



Efficacy of Peer-To-Peer Learning Strategy on English Language College Students' Social and Academic Achievement in Oyo and Osun States, Nigeria

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Abstract. Students learn best when they are actively involved in the process. Regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retained it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats. This research investigated the effect of peer-to-peer on social life and academic performance of English Language students. This study adopted a pre-test, post-test control group, quasi-experimental design, with The 2 X 2 X 2 factorial Matrix. The students were randomly assigned to be treated. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. Four instruments were used for data collection and these were English Language Achievement Test (ELAT), Peer-to-peer Guide (PPG), Social life Inventory (SLI) and Direct observation. Data collected were analyzed using both the descriptive and inferential statistics. Inferential statistics included computing analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) which was used in testing the hypotheses and differences among groups, using pre-test scores as covariates. The findings form the analysis of hypothesis (H_{01}) one revealed that there is a significant difference in the post social life between students exposed to peer-to-peer strategy and those exposed to conventional strategy ($F_{(1,79),065} P < 05$ ($S^2 = 0.739$)). It was recommended peer-to-peer strategy should be adopted in the teaching and learning of English language in schools, at all levels.

Keywords: Peer-To-Peer Learning Strategy, English Language, Social and Academic Achievement.

1. Introduction

In the traditional approach to teaching, most class time is in teaching while the students watching and listening. The students work individually on assignments, and inter-personal social life is discouraged. Such teacher-centered instructional

methods have repeatedly been found inferior to instruction that involves active learning, in which students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions of their own, discuss, explain, debate, or brainstorm during class. These old teacher-centered methods discourage social life among students who are supposedly to work together; most especially in English Language that have man's interactions as its core value and principle. There is no gainsaying in the fact that these methods impinge on the social life of students and invariably affect their academic performance. It also inhibits development of social skills in the students.

Effective and efficient learning is facilitated when differences among learners are recognized, and attempts are made to teach different students differently. Learning is facilitated topics are taught in depth rather than covered in breadth. Meaningful materials and meaningful tasks are learned more readily (Akinlaye, 1996). Students who work in collaborative groups also appear more satisfied with their classes. In peer-to-peer approach, students work in teams (groups) on problems and projects under conditions that ensure both positive interdependence and individual accountability (Smith, 2004).

However, with peer-to-peer, teaching and learning of English Language is influenced considerably by individual needs, aspirations, level of interest, taste, values and motivation in the environments. Learning is actively promoted by frequent repetition of response to a class of situation and limitation of events. Peer-to-peer and social relation develops general mutual concern and interpersonal trust among students and increases students' propensity for pro-social behaviour. This therefore suggests the overwhelming superiority of peer-to-peer and social relations for promoting students' achievement and productivity (Slavin 2003).

Cooper (2000) found that students who were initially prejudiced against one another evidenced greater interpersonal interactions in an experimental group setting than did students in competitive and individualistic settings. Students' learning goals may be structured to promote cooperative, competitive, or individualistic efforts. In contrast to cooperative situations, competitive situations are ones in which students work against each other to achieve a goal that only one or a few can attain. In competition there is a negative interdependence among goal achievements; students perceive that they can obtain their goals if and only if the other students in the class fail to obtain their goals. Norm-referenced evaluation of achievement occurs. The result is that either students work hard to do better than their classmates do, or they take it easy because they do not believe they have a chance to win. In individualistic learning situations, students work alone to accomplish goals unrelated to those of classmates and are evaluated on a criterion-referenced basis. Students' goal achievements are independent; students perceive that the achievement of their learning goals is unrelated to what other students do (Comeaux, 1991).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Active participation by a student in the learning process is better and preferable to inert and passive reception of knowledge when learning in the classroom. Research into the influence of peer-to-peer on both students' academic performance and their interaction patterns is essential at this stage of educational development. Previous researches have been limited to primary and post-primary institutions. To date, there has not yet been any evidence of this study on students of higher learning. This research investigated the effect of peer-to-peer on social life and academic performance of English Language students in Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and Osun State College of Education, Ilesha. The study has also examined the moderating effects of gender and age on students' social life and academic achievement.

Ho 1. There is no significant main effect of treatment on English Language students' students' social life and academic achievement in Oyo and Osun States.

Ho 2. There is no significant main effect of gender on English Language students' social life and academic achievement in Oyo and Osun States.

Ho 3. There is no significant main effect of age on English Language students' social life and academic achievement in Oyo and Osun States.

Ho 4. There is no significant interaction effect of treatment, Gender and Age on English Language students' social life and academic achievement in Oyo and Osun States.

2. Literature Review

Albert (2001) observed that the positive effects that peer-to-peer has on so many important outcomes made peer-to-peer one of the most valuable tools educators have. Educators fool themselves if they think well-meaning directives to "work together," "cooperate," and "be a team," will be enough to create cooperative efforts among group members. Placing students in groups and telling them to work together does not in and of itself result in cooperation. Not all groups are cooperative. Sitting in groups, for example, can result in competition at close quarters or individualistic effort with talking. To structure lessons so that students do in fact work cooperatively with each other requires an understanding of the components that make group work. Mastering the essential components of cooperation allows teachers to:

- Take existing lessons, curricula, and courses and structure them cooperatively.
- Tailor group lessons to meet the unique instructional circumstances and needs of the curricula, subject areas, and students.
- Diagnose the problems some students may have in working together and intervene to increase the effectiveness of the student learning groups.

The essential components of peer-to-peer are positive interdependence, face-to-face promotive interaction, individual and group accountability, interpersonal and small group skills, and group processing. Systematically structuring those basic elements into peer-to-peer situations helps to ensure cooperative efforts and enables the disciplined implementation of peer-to-peer of long-term success. Peer-to-peer is working together to accomplish shared goals. Within group activities, individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all other group members.

Merryfield (1986) asserted that peer-to-peer is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. The idea is simple. Class members are organized into small groups after receiving instruction from the teacher. They then work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it. Group efforts result in participants striving for mutual benefit so that all

group members gain from each other's efforts (your success benefits me and my success benefits you), recognizing that all group members share a common fate (we all sink or swim together here), knowing that one's performance is mutually caused by oneself and one's colleagues (we cannot do it without you), and feeling proud and jointly celebrating when a group member is recognized for achievement (we all congratulate you on your accomplishment).

In social cognitive theory, the peer group functions as an interdependent subsystem in gender differentiation not a socially disembodied one (Bandura, 1986; Bandura & Walters, 1959). Peers are both the product as well as the contributing producers of gender differentiation. Children learn at a very early age what gets socially linked to gender as well as the values and conditional outcome dependencies about the gendered conduct considered proper or inappropriate for their gender. The socially instilled orientations lead peers to instate the gender differentiation by favoring same-gender playmates and making sure that their peers conform to the conduct expected of their gender.

Once subgroups are formed, the group dynamics of mutual modeling, social sanctioning, activity structuring, and social and psychological territoriality come into play. Social influences from interdependent social systems are not only important in the initial subgroup formation, but in the maintenance of gender differentiation. The commercial stereotyping and exploitation of gender in the media pop culture, which holds great attraction for youth, is but one example of a promoting subsystem. Experimental and field studies graphically reveal that the group stereotyping dynamics can be activated through subgroup formation on the basis of even an arbitrary characteristic, socially invested with superior or inferior value (Elliott, 1977; Peters, 1971; Weiner & Wright, 1973).

Social learning theory has numerous implications for classroom use. These include:

- Students often learn a great deal simply by observing other people.
- Describing the consequences of behavior is can effectively increase the appropriate behaviors and decrease inappropriate ones. This can involve discussing with learners about the rewards and consequences of various behaviors.
- Modeling provides an alternative to shaping for teaching new behaviors. Instead of using shaping, which is operant conditioning,

modeling can provide a faster, more efficient means for teaching new behavior. To promote effective modeling a teacher must make sure that the four essential conditions exist; attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation.

- Teachers and parents must model appropriate behaviors and take care that they do not model inappropriate behaviors.
- Teachers should expose students to a variety of other models. This technique is especially important to break down traditional stereotypes.
- Students must believe that they are capable of accomplishing school tasks. Thus it is very important to develop a sense of self-efficacy for students. Teachers can promote such self-efficacy by having students receive confidence-building messages watch others be successful and experiences success on their own. .
- Teachers should help students set realistic expectations for their academic accomplishments. In general, in my class that means making sure that expectations are not set too low. However, sometimes the task is beyond a student's ability, example would be the cancer group.
- Self-regulation techniques provide an effective method for improving student behavior.

In peer-to-peer situations, there is a positive interdependence among students' goal attainments. Students perceive that they can reach their learning goals if and only if the other students in the learning group also reach their goals (Comeaux, 1991). A team member's success in creating a multi-media presentation on saving the environment, for example, depends on both individual effort and the efforts of other group members who contribute needed knowledge, skills, and resources. Not one group member will possess all of the information, skills, or resources necessary for the highest possible quality presentation.

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The first and most important element in structuring peer-to-peer is positive interdependence. Positive interdependence is successfully structured when group members perceive that they are linked with each other in a way that one cannot succeed unless everyone succeeds. Group goals and tasks, therefore, must be designed and communicated to students in ways that make them believe they sink or swim together. When positive interdependence is solidly structured, it highlights that:

- (a) each group member's efforts are required and indispensable for group success and
- (b) each group member has a unique contribution to make to the joint effort because of his or her resources and/or role and task responsibilities.

Doing so creates a commitment to the success of group members as well as one's own and is the heart of peer-to-peer. If there is no positive interdependence, there is no cooperation. (Ogundare, 2000).

Students need to do real work together in which they promote each other's success by sharing resources and helping, supporting, encouraging, and applauding each other's efforts to achieve. There are important cognitive activities and interpersonal dynamics that can only occur when students promote each other's learning. This includes orally explaining how to solve problems, teaching one's knowledge to others, checking for understanding, discussing concepts being learned, and connecting present with past learning. Each of those activities can be structured into group task directions and procedures. Doing so helps ensure that groups are both an academic support system (every student has someone who is committed to helping him or her learn) and a personal support system (every student has someone who is committed to him or her as a person). It is through promoting each other's learning face-to-face that members become personally committed to each other as well as to their mutual goals.

Furthermore, two levels of accountability must be structured into group lessons. The group must be accountable for achieving its goals and each member must be accountable for contributing his or her share of the work. To Odada (1988) individual accountability exists when the performance of each individual is assessed and the results are given back to the group and the individual in order to ascertain who needs more assistance, support, and

encouragement in learning. The purpose of peer-to-peer is to make each member a stronger individual in his or her right. Students learn together so that they subsequently can gain greater individual competency. Also, peer-to-peer is inherently more complex than competitive or individualistic learning because students have to engage simultaneously in taskwork (learning academic subject matter) and teamwork (functioning effectively as a group). Social skills for effective group work do not magically appear when group lessons are employed. Instead, social skills must be taught to students just as purposefully and precisely as academic skills. Leadership, decision-making, trust-building, communication, and conflict-management skills empower students to manage both teamwork and taskwork successfully. Since cooperation and conflict are inherently related, the procedures and skills for managing conflicts constructively are especially important for the long-term success of learning groups. (Brunfee, 1985).

Bora (2003) emphasized that social life is a dynamic, changing sequence of social actions between individuals (or groups) who modify their actions and reactions according to the actions by their interaction partner(s). In other words there are events in which people attach meaning to a situation, interpret what others are meaning, and respond accordingly. Social lives can be differentiated into:

- Accidental (also known as social contact) – not planned and likely not repeated. For example, asking a stranger for directions or shopkeeper for product availability.
- Repeated – not planned, bound to happen from time to time. For example, accidentally meeting a neighbour from time to time when walking on your street;
- Regular – not planned, but very common, likely to raise questions when missed. Meeting a doorman or a security guard every workday in your workplace, dining everyday in the same restaurant, etc.
- Regulated – planned and guided by customs or law, will definitely raise questions when missed. Interaction in a workplace (coming to work, staff meetings, playing a game), family, etc.

Many teachers have experimented with group work in their classrooms, but not always with complete success. Students learn best when they are motivated and fully engaged in the learning process, groups offer a way to achieve those outcomes, but poorly run groups can derail the learning process and turn students against group work. Fortunately, there is a sizable literature on the theory and practice of group

dynamics, offering research – and practice-based suggestions for getting the most out of student learning groups. In courses with well-run groups, students report increased motivation and greater satisfaction with the course. They also seem to learn more of the material and retain it longer than when they are taught via other methods. Finally, research clearly shows that group work promotes higher-order thinking and develops important interpersonal skills. (Slavin, 2003)

This study adopted a pre-test, post-test control group, quasi-experimental design, with The 2 X 2 X 2 factorial Matrix. Eighty-eight (88) College of Education English Language students were sampled from both Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and Osun State College of Education, Ilesha for the study. 200 level English Language students from both colleges were sampled. The students were randomly assigned to treated. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. The two groups totaling eighty-eight (88) constituted the sample of the study. Four instruments were used for data collection and these were English Language Achievement Test (ELAT), Peer-to-peer Guide (PPG), Social life Inventory (SLI) and Direct observation.

3. Methodology

Summary of the Application of the Treatments

STEPS	PEER-TO-PEER METHOD	CONTROL (LECTURE)
I. Teacher presentation	(i) Teachers took attendance; (ii) gave the topic; (iii) identified sub-topics; (iv) specified learning objectives (v) chalkboard summary – 20 min.	Teachers provided information. No teacher’s Guide
II. Strategy	(i) Teacher assigned students of different abilities to groups. (ii) Arranged class with students to facilitate interaction; (iii) Gave the questions for group discussion – 5 min. (v) monitored and provided assistance and clarification throughout the session.	i. Teacher assigned student to groups ii. Teacher presentation and demonstration.
III Student Activities	(i) Worked cooperatively in their learning groups; (ii) assumed assigned and rotated roles. (iii) discuss the questions and wrote group report – 35mins	
IV. Evaluation	i. Group reports presented and discussed in general class – 35 mins. ii. Teacher grade the reports iii. Weekly group competition – 60 mins iv. Achievement for groups recognized and rewarded	(i) A 40 minutes weekly test (ii) Achievement recognized and rewarded on an individual basis.
V. Assignment	The next topic given as assignment	The next topic given as assignment

3.1 Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using both the descriptive and inferential statistics. Inferential statistics included computing analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) which was used in testing the hypotheses and differences among groups, using pre-test scores as covariates. The Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) was employed to find out how each of the groups performed. The t-test and Scheffe Multiple Range test were used, where significant differences were observed, to determine the source of the significance. All the hypotheses were tested at P < .05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant main effect of treatment on English Language students’ students’ social life and academic achievement in Oyo and Osun States.

Table 1: Summary of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) on student’s social life Dependent Variable: Post social life

Source	Type III sum of Square	df	Means Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected Model	4048.789a	8	507.099	60.039	.000	.859
Intercept	593.493	1	593.493	70.407	.000	.471
PRENTWF	135.941	1	135.941	16.127	.000	.170
TRTMT	1888.745	1	1888.745	224.065	.000	.739
SEX	.400	1	.400	.047	.828	.001
AGE	.672	1	.672	.080	.778	.001
TRTM * SEX	.937	1	.937	.11	.740	.001
TRTMT * AGE	19.830	1	19.830	2.352	.129	0.29
SEX * AGE	7.741	1	7.741	.918	.341	.011
TRTMT * SEX * AGE	14.982	1	14.982	1.777	.186	.022
Error	665.927	79	8.429			
Total	18043.000	88				
Corrected Total	4714.716	87				

a. R Squared = .859 (adjusted R Squared = .844)

Table 1 revealed that there is a significant difference in the post social life between students exposed to Peer-to-peer strategy and those exposed to conventional strategy ($F_{(1,79)} = 224.065$ $P < .05$ ($\eta^2 = 0.739$). This implies that there is a significant effect of the treatment, therefore, H_{01} is rejected.

Table 2 below shows the magnitude of performance across the groups.

Table 2: Estimated Marginal Mean on Social life

Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Error
Peer-to-peer Method	38	4.764	.719
	50	18.04	.492
Gender			
Male	39	11.495	.597
Female	52	11.309	.612
Age (in Years)			
Below 20	19	22.841	.498
21 years & above	69	22.660	.229

Table 2 revealed that students exposed to peer-to-peer had the higher social life means score (18.04) than those in conventional strategy (4.764). The difference between them is said to be statistically significant.

H_0 2: There is no significant main effect of gender on English Language students’ social life and academic achievement in Oyo and Osun States.

Table 3: Summary of ANCOVA on Social life

Dependent Variable: Post social life

Source	Type III sum of Square	df	Means Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected Model	4442.376 ^a	8	555.297	161.208	.000	.942
Intercept	534.162	1	534.162	155.072	.000	.662
PREINTRT	57.957	1	57.957	57.957	.000	.176
TRTMT	2515.153	1	2515.153	730.172	.000	.902
SEX	5.179E-02	1	5.179E-02	0.15	.93	.000
AGE	.374	1	.374	.108	.743	.001
TRTM * SEX	2.966	1	2.966	.861	.356	.011
TRTMT * AGE	4.600	1	4.600	1.335	.251	.017
SEX * AGE	4.562	1	4.562	1.324	.253	.016
TRTMT * SEX * AGE	2.532	1	2.532	.735	.394	.009
Error	272.124	79	3.445			
Total	54352.000	88				
Corrected Total	4714.500	87				

a. r Squared = .942 9 (Adjusted R Square = .936)

Table 3 revealed that there is a significant main effect of treatment on students' interaction ($F_{(1,79)} = 730.172$; $P < .05$ ($\eta^2 = .902$). Therefore, H_{02} is rejected.

Table 4: Estimated Marginal Mean on students' social life

Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Error
Treatment			
Conventional Strategy	38	15.290	.454
Peer-to-peer Method	50	30.211	.309
Gender			
Male	39	22.717	.383
Female	52	22.784	.391
Age (in Years)			
Below 20	19	22.841	.498
21 years & above	69	22.660	.229

Table 4 above showed that the students exposed to peer-to-peer methods had the higher interaction mean score (30.211). Which is significantly more than those in conventional strategy (15.290).

H_{03} . There is no significant main effect of age on English Language students' social life and academic achievement in Oyo and Osun States.

Table 5: Summary of ANOVA on Academic Achievement

Department Variable: Post academic performance

Source	Type III sum of Square	df	Means Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1117.725 ^a	8	139.716	68.710	.000	.874
Intercept	330.560	1	330.560	162.565	.000	.673
PREINTRT	93.031	1	93.031	45.751	.000	.367
TRTMT	560.154	1	560.154	276.459	.000	.778
SEX	.458	1	.458	.225	.636	.003
AGE	.829	1	.829	.408	.525	.005
TRTM * SEX	.748	1	.748	.368	.546	.005
TRTMT * AGE	.737	1	.737	.362	.549	.005
SEX * AGE	8.354E-02	1	8.354E-02	.041	.840	.001
TRTMT * SEX * AGE	.420	1	.420	.206	.651	.003
Error	160.636	79	2.033			
Total	18864.000	88				
Corrected Total	1278.364	87				

a. r Squared = .874 (Adjusted R Square = .862)

Table 5 shows that there is a significant main effect of treatment on students' academic performance ($F_{(1,79)} = 276.459$, $P < .05$ ($\eta^2 = .778$). therefore, H_{03} is rejected.

Table 6: Estimated Marginal Means of students' academic performance

Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Error
Treatment			
Conventional Strategy	38	10.230	.350
Peer-to-peer Method	50	17.22	.234
Gender			
Male	36	13.827	.294
Female	52	13.625	.304
Age (in Years)			
Below 20	19	13.862	.384
21 years & above	69	13.591	.176

Table 6 above showed that students exposed to peer-to-peer had the higher achievement mean score (17.222) which is significantly more than those were exposed to conventional strategy (10.230).

Ho₂: There is no significant main effect of gender on student's social life. The analysis revealed that gender has no significant effect on students' social life ($F_{(1,79)} = 0.047$, $P < .05$ ($\eta^2 = .001$) and on students' academic achievement ($F_{(1,79)} = 0.225$; $P > .05$ ($\eta^2 = .003$). Therefore, Ho₂ is rejected.

Ho₃: There is no significant main effect of age on students' social life. The analysis show that age has no significant main effect ($F_{(1,79)} = 0.08$; $P > .05$ ($\eta^2 = .001$) and students' academic achievement ($F_{(1,79)} = 0.408$; $P > .05$ ($\eta^2 = .005$). Therefore, Ho₃ is not rejected.

Ho₄: There is no significant interaction effect of gender and age on students' social life. Table 5 revealed that the 2 – ways interaction effect is not significant on social life ($F_{(1,79)} = 0.918$; $P > .05$; ($\eta^2 = .011$) and students' academic performance ($F_{(1,79)} = 0.041$; $P > .05$; ($\eta^2 = .005$). Therefore, Ho_{6a} is not rejected.

The findings from the analysis of hypothesis (Ho₁) one revealed that there is a significant difference in the post social life between students exposed to peer-to-peer strategy and those exposed to conventional strategy ($F_{(1,79)} = 0.065$, $P < .05$ ($\eta^2 = 0.739$). The students exposed to peer-to-peer methods had the higher interaction means score (30.211); which is significantly more than those in the conventional strategy (15.290). These findings corroborated those by most of the previous researches on the subject; (Barnes et al, 2000, Ogundare 2000 and Merryfield (1986). They, therefore, lend support to the basic assumption of the peer-to-peer method.

These findings lend further support to earlier findings on the significance of peer-to-peer methods over and above the conventional of traditional method students' performances were seen to have improved better under one or more (Adeyemi, 2002, Amosun 1999; Aremu 1997; Bennett and Dunne, 1992; Cohen 1994a; Essan 1999; Panitz 2000, Sharan, 1999; Slavin & Hurley, 2000, Veean, 2001).

In the findings of Adeyemi (2002) and Amosun (2002), variations of the peer-to-peer. In his study, Esan (1999) found that mathematical problem solving skills were best enhanced by cooperative learning Alebiosu (1998) also found a significant main effect of treatment involving two models of

cooperative learning on the achievement of students in chemistry.

What seems evident from the results in this current study is that peer-to-peer has a greater potential for effective communication and interaction in the classroom. This is important because peer-to-peer offers the learners as individuals and together in groups, the unique opportunity to read, accept and internalize the basic English Language education concepts. It is therefore possible for the learners to work, within this approach, at this one pace, master the subject as dictated by the accuracy of their own responses and eventually carry such knowledge and experience to their various groups for the benefits of the other group members. The approach equally allows learners the knowledge of immediate feedback, which serves as a great motivation in propelling learners to want to learn more.

Furthermore, peer-to-peer seems to have offered the subject a great deal of motivation for effective learning. Behavioral psychologists such as Skinner (1985), Crowder (1965) have emphasized the importance of learners' active participation in the learning activity and the profound usefulness of immediate feedback. Skinner (1961; 1985) notes that a correct response needs to be reinforced in the shortest possible interval of time, and that such reinforcement encourages students to continue in their efforts. It has postulated that working in groups could facilitate the satisfaction of psychological and social needs. Odi (1980) believes that one Fanivar (1994) found, in group work, giving and receiving answers with explanation help to obtain superior argument, which brings about change in attitude. This is a pointer to the existence of positive interdependence among group members which is an essential feature of peer-to-peer.

Studies carried out on programmed learning activities have shown that learners tend to have positive attitudes towards learning programmes and that there exist a strong, positive correlation between learners' attitudes towards learning programmes and their achievement scores (Abimbade, 1983; Ajiboye, 1996, Kalejaiye, 1971). Kalejaiye (1971) reported a positive correlation between attitude score towards the new Mathematics and achievement score on the same topic. Abimbade (1983) also reported a favourable attitude towards learning, thereby leading, to a more effective cognitive achievement of the learners.

That this has a very serious implication for the social life and academic performance in English Language

Education in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized. English Language like other social science is a value-laden subject which allows for individual learners' decisions that affect learners' decision making and choice. Ajiboye (1996) further observed that if learners are then exposed to salient facts relation to English Language concepts through active participation (peer-to-peer), they will better be able to make informed and reasoned decision after due consideration, of the alternatives as presented to them in a more cognitive framework.

Another inference that could be drawn in the classroom peer-to-peer is that groups of different size and composition could be formed either by the teachers or by the students themselves. Where group members evolve by choice of the learners, with time, the groups would tend towards heterogeneity and improved performance on the part of group members. This proposition is based on the findings of Bennett and Dunne (1992),

These studies based their arguments on research evidence that informal groups composed by learners are usually heterogeneous or mixed ability, and that learners in the groups learn better in a natural company of others they socialize with. In such groups also, learners felt secured, relaxed and confident. In spite of the difference in their abilities, the learners in such groups readily interact and are willing to seek help from peers without being ashamed and offer assistance without a feeling of superiority. In the groups, the social, psychological and academic-based needs are interwoven and catered for. (Wesseller, 1982).

Where groups are formed by the teachers like it was done in this study, the groups could still achieve a lot. The position taken in this study in respect of formation of groups by the teacher was in line with that taken by Slavin (1996). Slavin (1996) believes that it is expedient for the teacher to use ability as the criterion for peer-to-peer rather than sex, personality, or social-economic background. This position will enable learners of varying ability levels (high, average and low) to interact, socialize, solve problems together and take common decision. This position, too, created positive interdependence among the groups in this study and led to the satisfaction of the social, psychological and academic needs of the learners. The findings of this study further showed that the formation and working in small groups led to improved human relations and social life. Changes in attitudes and feelings towards human beings as such were one of the most common and most important of the outcomes of peer-to-peer. Students sat in-groups

sitting down with other students to meet as humans, not just as other isolated entities. Each participating student in the groups has come to reorient himself to the whole business of being human among other human.

The students were able to gain new meaning from the idea that all persons are equal. The peer-to-peer and the discussions that went on in the groups enabled the students to see equality in that all had contributions to make, all had unique experience, to contribute, all had problems, which must be solved, and all were capable of spending themselves on the problem of others. These findings agree with earlier findings on the influence of peer-to-peer on both cognitive and affective outcomes by Kelly (1987); Panitz (1997); Sheppard (1978) Slavin and Hurly (2000). These earlier findings all pointed to the recognition of the worth of all individuals, the students would not have trusted, as indeed a new insight for many. The students leaned to work more effectively with other people, a situation which made them more sensitive to the necessity of having a decent for the opinions of others. It was, indeed, a practice of domestication in individual differences.

One possibility that could not be overlooked in these heterogeneous groups was the existence of various internal wrangling. This study was not able to research these problems. Even where individual differences were greatly catered for in the groups, Muth (1982) was of the view that it will be unwise to neglect other aspects of individuality that may result in attitude of evidence. When a member is not happy being in the group with a particular member, misunderstanding may arise which can affect the achievement of the individual, other members or the group as a whole. And where the individual feels insecure in the group, cooperation becomes a ruse, not a reality. This, then, weakens group cohesion.

Each member of the groups was given the opportunity to play the role of a leader and a follower at one time or the other. This, in a way motivated the students to support their groups, and deviant behaviours which could have marred the achievement of group goals were prevented. The changing of roles in groups helped to facilitate social skills which Slavin (1996) saw as an essential part peer-to-peer. This also helped the students to communicate effectively, provide leadership for group work, build, maintains and sustain trust among group members and meaningfully resolve conflicts within the group. The end product of these could have been the construct of social engineering in the groups.

This study made attempts to ensure that group processing was made specific through the involvement of all members of the groups in each discussion time as well as the maintenance of effective working relations, which the teachers' supervision ensured. However, on the basis of this contributing quality which, in the words of Johnson and Johnson (1994) are keys to successful group processing, the groups in this study may not have sufficiently achieved much in the form of group processing.

Group also afforded students the opportunity to face common problems collectively. Human beings are known to confront problems and issues in their environment as both individuals and as units in the groups. Individuality, which could strain our relationship with the environment should everyone do things individually was reduced to minimal level. In effect, the findings of this study in respect of group-based efforts are of sublime importance to understanding and using the environment in a sustainable manner (Baexz, 1987).

4. Recommendations

These findings are pointers to the urgent need for efforts in Nigerian classrooms to be concentrated on invigorating this approach, particularly in the teaching and learning of English Language. The dearth of teachers, the apparent lack of adequate teachers' preparation in our schools, can be successfully overcome with the adoption of the peer-to-peer method which will result in students' self-learning. It now behooves on relevant Government agencies and indeed all stakeholders in the education industry to prepare various peer-to-peer modules on selected English Language concepts. The results of this study have proved a basis for the advocacy and use of the peer-to-peer strategies in English Language in Nigeria.

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