performance of high-achieving students demanding the respondents to answer Yes or No.

To ensure that the instrument is adaptable for this research, it was pilot-tested on twenty respondents in two secondary schools in Ibadan. The two schools and the respondents were chosen by simple random method. The subjects used for the pilot study were however left out in the main study. In the course of the pilot study, the psychometric properties of the instrument were worked out. The instrument was validated using Cronbach Alpha. The high coefficient alpha recorded indicated acceptable degrees of internal consistency reliabilities for each of the sections in the questionnaire.

Five research assistants who were baccalaureate external degree research students were used for the administration of research questionnaires. The research proctors were provided prior training information as regards the administration of the instruments. Research questionnaires were administered and collected within forty five minutes.

Data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

Results

The result of the study was considered based on the research questions raised.

Research Question 1: Do instructional resources play a significant role in enhancing performance of high-achieving students in English Language?

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Table 1: **Significant role of instructional resources in enhancing performance of high-achieving students in English Language**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P	Remark
Academic Performance	75.4000	05.5600				
			50	-.145	.316	n.s.
Role of instructional resources	20.8600	1.5780				

N = population size, R = correlation, P = level of significance, n.s. = not significant

It is shown in the above table that there is a significant relationship between academic performance and role of instructional resources (r = -.145, N = 5-, P >.05). The result implies that instructional resources play a significant role in enhancing performance of high-achieving students in English Language.

Research Question 2: What is the effect of audio, visual and audio-visual materials on the academic performance of high-achieving students?

Table 2: **Effect of audio, visual and audio-visual materials on the academic performance of high-achieving students**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P	Remark
Academic Performance	75.4000	05.5600				
			50	.067	.643	n.s.
Audio, Visual and Audio-Visual Materials	10.9800	1.1693				

The above table indicates that there is a significant relationship between academic performance and audio, visual and audio-visual materials (r = .067, N = 50, P > .05). This in essence implies that audio, visual and audio-visual materials have positive effect on the academic performance of high-achieving students in English Language. In other words, such materials improve the academic performance of high-achieving students in English Language.

Discussion

Research Question 1: This study investigated whether or not instructional resources play a significant role in enhancing performance of high-achieving students in English Language. Results from this study showed that significant relationship existed between the role of instructional resources and academic performance of high-achieving students in English Language. The indication is that instructional resources play a significant role in enhancing performance of high-achieving students in English Language.

This result is consistent with the findings of (Quadri, Ogunjide and Oladejo, 2003) which showed that there is a positive correlation between the use of instructional resources and performance of high-achieving students in English Language. This result was not surprising since certain authors like (Moughamian, Rivera, Francis, 2009) also carried out researches on this issue and came up with similar findings. This result also corroborates with that of Sweller (2009) who discovered that technical instructional materials like technical non-projected aids, photography, tape recorder and radio enhance the performance of high-achieving students in English Language.

Research Question 2: This study also investigated the effect of audio, visual and audio-visual materials on the performance of high-achieving students in English Language. Results from this study also indicated that there is a significant relationship between academic performance of high-achieving students in English Language and the use of audio, visual and audio-visual materials. This implies that positive relationship exists between the use of audio, visual and audio-visual materials and the performance of high-achieving students in English Language.

This result is consistent with that of Maduewesi (2009) and Kachru (2010) which indicated that strong relationship existed between the use of audio, visual and audio-visual materials and performance of high-achieving students in English Language. The result of this study is also in line with that of Aremu (2008) who found out that audio, visual and audio-visual materials are instructional resources and instruments that promote learning of English Language in schools.

Conclusion

Teachers of English Language in secondary schools should come to understand their unique role in the use of instructional resources such that the outcome of manipulation of such materials in educating high-achieving students will improve the students' academic standards. Teachers should be aware that when

instructional resources are adequately used in teaching the students, the role such materials play include interest booster, knowledge transmitter, memory stimuliser, time saver and eye opener.

On the other hand, students, especially the high-achieving learners, should know that without their active involvement while instructional resources are being used by their teachers, learning may not be real and permanent. Therefore, students are encouraged to pay rapt attention in the class whenever instructional resources are used for them in order to maximize their performance in English Language.

In conclusion, it should be borne in mind that when instructional resources are adequately and appropriately used by the teachers and the students also pay attention in the class and outside the class (in a case of field trips) linguistic development is bound to be enhanced.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations would be made for the teachers, students, parents and school administrators/government.

Firstly, since teachers are the ones who use instructional resources to teach the students, whether such materials will have positive effect on the academic performance of the students depend on the proficiency with which the teachers handle the resources. It is therefore recommended that the teachers use the instructional resources with appropriate teaching methods that will bring about active involvement of the students.

It is also recommended that the students relate well with the instructional materials and pay rapt attention while they are being used by their teachers to impart knowledge. The resultant effect of this is that they will learn quickly and use their imagination correctly thereby making learning to become real and permanent.

Parents are also enjoined to contribute their own quota by ensuring that provisions are made for these instructional resources. They must also encourage their children to imbibe reading culture and form good studying habits both at home and in the school. Parents must also see to it that there should be no communication gap between the home and school.

Finally, the school administrators and the government must always have consultations with the experts or professionals in the design of appropriate instructional resources. In-service training programmes, workshops, seminars and conferences on the selection and use of instructional resources should be organized from time to time to enrich and update the knowledge of the English Language teachers in our schools.

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