
Influence of Scaffolding Instructional Strategy on Retention of English Language Concepts among Secondary School Students in Jigawa State, Nigeria

¹Assoc. Prof. Samira Abdullahi & ²Usamatu Mansur, Ph.D

¹Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Northwest University, Kano State, Nigeria

²Department of Education, Sule Lamido University, Jigawa State, Nigeria

Email: usamatu.mansur@slu.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effects of scaffolding instructional strategies on secondary schools students' retention of English language learning, a quasi-experimental design using pretest, post-test and post- posttest strategy was employed. Two (2) research objectives were used to guide the study. The population comprises 36,154 Secondary School (SSII) students across Jigawa State, Nigeria. The sample of 116 students was utilized using multi stage sampling technique. "English Language Performance and Retention Test (ELPRT)" was used as primary instrument for data collection. The researcher developed instrument and later be validated by the experts in English language, curriculum studies and tests and measurement. The data collected was analyzed using independent sample t-test for hypotheses 1 and Two-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for hypothesis 2 at 0.5 level of significance. The finding revealed that scaffolding instructional strategies was found to have significant effects retention in English language learning. The finding also revealed that there is no significance difference in retention between male female students. The study therefore concluded that, scaffolding instructional strategies is effective interventions that can be utilized in improving retention in learning English language in secondary schools of Jigawa State. Based on these findings, it is recommended that secondary schools educators and other education stakeholders should device the means of employing the use of scaffolding instructional strategies in teaching English language in schools.

Keywords: Scaffolding Instruction, Learning Retention, English Teaching Methods

INTRODUCTION

The importance of English language in the Nigerian education system is undeniable, therefore, teaching of English is a fundamental concept within the educational process; though, the methods and approaches employed cannot uniformly apply to all subjects under identical conditions using the same resources. Effective teaching of English requires the careful selection of methods that aligns with the specific nature of the subject being taught, to ensure that the instructional

approach is in tandem with the objectives and contents for effective learning outcomes. Bada and Jita (2023) asserted that achieving classroom objectives necessitates the adoption of effective teaching methods that facilitate meaningful learning, thereby promoting observable and sustained behavioral changes in learners. Similarly, Killen (2023) emphasize that the most valuable legacy a nation can offer to its future generations is a robust education system, achievable through the use of

appropriate and efficient teaching methodologies.

Teaching method is a roadmap for presenting contents to be learnt based on the selected approaches. Hence, it is simply translating an approach into instructional system, based on the objectives, contents and types of tasks (Hakim, 2020). Utami (2020) conceptualizes teaching methods as systematic processes of delivering instructional materials to learners, designed to achieve specified goals and predetermined learning objectives. In this context, teaching methods serve as the primary means of effectively communicating the content embedded within the curriculum. The selection of an appropriate method must align with the subject matter to be studied to facilitate optimal learning outcomes. Consequently, teaching methods hold a significant role in the teaching and learning process, stressing the necessity for teachers to possess comprehensive knowledge of diverse instructional strategies as a critical mechanism for promoting positive impacts on their students' learning experiences.

Teaching methods can generally be categorized into teacher-centered and learner-centered approaches, each with distinct characteristics and implications for the learning process. Teacher-centered methods emphasize the teacher's role as the primary source of knowledge, where instruction is often lecture-based, and students are passive recipients of information. This approach is structured and allows for the efficient delivery of content but may limit student engagement and critical thinking.

In contrast, learner-centered methods focus on the active involvement of students in their own learning. Here, teachers act as

facilitators, guiding learners through problem-solving, discussions, and hands-on activities that promote critical thinking and collaboration.

Aytac (2021) highlighted that the prevalent procedures employed by many teachers, particularly in senior secondary schools, rely heavily on teacher-centered approaches. These methods, characterized by teacher dominance in the learning space and limited learner participation, often render students passive recipients of knowledge. Consequently, such approaches are deemed ineffective, as they fail to make a significant impact on learners' academic performance. In contrast, Hanif (2020) emphasized the importance of transitioning to learner-centered methods, where teachers assume the role of facilitators. This involves actively supporting learners during classroom activities by guiding discussions, clarifying instructions, providing appropriate resources, and promoting collaborative learning. Thus, building on the emphasis of learner-centered approaches, effective classroom interaction and scaffolding teaching strategies remained critical for enhancing language instruction.

Scaffolding, as described by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, involves the teacher providing temporary support to learners to bridge the gap between their current abilities and learning objectives. In language instruction, scaffolding can take the form of modeling correct usage, breaking tasks into manageable steps, offering feedback, and gradually transferring responsibility to learners as their proficiency improves. These supports may include resource utilization, compelling task, templates and guides on the development of cognitive and social skills. Instructional scaffolding could be employed through modeling a task, giving advice or providing coaching (Rehan & Yasmeen, 2021). The scaffolding teaching approach

promotes the development of autonomous learning strategies by enhancing learners' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills, which are essential for achieving meaningful learning outcomes in English language studies.

As learners engage with these strategies, retention of language instruction becomes increasingly effective. Scaffolding, through targeted support and incremental challenges, ensures that learners can internalize and retain new language skills (Gibbons, 2021). Retention in learning reflects how effectively acquired knowledge is maintained and recalled over time in learners' memory (Gordani & Khajavi, 2020). It is fundamentally tied to the mastery of the concepts being studied, which forms the basis of long-term retention. Students' ability to retain learned material serves as a key indicator of a nation's educational progress and development (Yu, Gao, & Wang, 2021). However, despite its importance, retention often receives insufficient attention from teachers and other stakeholders within the educational process (Murniati, Susilo, & Listyorini, 2023). Kula (2020) posits that low retention rates are frequently linked to inadequate mastery of concepts, which can be worsened by poorly designed assessments and ineffective teaching methods. In the context of English language instruction, the use of scaffolding strategies might help in addressing these issues by promoting deeper understanding and long-term retention of language skills, thus enhancing students learning outcomes.

Problem Statement

The performance of Nigerian students in English language examinations has been a cause of concern, with a particularly alarming trend of failure in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). In Jigawa State, the

performance of public senior secondary school students in English language exams has seen a significant decline between 2016 and 2019, with only a marginal improvement in 2020 and 2021.

The National Examination Council (2025) annual statistics report shows a continuous decline in achieving five credits, including English language, which further worsens the educational challenges in the state. Researchers like Bada and Jita (2023), Utami (2020), and Aytac (2021) asserted that a number of factors have contributed to the decline in students' performance in the English language. These may include a limited number of qualified English teachers, inadequate use of student-centered instructional strategies, among others. To address the situation, the Jigawa State Government took several measures, including withdrawing its registration with WAEC, increasing the number of teachers through the J-Teach program and later confirming their appointment, transferring teachers with higher qualifications from the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) to higher secondary schools. Despite the government's efforts, the problem of poor academic performance in English language persists. This gap indicates that existing measures have not been sufficiently effective in addressing the root causes of poor performance. There is a need for more effective, research-driven instructional strategies that promote active student engagement and deeper learning, which could lead to improved retention and academic outcomes.

This research suggests that incorporating more effective students centered instructional strategies such as scaffolding instructional strategy, could significantly enhance students' learning outcomes in English language. Therefore, this research

seeks to investigate the effects of scaffolding instructional strategy on senior secondary schools students' academic performance and retention of English language learning, to identify solutions that will improve students' outcomes and contribute to the development of English language proficiency in the state.

Objectives of the study:

This research achieved the following objectives:

1. To find out the influence of scaffolding instructional strategy on the learning retention of secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State.
2. To explore the influence of scaffolding instructional strategy on learning retention of male and female senior secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the influence of scaffolding instructional strategy on learning retention of secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State?
2. What are the differences in the effect of scaffolding instructional strategy on learning retention between male and female senior secondary school students in English language?

Research Hypotheses

From the above research questions raised, the following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of scaffolding instructional strategy on the learning retention of secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the effect of scaffolding instructional

strategy on the learning retention between male and female senior secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State.

METHODOLOGY

The study used quasi-experimental design involving the population of 36,154 SSII students from varying socio-economic backgrounds in all public secondary schools across the ten (10) education zones of Jigawa State, Nigeria. One hundred and sixteen (116) students were drawn from two secondary schools located at different education zones.

Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to ensure representativeness and feasibility. First stage, cluster sampling for dividing large populations into geographically proximate groups was employed in identifying different education zones across Jigawa State. In the second stage, purposive was used to select two public senior secondary schools from different education zones which will be chosen based on criteria such as accessibility, availability of qualified English language teachers, and previous performance in English language subjects. In the third stage, systematic random sampling was used in selecting one intact SSII class from each of the chosen schools, each class within the selected schools has an equal and independent chance of being selected.

The study utilized test instrument titled "*English Language Performance and Retention Test (ELPRT)*" as the primary instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by subject matter experts. For the reliability, a pilot testing was conducted using a split half method with thirty 30 students from a randomly selected government secondary school outside sampled schools area. Treatment plans was designed for the experimental

group to outline the structured teaching approach employed during the intervention. Researcher and the research assistants was used English language lesson periods for SSII in the sampled schools to pre-test the selected students using the designed teacher-made test. The aim is to ascertain the students' prior knowledge on the topics. After

administration of the six weeks treatment and the post test, an interval of two weeks was set before the administration of the retention test (post-posttest). This retention test was generated from the same instrument after reordering some items. The whole data collection procedures lasted for six (6) weeks.

RESULTS

The following section present a result of this study based on the research question

1. What is the effect of scaffolding instructional strategies and the conventional lecture method on the learning retention of secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State?

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the effect of scaffolding instruction and the conventional lecture method on the learning retention

	Teaching strategies	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
post-post test scores	scaffolding strategy	55	39.8545	9.77794	1.31846
	conventional method	61	19.3279	6.83062	.87457

Table 1 shows the mean difference between the post posttest scores of the 2 groups where the first group which is scaffolding strategy has a higher score (M=39.85, SD=9.78) while conventional method has a

lower mean score of (M=19.33, SD=6.83). This indicated that students in classroom interaction method are statistically more retentive than other conventional teaching method

Table 2: Descriptive statistics on the effects scaffolding instruction and conventional teaching method on the learning strategy of male and female

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Male	30.0377	13.47785	53
Female	28.2381	13.08128	63
Total	29.0603	13.23650	116

Table 2 above shows the mean difference between the posttest scores of the 2 groups, male and female where male has a mean score of 30.04 while female has a mean

score of 28.24. This indicated that scaffolding instruction strategy is a gender friendly across all groups

The following section present a result of this study based on the research hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the effect of scaffolding instructional strategies and the conventional lecture method on the learning retention of secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State.

Table 3: Independent sample t-test of the effect of scaffolding instructional strategy and the conventional lecture method on learning retention

	N	Mean	Std. D	df	t-value	P-value
Scaffolding Instruction	55	39.85	9.78	114	13.21	0.000
Conventional method	61	19.33	6.83			

The result from Table 3 showed that students taught English language using the conventional lecture method had lower scores (M=19.97, SD=7.68) than those taught using a scaffolding instructional strategy (M=37.16, SD=12.06). An independent t-test found this pattern

significant because the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between scaffolding instructional strategy and the conventional lecture method on retention of secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State is rejected.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the effect of scaffolding instructional strategies on the learning retention between male and female senior secondary school students in English language.

Table 4: Two-way ANOVA on the effects of scaffolding instruction and conventional teaching method on the learning retention of male and female

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	93.224 ^a	1	93.224	.530	.468
Intercept	97754.190	1	97754.190	555.661	.000
Gender	93.224	1	93.224	.530	.468
Error	20055.353	114	175.924		
Total	118111.000	116			
Corrected Total	20148.578	115			

a. R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = -.004)

Table 4 shows no statistically significant difference in the mean score of scaffolding instructional strategies on the learning retention between males and females ($p = .468$). Therefore, this research fail to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the effect of scaffolding instructional strategy on the learning retention

between male and female senior secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State.

Summary of major Findings

In summary, this study institutes the following outcome;

1. Based on the finding from the study, the result shows that there is a statistically significant influence between scaffolding instruction strategy and learning retention.
2. Based on the finding from the study, the result shows that there is weak, non-significant influence of gender difference in students' learning retention in scaffolding instruction strategy class.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the effect of scaffolding instructional strategies on senior secondary schools English language students' retention in Jigawa State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that there is significant influence of scaffolding instructional strategy on students' retention in Jigawa State. This finding tallies with the prior studies of Boris (2020), Onah & Achufusi (2022) whom stressed that scaffolding teaching approach promotes a deeper level of learning than many other teaching strategies and this study showed a significant correlation with their studies.

Going back to the research work, Lev Vygotsky (1930), highlights the significance of social interaction, collaboration, and scaffolding in fostering cognitive and linguistic development and this finding also indicates its significant effect on students' retention.

Going through the empirical study, this research tallies with the finding of Aslam, et al., (2017), Mahan (2020), Onah, (2022) – Scaffolding teaching approach group achieved better than their counterpart in terms of retention. Again, Popoola, (2021), Alake and Ogunseemi (2023) – Scaffolding improved students reading, writing and spoken skills Filgona and Sakiyo (2020) revealed that students exposed through the application of scaffolding models had better

achievement in retention compared with their peers and gender had no effect on their achievement when exposed to scaffolding model.

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, result from study reveals that, 1 and 2 were rejected, indicating the presence of statistically significant influences of Classroom interaction teaching approach on students' academic performance and retention in English Language learning. While, Hypotheses 3 and 4 were retained, meaning there is no statistically gender difference in the academic performance and learning retention between male and female students in learning English language.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result found from this study which portrays the effect of scaffolding instructional strategy over the conventional lecture method on learning retention, it is recommended that

1. Teachers should be using scaffolding instructional strategy to maintain the student learning retention.
2. Result from this research failed to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the effect of scaffolding instructional strategy on the learning retention between male and female senior secondary school students in English language in Jigawa State, therefore it is recommended to teachers and school managers to be utilizing this teaching method to maintain the non-discrimination in learning retention between the gender students.
3. It is recommended to carry out a further research with aim of exploring additional instructional strategies. There is also a need to explore additional factors influencing English language learning, assess the role of learner-centered strategies in student success

and consider institutional and contextual challenges in teaching methodologies.

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