

Effect of Instruction in Location of Topic Sentence on Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Reading Comprehension

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Abstract:

The study was undertaken to determine the effect of instruction in Location of Topic Sentence on academic achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in reading comprehension in selected Local Government Areas in Gumel Emirate, Jigawa State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised all the 3,315 students at senior secondary school class two level (SSS 11) in all the 12 public secondary schools in Gumel Emirate of Jigawa State in 2015/2016. The sample for the study consisted of 420 SSS11 students in the 2015/2016 session in twelve (12) intact classes which were drawn from four (4) single-sex schools, using purposive sampling technique. The research design for the study was a quasi-experimental and specifically the non-randomized control group. Location of topic sentence (LOTS) reading strategy developed by the researcher was used to teach students in Experimental Group 1, Experimental Group 2 and Control Group. The instrument for data collection was English Language Comprehension Passage Questions (ELCPQ). The three groups had the same pre-test passages. Also, their post-test passages were the same. The scorer reliability of the pre test and post test instruments computed using Kendall coefficient of concordance yielded the reliability index of .78 and .73 respectively. The study was guided by one research question and one hypothesis. While mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question, the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypothesis. The finding indicated that the students exposed to topic sentence at the beginning of paragraphs achieved higher in reading comprehension than their counterparts exposed to topic sentences located at the middle and at the end of paragraphs. The finding established a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students presented with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of paragraphs of a reading passage. The pairwise comparisons of the mean difference between the groups showed that the beginning topic sentence was more effective in comprehending passages followed by the middle topic sentence and the ending topic sentence respectively. Based on the findings, it was recommended that English language teachers should use Location of Topic Sentence (LOTS) reading strategy to teach reading comprehension in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Key words.: Location of Topic Sentence, Topic Sentence, Reading, Reading Comprehension, Achievement

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I. INTRODUCTION

The official use of English language in Nigeria began in the early 19th Century by the British Colonial administration. Since then, the language has assumed a towering influence over 520 indigenous languages and dialects in Nigeria (Nigeria-Ethnologue, 2017). Today, English performs so many functions in Nigeria as the language of government, instruction at all levels of the educational system, international diplomacy and mass media, etc. English also serves as a unifying language of trade and commerce and expression of culture for the over 190 million people from different ethnic groups in Nigeria.

The international status of English as well as the multi-dimensional roles it performs in Nigeria makes it imperative that students must have to attain a high level of proficiency and competence in its use. According to Igboanusi (2001), English is compulsory for any Nigerian who wants to participate in local, national and international political affairs and economic enterprises. This assertion is corroborated by Egbokhare (2007) who argues that since English is an international language and language of science, business and other forms of international interaction, there is a need to acquire a form of it that is generally accepted as the standard

form if we are to function effectively in the present day world. Thus, English as a second language in Nigeria dominantly functions as the language of government, education, legislation, mass media, trade and commerce, international diplomacy, science and technology, sports, politics, religion, and expression of multi-cultural values. From the foregoing, the need for all students in secondary schools in Nigeria to have a sound mastery of the language and attain good achievement it becomes imperative. Unfortunately in Nigeria, the achievement of students in English has continued to decline as indicated by the results of students in English Language in different examinations.

The low achievement and general weaknesses of senior secondary school students in English language keep on manifesting in different components of the language being examined by the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Yet these students must gain competence in English as the dominant language of government, commerce, education, administration and international diplomacy in Nigeria. Aduwa-Ogiegbaen and Iyamu (2006) lament that the secondary school system has been witnessing steady decline with the percentage of

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students who failed English Language examinations fluctuating between 55% and 75% in the past ten years. Adesulu (2016) compiled the 2012 – 2016 WASSCE May/June Result Statistics in English Language and reported that 38.81% of candidates that sat for the examination in 2012 obtained five (5) credits and above in English language, 36.57% of candidates that sat for the examination in 2013 obtained five (5) credits and above in English language, 31.8% of candidates that sat for the examination in 2014 obtained five (5) credits and above in English language, 38.68% of candidates that sat for the examination in 2015 obtained five (5) credits and above in English language, while 53% of candidates that sat for the examination in 2016 obtained five (5) credits and above in English language. The achievement of students in English language as shown in the 2012 – 2016 WASSCE May/June Result Statistics indicates that the senior school students are still very poor in English in Nigeria. The only improvement was recorded by students in 2016 after a number of years of woeful failures. The statistics show that there is still much to do to help students to improve on their achievement in English Language.

The persistent low achievement of students in English in Nigeria has been attributed to many factors like poor teaching methodologies, absence of relevant instructional materials, insufficient English language teachers, poor studying environment, overcrowded classrooms, Different studies and the successive reports of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) Chief Examiners on English language examinations have identified the poor teaching of reading skills in schools as a major reason for the importunate failure and poor achievement of students in English language. Students were reported to find it difficult to comprehend reading passages and interpret questions correctly in WAEC English language Paper 2 Theory Questions under Section B on comprehension.

The teaching of the English Language as a second language in Nigeria involves the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is expected that the teaching of the language in schools should make the learners to be proficient and competent in listening and reading (receptive skills) and speaking and writing (expressive/productive skills). Of the four language skills, reading has been considered as the most important skills in learning a second language (Yadav, 2014). This implies that the learners should be given early exposure to reading. Also, reading should be properly taught in schools because it is the key to learning other subjects.

Though reading is very critical in acquisition of knowledge in and outside the school settings, the teaching of reading in Nigeria has been confronted with a lot of challenges. Andzayi (2004) listed the problems confronting the teaching of reading in secondary schools as poor methodology, insufficient qualified teachers, inadequate library facilities, home background, lack of interest and absence of reading on the time table. Also, the studies of Akinbote, Kolawole and Kolawole (2007) found out that reading skills in English were not being taught well at the primary school level. The outcome of this is that most pupils in Nigerian public schools proceed to secondary schools without being adequately prepared to cope with the challenges of reading. The weak foundation of children in reading and the

ineffective teaching of reading skill in schools have continued to add to the problem of low comprehension of English texts by students in Nigeria.

Reading fluently without the understanding of what is read is meaningless. In other words, comprehension is the hallmark of every reading effort. Suhaimi (2009:2) elaborated this by noting that ‘the main purpose of reading is to comprehend the ideas in the material. Without comprehension, reading would be empty and meaningless’. The writer adds further that it often happens several cases where students are capable of reading the words, but face much difficulty in expressing their comprehension of the main ideas. Reading comprehension involves interaction of the reader with the text to obtain meaning. Comprehension involves the reader’s ability to grasp with mind the substance of a written material and it is what makes reading meaningful. It is the process of laying hold on the meaning underlying a text or a passage. Comprehension is fundamental in all kinds of reading because the very essence of embarking on a reading exercise is to obtain the information that is hidden in the material hence no meaningful reading can take place without the understanding of what is being read (Adedokun, 2017). This position justifies the assertion that reading takes place when the reader understands what has been encoded and thus puts comprehension at the centre of reading. Therefore, reading comprehension requires making meaning and obtaining necessary information from texts.

In Nigeria, the teaching of reading comprehension at the secondary school level is dominated by the conventional strategy. The conventional strategy is such in which the language teacher presents reading lesson step by step with teachers actively dominating the lesson. Different teachers have varied steps in conventional strategies they use to teach reading comprehension in schools in Nigeria. Baba, Mensah, Nwafor, Garba, Hakeeb and Yusuf (2013) presented their own template of the conventional strategy as follows:

Step 1. The teacher reads the passage and explains it paragraph by paragraph while students listen attentively.

Step 2. The teacher reads the questions on the passage while students listen attentively.

Step 3. The teacher and students find difficult words in the passage.

Step 4. The teacher explains the words and asks students to check a dictionary for further meanings of such words.

Step 5. The students are made to read the passage paragraph by paragraph.

Step 6. The teacher reviews the idiomatic expressions and grammatical terms as applicable.

Step 7. The students attempt the questions on the passage.

Step 8. The teacher guides them to answer difficult questions.

The conventional strategy has been under severe criticism for its ineffectiveness and teacher-centeredness According to Oyetunde and Muodumogu (1999), reading comprehension lesson is always dominated by the teacher who does most of the reading and then asks students to answer accompanying comprehension questions. They are of the opinion that the conventional strategy has led to reading failure of students. For this reason, Amucheazi (2000) advocated for an urgent

need to investigate into the causes of poor reading comprehension among pupils (students) with a view to finding a lasting solution to the problem. The foregoing amplifies the fact that the teaching of reading comprehension in secondary schools in Nigeria requires effective and learner-friendly strategies which both teachers and students can use to teach and read effectively.

This study focuses on location of topic sentence (LOTS) that was developed by this researcher. LOTS is a reading strategy that English teachers could use to guide students to comprehend passages by prompting them to identify and discuss the topic sentences which contain the main ideas of the writer in a reading passage (Banjo, Elugbe, Onaja and Akano, 2007; Manal, 2012). In other words, LOTS helps students to identify and discuss the main ideas in topic sentences and the sub-ideas that provide more information about the main ideas in supporting sentences in a paragraph. LOTS strategy is child-centered and activity-based. It requires students to be actively involved in classroom discussion to identify topic sentences and the ideas expressed in them in different locations/positions in paragraphs. To present reading comprehension lesson using Location of topic sentence (LOTS) strategy, the teacher can use instructional materials like projector, computer and cardboards as instructional materials for students to identify and discuss the topic sentences, their main ideas and sub-ideas in paragraphs of a reading passage. The teacher can type the passage to be taught with computer using Microsoft word processor. The soft copy is afterwards sent to students' personal computers. During lesson, individual students can underline or embolden or colour the topic sentences, main ideas, sub-ideas in paragraphs and difficult words, etc for discussion. Projector can be used to display the passage to be taught in the absence of personal computers for students. Also, the teacher can use cardboards to write out the paragraphs to use for introducing, identifying and discussing the topic sentences. LOTS strategy, as developed by this researcher, involves the following levels and stages in teaching reading comprehension:

1. PRESENTATION

Stage 1: Teacher introduces the new task

Stage 2: Teacher and students discuss the concept of topic sentence and its main idea

Stage 3: Teacher and students discuss the sub-ideas in paragraphs

2. EXPLORATION

Stage 4: Students read the passage to identify, mark out or write out topic sentences, main ideas and sub-ideas in paragraphs of a reading passage

3. DISCUSSION

Stage 5: Students discuss the identified topic sentences, main ideas and sub-ideas in paragraphs of the passage, while the teacher guides.

4. APPLICATION

Stage 6: Teachers and students identify and discuss difficult words and expressions in the passage

Stage 7: Students relate the main ideas and sub-ideas to questions on the reading passage.

5. EVALUATION

Stage 8: Evaluation of students (Adedokun, 2017:12).

A word is a minimal unit of linguistic expression which is both meaningful and capable of occurring in isolation. Different words are usually combined together to form sentences. Therefore, a sentence can be described as a group of words that contain a subject and predicate. Every good sentence must have a complete meaning by itself. On the other hand, a paragraph is a group of sentences that deal with a single idea or thought. The topic sentence is the sentence that bears the single or main idea in a paragraph. Nordquist (2012) describes topic sentence as the sentence that states or suggests the main idea (or topic) of a passage. By this, topic sentence is depicted to mean the sentence in a paragraph which summarizes the main idea of that paragraph. A topic sentence is a sentence whose main idea or claim controls the rest of the paragraph. The body of a paragraph only explains, develops or supports with proof(s) the topic sentence's main idea. Therefore, the understanding of the topic sentence in a paragraph is undoubtedly a master-key to unlocking the idea of the writer that is embedded in the paragraph. Ability to identify the position of the topic sentence in paragraphs is very significant and strategic in all kinds of reading, whether the reading is undertaken for academic or pleasure purpose. Thus, topic sentence can be best described as the sentence that controls every paragraph in a passage, an essay or a write-up.

Topic sentence provides the hint of what the writer says in a paragraph to the reader. It stands to accelerate readers' understanding and comprehension of the reading materials (Brizee, 2009 and Turner, 2012). This is because the topic sentence is the main idea in a paragraph and the rest of the paragraph supports the main idea. The topic sentence advises the reader of the subject to be discussed and how the paragraph will discuss it and that readers generally look to the first few sentences in a paragraph to determine the subject and perspective of the paragraph. Banjo Elugbe, Onaja and Akano (2007) showed that the knowledge of the topic sentence and the ability to identify it in paragraphs has been found to be very indispensable for reading accessibility. This shows that the ability of the reader to identify the topic sentence in a paragraph will facilitate his/her comprehension of the message in the paragraph and the paragraphs in the entire passage (Adedokun, 2017). Thus, it can be established that the reader's ability to locate the topic sentence in paragraphs is a sort of reading comprehension strategy that can help readers to process texts effectively. It means then that topic sentences serve as useful guides to help readers to identify and comprehend the ideas being passed across by writers in passages.

This study, therefore, seeks to determine how the identification of topic sentences in paragraphs can help students comprehend passages better. There is a common assumption among students and general readers that topic sentences are always located at the beginning of paragraphs. But topic sentence can also be found at the middle or at the end of paragraphs. This study seeks to find out whether location of topic sentence (LOTS) at the middle and at the end of paragraphs by the writers will enable students to comprehend passages better than when their topic sentences are placed at the beginning of paragraphs of reading passages.

Location of topic sentence (LOTS) as a reading strategy will be used to teach reading comprehension to the Experimental Group 1, Experimental Group 2 and Control Group.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to find out the effect of location of topic sentence (LOTS) on senior secondary school students' achievement in reading comprehension in Jigawa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the achievement scores of students taught with topic sentence located at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the paragraphs of a reading passage.

III. RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What are the mean achievement scores of students taught with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the paragraphs of a reading passage?

IV. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the paragraphs of a reading passage.

V. METHODOLOGY

The quasi-experimental and non-randomized control group, pre test, post test design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 3,315 students at senior secondary school class two level (SSS 11) in all the 12 public secondary schools in Gumel Emirate of Jigawa State in 2015/2016 academic session. Purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. The sample comprised 420 SS11 students in twelve intact classes from four sampled senior secondary schools (2 male and 2 female) in 2015/2016 academic session. To guide the study, one research question and one hypotheses were used. Location of topic sentence (LOTS) reading strategy developed by by Adedokun (2017) was used to teach students in Experimental Group1, Experimental Group 2 and Control Group. English Language Comprehension Passage Questions (ELCPQ) which was validated by three experts served as the instrument for the study. Kendall coefficient of concordance was used to compute the scorer reliability of the pre test and post test instruments and it yielded the reliability index of .78 and .73 respectively. The instrument contained six (6) passages on test of comprehension, three (3) pretest passages for Experimental 1 (topic sentences located at the middle of paragraphs), Experimental 2 (topic sentences located at the end of paragraphs) and Control Group (topic sentences located at the beginning of paragraphs), and three (3) equivalent post test passages served as instruments for the study. There is a general assumption among readers that topic sentence is usually or conventionally located at the beginning of a paragraph. Topic sentence can also be placed at the middle or at the end of a paragraph in a reading passage. This study seeks to determine how the identification of topic sentences in paragraphs can help students to comprehend passages better. Mean and standard deviation were used to

answer the research question while the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

VI. RESULTS

Research Question: What are the mean achievement scores of students taught with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the paragraphs of a reading passage?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of achievement scores of students presented with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the paragraphs of a reading passage

Location of Topic Sentence	Pre test			Post test		
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean Gain
Beginning Topic Sent.	132	47.80	15.49	66.31	15.15	18.52
Middle Topic Sentence	145	45.51	15.97	63.79	18.08	18.28
Ending Topic Sentence	142	43.16	13.54	56.52	11.30	13.36

Table 1 shows that students who were exposed to topic sentence at the beginning of paragraphs had mean achievement score of 66.31 with a standard deviation of 15.15, while those that were exposed to topic sentence at the middle of paragraphs had mean achievement score of 63.79 with a standard deviation of 18.08, and students exposed to topic sentence at the end of paragraphs had mean achievement score of 56.52 with a standard deviation of 11.30 at the post test. Mean gain scores of 18.52, 18.28 and 13.36 for the three groups respectively imply that the students who were exposed to topic sentence located at the beginning of paragraphs achieved higher than their counterparts.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the paragraphs of a reading passage.

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance of the difference in mean achievement scores of students presented with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the paragraphs of a reading passage, by gender, location and subject specialization

Source	Types 111 Sum Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	45178.352*	23	1964.270	13.581	.000
Intercept	115042.166	1	115042.166	795.379	.000
Pretest	424.101	1	424.101	2.932	.088
Group	5064.780	2	2532.390	17.508	.000
Gender	4903.504	1	4903.504	33.902	.000
Location	2048.964	1	2048.964	14.166	.000
Subject Matter Specialization	851.054	1	851.054	5.884	.016
Group*Gender	5568.858	2	2784.429	19.251	.000
Group*Location	4327.623	2	2163.812	14.960	.000
Group*	473.726	2	236.863	1.638	.196
Subject Matter Specialization					
Gender*Location	2620.683	1	2620.683	18.119	.000
Gender*	533.966	1	533.966	3.692	.055
SubjectSpecialization					

Analysis of data in Table 2 shows that the probability associated with the calculated value of F (17.508) for the difference in the mean achievement scores of students is .000. Since the probability value of .000 is less than .05 level of significance ($p < .05$), the null hypothesis was rejected meaning that there is significant difference in the mean

achievement scores of students presented with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of paragraphs of a reading passage. To determine the direction of the significance, pair wise comparisons were conducted as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Pairwise Comparisons of the Mean Difference Between the Groups Dependent Variable Posttest

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.d
Beginning Topic Sentence	Middle Topic Sentence	-2.965a	1.855	.332
	Ending Topic Sentence	10.330c	1.859	.000
Middle Topic Sentence	Beginning Topic Sentence	-2.965c	1.855	.332
	Middle Topic Sentence	7.364*	1.439	.000
Ending Topic Sentence	Beginning Topic Sentence	-10.330c	1.859	.000
	Middle Topic Sentence	-7.364*	1.434	.000

Table 3 shows that there is a significant difference between students 'achievement in the beginning topic sentence and ending topic sentence groups in favour of beginning topic sentence groups. There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of beginning topic sentence and middle topic sentence groups. There is significant difference in the mean achievement scores of middle topic sentence and ending topic sentence groups in favour of middle topic sentence groups. Therefore, the beginning topic sentence was more effective followed by the middle topic sentence and the ending topic sentence was the least effective.

VII. DISCUSSION

Table1 results showed that the students exposed to topic sentence at the beginning of paragraphs achieved higher in reading comprehension than their counterparts exposed to topic sentences located at the middle and at the end of paragraphs. The finding in Table 2 established a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students presented with topic sentence at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of paragraphs of a reading passage. The pairwise comparisons of the mean difference between the groups in Table 3 show that the beginning topic sentence was more effective followed by the middle topic sentence and the ending topic sentence was the least effective.

The findings above indicate that the students exposed to the topic sentences located at the beginning of the paragraphs had higher achievement in reading comprehension than those exposed to the topic sentences located at the middle and at the end of the paragraphs respectively. The implication of these findings is that students are likely to comprehend passages in which the topic sentences are located at the beginning of the paragraphs better than those passages in which the topic sentences are placed at the middle or at the end of the paragraphs of a reading passage. From the findings, it is evident that students will comprehend passages better if taught reading comprehension with LOTS as a reading comprehension strategy. Also, there is likelihood for them to obtain higher achievement in reading comprehension using LOTS if the topic sentences are located at the beginning of paragraphs than when the topic sentences are placed at the middle or end of the paragraphs.

The finding here contradicts the findings of many studies in which students in experimental group are found to perform better than their counterparts in the control group (Marja,

2008; Ezeokoli and Ezenandu, 2013). Specifically, the results of Al'-Qatawneh and Alodwan (2012) showed a statistical difference at 0.05 between the students mean of the experimental and the control groups that could be attributed to the method of teaching in favour of experimental group. The findings in this study indicate that the control groups achieved better than the experimental groups. The disagreement with the findings in studies such as Egbe (2015) in which the experimental group had higher achievement than the control group in English Grammar and that of Shua'ibu (2016) in which the experimental group had higher achievement than the control group in Tajweed is not a surprise. The control groups in this study were exposed to beginning topic sentences which most writers conventionally use to develop the paragraphs in their writing. It shows that students are used to this conventional way of placing topic sentences in the paragraphs by different writers. The implication is that a good number of students are more conversant with the location of topic sentences at the beginning of the paragraphs in reading passages, which consequently enabled the students in control groups to rightly employ LOTS strategy to easily locate the topic sentences in paragraphs, comprehend the passages better and obtain higher mean achievement scores than their counterparts in the experimental groups. It can be deduced from the higher achievement of the control group over the experimental group students that students do comprehend passages better when topic sentences are located at the beginning sentences in the paragraphs than when they are located in the middle or at the end of paragraphs.

The result of this study has significantly established the efficacy and efficiency of LOTS strategy as a reading comprehension strategy that English teachers can use to effectively teach reading comprehension passages. The finding indicates a consistent higher post-test mean achievement scores for students in all groups than in pre-test. This is an indication that LOTS strategy has helped them to comprehend the reading passages better. Also, the control group students exposed to beginning topic sentences of the paragraphs had greater post-test mean achievement score than their counterparts in the experimental groups exposed to topic sentences located at the middle and at the end of paragraphs. The implication of the result of this study is that LOTS as a reading comprehension strategy can be adapted by English teachers to teach reading comprehension effectively to students than the conventional strategies that have been labeled as responsible for the consistent and ineffective teaching of reading comprehension and low achievement of students in English language in secondary schools in Nigeria.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The result of this study has largely shown that LOTS has significant effect on students' achievement in reading comprehension. With the consistent higher post-test mean achievement scores for students in all groups than in pre-test, the efficacy and efficiency of LOTS as a reading comprehension strategy that English teachers can use to effectively teach reading comprehension passages has been empirically established. The findings show that students' achievement in reading comprehension considerably increased after being exposed to LOTS in post-test.

The findings reveal that students obtained higher achievement in reading comprehension using LOTS when the topic sentences were located at the beginning of paragraphs of reading passages than when the topic sentences were placed at the middle and end of the paragraphs. With this, the superiority of LOTS as a reading comprehension strategy over the step-by-step conventional strategies currently being used in secondary schools in Nigeria is exposed.

The findings of this study have a lot of educational and pedagogic implications for teaching and learning of English language in secondary schools. Specifically, the study provides empirical evidence on the significance and efficacy of LOTS as an instructional strategy that can be used to effectively teach reading comprehension in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Over the years, the WAEC and National Examination Council (NECO) Chief Examiners' Reports in Nigeria have decried the poor performance of candidates in comprehension passages in English language paper 2 examinations. They have also linked the low achievement in English language in internal and external examinations conducted by the two examination bodies to poor performance of students in comprehension and summary passages. According to their reports, despite the fact that students were often given passages that fall within their comprehension ability, they still achieve below expectation. Students exhibited incompetence in tackling the questions and that many of the answers in the comprehension section show their weakness of copying the passage indiscriminately. It shows that students basically find it difficult to comprehend comprehension passages. It is against this backdrop that the results of this study provide pedagogical implications for the English language teachers in secondary schools in Nigeria.

This study has shown that by guiding students to identify topic sentences in paragraphs, they will be able to comprehend and correctly answer questions on the comprehension passage. Therefore, LOTS serves as an alternative instructional strategy that English language teachers can use to teach reading comprehension with satisfactory achievement at secondary school level. It is child-centred and allows students to be actively involved in activities and communication during lessons. It will assist students to comprehend comprehension passages easily, answer questions correctly on passages and as well boost their achievement in reading comprehension in WAEC and NECO English language examinations.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and with respect to the conclusions and educational implications of the study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. The study provides empirical evidence that LOTS as a reading comprehension strategy has significant positive effect on senior secondary schools students' achievement in reading comprehension. Therefore, English language teachers should adopt the strategy as an alternative to the conventional strategies (CSs) in teaching reading comprehension in secondary schools since it has been proved to improve and accelerate students' comprehension and achievement in reading comprehension.
2. English language teachers should teach and encourage their students to use the LOTS reading comprehension strategy to engage in intensive and academic reading on their own. This will not only lead to improvement in reading comprehension among students, but also boost their achievement in English language and other subjects in the school curriculum.
3. Curriculum designers like Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) should incorporate LOTS as an effective strategy in teaching reading comprehension in the next review of English curriculum for secondary schools.
4. Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and National Teachers' Institute (NTI) are advised to fund further researches on LOTS as an effective strategy to teach reading comprehension in schools to establish its empirical effectiveness and efficiency.
5. Workshops, seminars and conferences being organized for English language teachers by foreign donor agencies like British Council (BC), Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN), Teacher Development Programme (TDP), etc, should consider LOTS strategy in training English language teachers on how to teach reading comprehension effectively to students in secondary schools.
6. Also, the technocrats in both Federal and State Ministries of Education who often organize capacity building and on-the-job trainings or workshops for the language teachers should adapt and expose LOTS to such teachers as a practical strategy they can employ to teach reading comprehension to students in secondary schools.
7. Language Education units in faculties of education in universities and Colleges of Education can conduct further empirical research on LOTS strategy and adapt it as one of the strategies to prepare prospective language teachers for teaching reading comprehension and summary in secondary schools.
8. The English Language textbook writers for the junior and senior school students on reading comprehension and summary writing can incorporate LOTS in their texts as an effective strategy that English language teachers can use to teach reading comprehension.
9. Most school libraries in Nigeria are either empty or filled with outdated books. A number of English language teachers teach reading comprehension on chalkboards because many students attend class lessons without text books. For effective teaching of reading comprehension in schools, government should stuff the school libraries with relevant books. Also, parents should provide reading materials for their children.
10. Many teachers and students are not aware of the findings of researchers that can boost their skills and effectiveness in their subject areas. Therefore, government should provide fund to make the findings of this research with regard to the use of LOTS in teaching reading comprehension available in secondary school libraries for the English language teachers. This will also give

students the opportunity of reading and studying how to use the strategy to read and comprehend texts on their own.

11. More studies should be conducted on LOTS in reading comprehension among primary school pupils as well as junior secondary school students or equivalents in different nations.

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