

Enabling the enablers: Effect of peer tutoring approach on scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates in Delta State University, Abraka

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Abstract

The study explored enable the enablers: effect of peer tutoring approach on the scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates in Delta State University, Abraka. The study, an experimental study employed twenty-six (26) French language undergraduates. The instrument utilised for this study was a test instrument named “French Scholarly Learning Outcomes Test (FSLOT). Data were analysed utilising mean statistics and ANOVA. The result of the study proved that peer tutoring approach boosted the scholarly learning outcomes of undergraduates in French language; peer tutoring approach enhanced the scholarly learning outcomes of undergraduates of French language notwithstanding their sex. In conclusion, the study established that peer tutoring approach boosted the scholarly learning outcomes of undergraduates in French language, if applied in French language instruction, would increase undergraduates scholarly learning outcomes; the use and adoption of peer tutoring approach for instruction in French language would enhance the scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates notwithstanding their sex. It was recommended that activity-based approaches should be integrated for instruction into the French language curriculum in tertiary institutions, French teachers/lecturers should instruct undergraduates with peer tutoring approach to aid the development and improvement in French language; peer tutoring approach should be utilised in French language instruction and learning regardless of their sex.

Keywords: 1.Enabling the enablers; 2.peer tutoring; 3.French language; 4 undergraduates; 5.French language undergraduates; 6.Scholarly Learning Outcomes; 7.Delta State University.

Introduction

Teaching is only effective when the process used brings about a desirable change in the behaviour of the learner. Teaching should not only stimulate students’ interest in the subject but also enhance their performance in examinations. To achieve this paramount goal, there is need for the use of innovative and result oriented methods. Teaching and learning in the 21st century has evolved from the conventional method to more innovative methods. The role of innovative and result oriented instructional approaches in the teaching process cannot be over emphasized. Udo and Udo (2020) asserted that the role and place of a teacher in the twenty-first century is to guide students in dealing with immense contents, to develop the skills and understanding necessary to function effectively in a responsible way and to help students to develop their personal learning styles. According to Iroriteraye-Adjekpovu and Osimala (2020), the type of teaching that is required for global learning in the twenty-first century is that which

will encourage students active participation where they learn at their own pace, space and interact with both human and material resources to discover facts for themselves leading to meaningful learning.

Innovative/activity-based approaches are teaching methods that try to make classroom instruction more student-centred. As a result, the paradigm shifts from chalk and talk to activity-based/student-centred approach is on. As a method, innovative methods consider how children develop their own meanings from contents rather than merely copying them (Ribhi, 2017). Students must be provided the opportunity to develop their knowledge of French language through the combination of experience, materials, and ways of thinking. As a methodological fundamental shift, innovative methods of which the peer tutoring teaching approach is one, is already attracting considerable interest. Different authors appear to define student centred teaching differently, with some equating it with active learning and others interpreting it more broadly to include active learning, choice in learning, and a shift in authority from the teacher to the student (Kabutu, Oloyede & Bandele, 2015).

The teaching approach teachers used currently appears to be discipline-centred, teacher-centred teaching, and the student learning is just passive surface learning (Samuel, 2017). A wealth of evidence has been reported to support the concept that under the discipline-centred teaching, the needs, concerns, and requirements of teachers and students are not considered because the subject content is driven by, and depends mainly on the disciplinary content that must be presented. French language instruction requires attention to both the content of the new approach to the teaching-learning process. Undergraduates' performance in examinations appears to be discouraging; prompting researchers to investigate the causes of the poor performance and how to improve on the teaching-learning process.

The objectives of the French language curriculum in the National Policy of Education, is to promote national and international business; foster national and international development and to preserve the local languages and cultures (FRN, 2014). To achieve the stated objectives, there is a need for an instructional approach that engages the students actively. The use of activities to the teaching of French language, therefore, be a rule rather than an option, if we hope to produce graduates that would be able to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and competence needed to achieve the stated objectives. One of the ideal instructional approaches in which students can participate actively while learning is the peer-tutoring approach.

Peer tutoring should be viewed or considered as one form of peer collaboration under cooperative approaches to instruction. It entails well structured, guided and formalized peer interaction to promote and facilitate scholarly learning outcomes (Ashlamel & Iwanger, 2018). It's a teaching approach in which student exchange roles during tutoring session, both giving and receiving scholarly assistance while the teacher supervises rather than participates in the intervention. The students dialogue among themselves as each learner acts in response to another. The dialogue is usually structured by the use of four strategies, sometimes known as the Fabulous Four (Oczkus, 2013), which are predicting, clarifying, questioning and summarizing.

Teaching approach has bearing on the students learning outcomes. The attention on the introduction of innovative or students centred approaches to the teaching of French language, is to find alternative means to effectively deliver contents of the subject with the overall objective of enhancing both efficient teaching and learning and student learning outcome. Therefore, the approaches an instructor uses for instruction has the potentials in enhancing or reducing learning outcome. Students scholarly learning outcome can improve if the right teaching approach to instruction is employed. Against this background, this study explored the effect of peer tutoring as an activity-based approach on the scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates in Delta State University, Abraka.

RQs

1. Will there be any effect of peer tutoring approach on the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka?
2. Will the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka instructed using peer tutoring approach vary on the basis of gender?

Hypotheses

Ho₁: There will be no significant effect of peer tutoring approach on the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka.

Ho₂: French language undergraduates instructed using peer tutoring approach will not significantly vary in their scholarly learning outcome on the basis of sex?

Literature Review

Peer Tutoring approach is one that promotes active engagement for all learners in the classroom. It provides all learners the opportunity to excel academically and achieve most educational goals. Peer tutoring approach is characterized by specific role taking in most cases. Peer tutoring refers to students working in pairs to help one another learn material or practice a scholarly task. Peer tutoring works best when students of different or varying ability levels work together. During a peer tutoring assignment, it is common for the teacher to have students switch roles partway through, so the tutor becomes the tutee. This technique offers the chance for both students to have a deeper understanding of the subject matter being studied because teaching a concept to someone else helps one's own learning to be extended. In Peer tutoring at every point, students have the role of tutor(s) while the others are in the role of tutee(s). Broadly speaking peer tutoring places high focus on curriculum content guided by specific procedures for interaction. These interactions are usually guided by the provision of structured materials amongst which a degree of student choice may be available. Student's tutors usually undergo training which is either specific or generic or even both (Topping, 2017).

In addition, peer tutoring approach is a type of teaching approach in which students are instructed by their peers, who have been trained and supervised by the classroom teacher. Peer tutoring involves having students work in pairs, with another student of same age or grade. Peer tutoring approach to instruction, is an extremely powerful way to improve student academic, social, and behaviour. Peer tutoring works for six reasons: first, students have more opportunities to respond to academic material. In other words, they have more opportunities to practice what they are learning by talking about what they are learning (Ezenwosu&Nworgu, 2013).

Ward et al. (1998) concluded that peer-tutoring is an effective instructional approach especially for students learning and developing new skills. Peer tutoring involves pairing of the students by the teacher based on their ability level. It involves students playing the status of a teacher/tutor and a tutee and applying the principles and practices of one who teaches also learns (Tella 2013). Peer tutoring, according to Tella (2013), can be that approach with a great promise for achieving the complex academic and social needs of students with diverse learning abilities in regular classes without affecting others in the class, believing that when students supplement teachers efforts to help assist low achievers in large class sizes which is typically in the country's educational settings. Peer tutoring is such approach that provides small group, individualized that is intensive, focusing instructions that allow students an opportunity for active responding and immediate student feedback. In Peer tutoring groups, an instructor or teacher groups students into dyads, matching higher and lower performing students in pairs. (Romano & Walker 2010).

Forms of Peer Tutoring Approach

Allen (2011), thus categories them as follows:

- Cross - age tutoring
- Cross - ability tutoring
- Reciprocal tutoring

Cross age tutoring occurs when older student act as tutors to younger students. For instance, undergraduate 2nd year tutoring undergraduate 1st year, while cross ability tutoring occurs when student with a greater mastery of the subject matter serving as a tutor to a less bright student (tutee). Seo and Kim (2019), believed that cross age and cross ability tutoring are used interchangeably in the research ambit. To him, age and ability are highly correlated variable and cross ability tutoring often suits most studies. Peer tutoring occurs when students of same age or ability inter switch between tutor and tutees.

Studies on Peer-tutoring Approach and Scholarly Learning Outcome

Several studies have explored the effect of peer-tutoring approach on students' scholarly learning outcomes in different fields. For instance, Hartman (2010) conducted a study and reported that peer tutoring enhanced students' scholarly learning outcome. Wawrzynski, LoConte and Straker (2011) also asserts that peer tutoring serves as an effective way to improve self-esteem in students. Peer tutoring promotes intellectual and social engagement amongst peers. Comfort (2011) observed that scholarly learning outcome across different assessment/evaluation methods, is enhanced through peer tutoring, and benefits both the tutees. This report is agreed with that of Whitman (2012) and Annis (2013) who observed or proved that peer tutoring improved students scholarly learning outcome than students who were no exposed to peer tutoring. Comfort and McMahon (2014) found that peer tutoring facilitated learning and the sharing of unique and new ideas from different perspectives. Cofer(2022) evaluated peer tutoring effect on students' performance. The study showed that students exposed to peer-tutoring performed better than control group.

Lumpe and Staver (2015), examined the effect of peer collaboration approach on high school students. The result demonstrated that the peer tutoring set/group improved their scholarly learning outcome than the subjects working alone. Topping (2017), carried out a research work focusing on cross-age peer tutoring in which older students tutor younger ones. The general idea was for the older tutors stimulating the tutees knowledge construction and self-directed learning during online task-based interaction. The result proved that peer tutors often provide organisational support which facilitates tutees knowledge construction and concentrate on improving on learning and achievement.

Methodology

Design

The quasi-experimental design was utilized for the study.

Sample Selection

The study sample comprised 26 French language undergraduates drawn from two levels (year 2 and year 3 levels). The two levels were carefully chosen using the judgemental (Purposive) sampling method. Intact classes were used as both the experimental group and control group. The peer tutoring approach group had 13 undergraduates, whereas the control group had 13 undergraduates, totalling 26 students (9 male and 17 female). Year 4 were used as tutee for the study.

Instrument

French Scholarly Learning Outcome Test (FSLOT) was used as instrument to measure undergraduates scholarly learning outcome. The FSLOT is a two-part instrument. Part A comprised information on students' bio-data, while Part B contained 20 multiple-choice items of one right answer with three (3) wrong answers. The item content was from course contents and were carefully selected from previous semesters computer-based examinations, though adapted by the researcher. A test blueprint was utilized to construct the FSLOT. The reliability index of the FSLOT was 0.82 with the aid of Cronbach alpha statistics.

Experiment Procedure

The experimental/treatment and the control groups were guided by French languages lecturers in the selected levels. The FSLOT was administered as a pretest prior to the experiment, and posttest after experimentation was given to both groups. The treatment group was instructed using the peer tutoring approach, while the control group was instructed using the conventional instructional approach. The exercise lasted for 6 weeks. Preceding the experimentation, the FSLOT was administered as pretest using the FSLOT. Then after, they were instructed using the peer tutoring approach and the conventional instructional approach and were posttested to ascertain the students' scholarly learning outcomes.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and ANCOVA.

Result

RQ1

Will there be any effect of peer tutoring approach on the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka?

Table 1: Pretest and Posttest Scores of peer-tutoring approach on the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates

Groups	N	Pretest Mean	SD	Posttest Mean	SD	Gain
Peer Tutoring Approach	13	4.67	2.43	17.54	3.36	12.87
Control Group	13	7.35	4.32	11.82	2.45	4.47

Table 1 shows that French language undergraduates instructed with peer tutoring approach had a pretest of mean of 4.67, while at posttest they had 17.54 and a mean gain of 12.87. As opposed to that, the control group had a pretest mean of 7.35, while their posttest mean score was 11.82 and a mean gain of 4.47. In comparison, French language undergraduates instructed using peer tutoring approach had a better mean score than the control group in their posttest. The mean gain of the peer tutoring approach group is better or higher than the control group. This proved that French language undergraduates instructed using the peer tutoring approach gain more and improved their scholarly learning outcomes than the control group.

H₀₁: Peer tutoring approach will not improve the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka.

Table 2: Summary of ANCOVA on Peer Tutoring Effect on scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates.

Source of Variation	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	478.353	2	235.653	33.333	.000
Intercept	3228.278	1	3228.278	343.533	.000
Pretest	0.136	1	0.136	0.031	.686
Peer tutoring	266.645	1	266.645	31.442	.000
Error	268.868	23	6.683		
Total	13448.000	26			
Corrected Total	666.564	25			

Table 2 shows that the ANCOVA on peer tutoring and conventional approaches effect on the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka. Table 2 indicated that the peer tutoring approach to instruction improved the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates (F (1,23) =31.442, p= 0.000). Since p=0.001 is less than 0.05, the hypothesis is rejected. Thus, peer tutoring approach significantly improve the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka.

RQ2

Will the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka instructed using peer tutoring approach vary on the basis of gender?

Table 3: Pretest and Posttest Scores of peer-tutoring approach on the scholarly learning outcome of French language undergraduates on the basis of Gender

Groups	N	Pretest Mean	SD	Posttest Mean	SD	Gain
Male	9	6.23	2.43	15.33	2.22	9.23
Female	17	6.58	2.24	15.71	2.33	9.13

Table 3 indicates that male French language undergraduates had a pretest mean of 6.23 and posttest mean of 15.33, with gain of 9.23. The female French language undergraduates had a pretest mean of 6.58 and posttest mean of 15.71, with a resulting gain of 9.13. Thus, this result indicates that at posttest, male French language undergraduates scholarly learning outcomes mean of 15.33, was slightly lower than the female French language undergraduates scholarly learning outcomes of 15.71. This implies that female French language undergraduates slightly improved in their scholarly learning outcomes when compared with the male French language undergraduates.

Ho₂: French language undergraduates instructed using peer tutoring approach will not significantly vary in their scholarly learning outcome on the basis of sex?

Table 4: ANCOVA Summary of French Language Undergraduates Scholarly Learning Outcomes on the basis of gender.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	4478.113	2	1144.425	8.223	.000
Intercept	5994.302	1	5994.302	52.455	.000
Pretest	2555.161	1	2555.161	23.245	.000
Gender	20.771	1	67.233	1.022	.215
Error	7134.732	23	125.122		
Total	262727.000	26			
Corrected Total	13522.344	24			

Table 4 shows that the French language undergraduates scholarly learning outcomes when instructed using peer tutoring approach was not statistically significant ($F(1,23) = 1.022, p = 0.215$). Since the value $p = 0.215$ is greater than 0.05, the hypothesis is therefore accepted. Whether male or female French language undergraduates did not vary in their scholarly learning outcomes on the basis of gender when instructed with peer tutoring approach. This, therefore, implies that both male French language undergraduates and female French language undergraduates improve in their scholarly learning outcomes.

Discussion

The hypothesis one result indicates that peer tutoring approach enhanced the scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates more than the control group (conventional) approach. This proved that French language undergraduates instructed with peer tutoring approach improved their scholarly learning outcomes in French language. Thus, peer tutoring approach is effective and enhance scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates of Delta State University, Abraka. This finding collaborates with Philip and Council (2010), Hartman (2010), Comfort (2011), Ezenwosu and Nworgu (2013), Comfort and McMahon (2014), Lumpe and Staver (2015) and Topping (2017), Irfan, Rabia and Muhammad (2021), who reported that peer tutoring approach improved students' scholarly outcomes. And that it has an effect and boosted students' performance. It can be inferred from the study finding that peer tutoring approach transmuted the classroom from a setting for the transfer of knowledge when

subjects are approached from various and underrepresented points of view, allowing students to benefit from one another's viewpoints.

The result of the study (hypothesis two) upheld the hypothesis that states French language undergraduates instructed using peer tutoring approach will not significantly vary in their scholarly learning outcome on the basis of sex. Peer tutoring approach had no sex bias with reverence to enhancing French language undergraduates scholarly learning outcomes; in other words, the approach (peer tutoring) was not in favour of male over female or female over male undergraduates. The enhancement in the scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates instructed with peer tutoring cannot be related to sex, as both sexes had a better learning outcome/grade. This is in line with similar researches by Oviawe (2008), Christian (2014), AbdulRaheem, Yusuf & Odutayo (2017), Srivastava and Rashid (2018), Hwang, Nguyen and Pham (2019), Udo (2020), and Olulowo, Ige and Ugwoke (2020), who observed that students instructed using peer tutoring approach did not significantly vary in their scholarly learning outcome on the basis of sex.

Conclusion

This research emphasised the usefulness of the peer tutoring approach on the scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates. The outcome of this study has provided empirical data or evidence on the efficacy of peer tutoring approach in boosting French language undergraduates scholarly learning outcomes. It was also established that with peer tutoring approach the interaction of French language undergraduates with their peers improved in terms of the quality significantly both scholarly and socially. Based on FSLOT scores, peer tutoring approach can help or aid attainment the objectives of French language curriculum in tertiary institutions. Therefore, instead of restricting French language undergraduates to the conventional approach, the introduction of activities based instructional approaches such as Peer tutoring approach would enhance their scholarly learning outcomes in French language. The use and adoption of peer tutoring approach for instruction enhanced the scholarly learning outcomes of French language undergraduates notwithstanding their sex.

Recommendations

1. Activity based instructional approaches should be integrated for instruction into the French language curriculum in tertiary institutions.
2. French Teachers/lecturers should instruct undergraduates with peer tutoring approach to aid the development and improvement in French language.
3. To enhance the scholarly learning outcomes of undergraduates in French language, peer tutoring should be used more widely and frequently in tertiary institutions setting.
4. Peer tutoring approach should be utilised in French language instruction and learning regardless of their sex.

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