



Determining the Readability Level of Nursery 3 and Primary 3 English Studies Textbooks Using Cloze Test In Rivers State, Nigeria

Ifunanya Victoria Uzoeshi
Institute of Education
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Monica Ngozi Odinko
Institute of Education
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Abstract

Reading serves a wide range of purposes in the lives of different categories of people who are literate. In school, it is the basis for learning different subjects. Whatever, the aspect of life one is considering, one discovers that the ability to read efficiently enhances individual's ability to function in an effective manner. It is against this background that the study sought to determine the readability level of English studies textbooks using cloze test for primary 3 pupils in Rivers state, Nigeria. Two research questions were answered in the study. The research design used for the study is ex-post facto. The instrument used is the cloze test to measure the readability level of the selected texts at Independent level, Instructional level and Frustration level. Result reveals that 39.5% of Nursery 3 pupils fall within independent level, while 37.3% of Nursery 3 pupils fall within instructional level, and 23.2% of Nursery 3 pupils fall within frustration level. Result reveals that 100 (100%) of Primary 3 pupils fell within the frustration level and none fell within independent and instructional levels. This implies that Primary 3 pupils could not read and give more than 70% correct answers to the Primary 3 English textbooks used in Rivers State. It could therefore be concluded that the English textbooks used by Nursery 3 and Primary 3 pupils at the lower basic education level in Rivers State are not readable to a very high extent because the pupils were not able to read the textbooks. The study therefore concludes that English reading textbooks should be carefully selected by stakeholders in education in order to fulfil the requirements of standard measuring formulars like the cloze test readability formular.

Keywords: Readability, Nursery 3, Primary 3, English Studies, Textbooks, Cloze Test, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Uzoeshi, I. V., & Odinko, M. N. (2021). Determining the readability level of nursery 3 and primary 3 English studies textbooks using cloze test in Rivers State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 14(1), 120-000.

INTRODUCTION

Reading serves a wide range of purposes in the lives of different categories of people who are literate. In school, it is the basis for learning different subjects. Whatever, the aspect of life one is considering, one discovers that the ability to read efficiently enhances individual's ability to function in an effective manner.

Easy reading of a text helps learning and enjoyment, so what we write should be easy to read (Fry, 2006). Thus, materials meant for learners if difficult for the intended, makes learning and understanding of such subject difficult. McNamara (2006) is of the opinion that reading texts must be simplified at the beginning and intermediate levels in order to make the text more comprehensible for learners and to help prepare them for more authentic text. Textbooks are very useful resources that learners and teachers can utilize according to their needs. For instance, they are considered as "primary vehicles for delivering content knowledge and for delivering in large measures what goes on in a class" (Lebrun, et al., 2002) and for assessing what students do and do not learn (Oakes & Saunders, 2004). Textbooks may not only influence what and how pupils learn, but also what and how teachers teach.

Reading is an interaction between the reader and the text, infact the text itself plays a significant part in the process because that is where the message encode (Sadoski, 2004). The researcher believes that the text is like a portal that the reader must pass. Just as important as the background knowledge of the reader, so does the content of the text. The content of the text may affect the reader on how to process the information thereby affecting the academic achievement of the learner. The more imaginable, concrete, and real the things in the text are, the more readable the text for the readers. The reader will also likely have more understanding of the passage if the content is familiar with things around them.

English language teaching can yield the desired result if factors such as availability of qualified teachers who are experienced, conducive teaching and learning environment, among others, that could promote teaching and learning are ensured (Ogunsaju, 2004). It seems that academic standard in all Nigerian educational institutions has fallen considerably below societal expectations due to lack of the various factors mentioned above. This statement corroborates that of Ajayi (2002) which states that poor students' performance in English language could be associated with the teachers who are the center of attraction in teaching and learning process. But on the contrary, Olukoya (2011) argued that students' poor performance was not solely their teachers' fault, other factors such as school, home, students, textbooks used by the learners etc contributed towards it.

Adewale (2004) asserts that the aim of any reading programme is to lay a strong foundation that can benefit pupils throughout their lives in academic pursuits. Studies among in-service and prospective teachers depict the same grim picture (Applegate & Applegate, 2004). Applegate and Applegate (2004) conclude that many pre-service teachers are not avid readers themselves and that this lack of reading engagement may be passed on to students. Teachers in their study acknowledged the importance of reading but they, themselves, did not exhibit investment in personal reading.

Richards and Schmidt (2002) assert that readability is influenced by some factors including:

- the average length of sentences in a passage,
- the number of new words a passage contains, and

- the grammatical complexity of the language used.

According to Abonyi and Oluikpe (2013), readability refers to the assessment of the difficulties that readers of a certain level of skills may have in reading a piece of connected written discourse or text. Dubay (2007) asserts that readability generally tends to portray the effectiveness in communication between the author of a written text and the reader. Understanding what is readability, is essential to academic success in general and literacy development in particular.

Readability is commonly defined as a measure of ease with which a written text can be understood (Feng, 2010). This definition focuses on writing style as opposed to issues of text content, coherence and organization. Researchers such as Collins-Thompson and Callan (2004); Fenget al., (2009); Petersen and Ostendorf (2009); and Si and Callan, (2001) have approached this problem with the assumption that the readability of a text could be measured by a simple function of a few text properties that are objective and easy to determine. Many traditional metrics that claim to measure text readability often relied on a limited set of superficial text features, such as sentence length, number of syllables per word, word frequency, etc. In a similar manner the creator of SMOG readability formular McLaughlin (1969) sees readability as “the degree to which a given class of people find certain reading matter compelling and comprehensible. This definition appears to stress on the interaction between the text and a class of readers of known characteristics such as reading skill, prior knowledge and motivation. Readability can, thus, be defined as the sum total (including interactions) of all those elements within a given piece of printed material that affect the extent to which the readers have understanding, read it at an optional speed, as well as find the text interesting. All these help readers to understand a text.

The readability of a text in a nutshell therefore, refers to the ease with which a reader reads and understands a written text. It is the match of the reading level of a written text to the understanding level of the reader. All these constitute readability of a text. The readability level of a textbook can be carried out in a number of ways which includes using Winnetka Formular, Spache Readability Formular designed for primary grade books, Fry Readability Formular, SMOG Formular, FOG Index Formular and Cloze Procedure. However, for the purpose of this study FOG Index will be used.

The Cloze procedure was primarily developed by Taylor in 1953 to test the difficulty of instructional materials and to evaluate their suitability for learners they are meant for. It has since been used by a number of researchers especially as a measure of student’s comprehension (Ereke & Okonkwo, 2016; Ahmad, 2013; Ogenyi, 2011; Ahmad, 2013; Ogenyi, 2011; Ugwu, 2009; Dubay, 2004). Cloze test or cloze procedure is defined as a technique for measuring reading comprehension as well as overall language proficiency (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). Cloze test promotes more accurate readability since it measures the readability of the text by readers’ involvement in processing the text (Alderson, 2001). Harrison and Salinger (2002) stated that a cloze procedure is a number of text deletion activities. In a cloze procedure, readers are given a passage that has blanks in places of some of the words deleted from the passage. Then the readers are asked to fill in the blanks with the words matched according to the passage. Based on the result of the test then the text can be analyzed and classified whether the text is at independent, instructional and frustration level for the readers.

At the independent level learners can read successfully by themselves thus not needing anyone to assist them. This level can be identified as an easy level for learners. They should be able to give at least 90% correct answers from the questions related to the passage within this level. At the instructional level, pupils need help from the teacher to comprehend a passage.

They will face more challenging passage in this level. This level can be identified as a moderate level. The learners are expected to give at least 70% correct answers from the questions related to the passage within this level. The frustration level is defined as a difficult level for learners. They will have a hard time to understand the passage at this level. The pupils will not be able to give more than 70% correct answers from the questions related to the passage within this level. The teachers should avoid difficult materials at this level. From the explanation above, among those three levels, the independent level is considered as the most appropriate level for pupils. At this level, the reading materials can help the pupils to improve their reading comprehension. The level will give impact whether the text is appropriate or not for the intended readers.

The suitability of text refers to the appropriateness to which a text matches the level of the learners in terms of some criteria such as age, level of language, nature of examples, illustrations used and cultural settings reflected. Adeuja (2017), added that movies are rated and classified as being suitable for a certain age and audience but it appears that such classification systems has not been established for books even when books differ with respect to their content, writing style, topic, genre and other age related factors which may make them not to be appropriate for all audiences too. Suitability can be determined also through criteria of text selection which includes use of pictures and aesthetic nature of the text.

If pupils are expected to be proficient in reading text written in English language, then a rich stimulating learning material is essential to enable pupils attain mastery of English language. Amuseghan (2007) observed that many students who passed through secondary schools in Nigeria are faced with communicative incompetence. This researcher added that the English language course book, methodology and content are often mentioned as the problem of poor academic achievement. Hence, there must be a link or connection between what is prescribed in the English language curriculum, its implementation and the outcome (Obanya, 2002). This implies that teachers must use textual materials and employ methods and strategies commensurate to the learners' age while teaching English language. This must begin at the pre-primary level of education since it is the foundation of all other levels of education.

Primary education is the education given to children aged 6-12 years in a school (FRN, 2014). Primary education is the second stage of compulsory education in most parts of the world, and is normally available without charge, but may also be offered in a fee-paying independent school. Part of the objectives of setting up primary level of education in Nigeria according to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014) includes: to inculcate permanent literacy, numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively.

Arising from the stand of the National Policy on Education, education at the primary school level in Nigeria should be a basic necessity, such that the acquisition of the skills imparted at that stage may lead to the production of citizens who should be literate as well as have the ability to communicate effectively among others. Hence, pupils in primary schools are taught basic life skills like: spelling, writing, interpersonal communication, concentration and reading textbooks for different subjects. However, to aid Rivers state children attain the objectives, the materials used by the teachers must be readable and attractive. Furthermore, the size of the book should be handy. The size should be such that nursery pupils can carry them with ease. They should not be bulky. Printing, layout, issues discussed should be interesting and attractive. They should be printed in bold letters that would not require children to strain their eyes as well as be correctly and neatly printed.

A good primary school text book should be free of bias-including age, gender, home, life style and race. The researcher pointed that children's books provide a wonderful way for children to learn about diversity and fairness. This assertion is supported by Derman-Sparks and

Edwards (2010) who asserted that a good primary text book should have a suitable vocabulary and structure. The vocabulary should be controlled, properly selected and graded based on the curriculum recommendation. The introduction should be progressive within the series of readers. The words and structures should be introduced in a systematic order. The simple meaning should be used of a word or structure if they have more than one meaning. At the end of the textbook, a glossary of difficult words and structures should be given.

Thornbury (2002) believed that the analysis of language teaching textbook is a necessary tool for the improvement of primary education. From observation and personal experience, it seems that most of the illustrations done in textbooks used at the pre-primary and primary levels of education are not properly done and this seems not to be making the subject matter clear to the pupils. Insufficient and ambiguous illustrations may make the subject matter unclear to the pupils. Furthermore, some of these textbooks are not being presented with colours that are attractive to the pupils. This singular act will likely not make the texts to be inviting or catchy to the pupils, since the pupils who the textbooks are meant for always love to play while working on a given task. At times the illustrations convey too many ideas thereby making the texts to be confusing and discouraging to the pupils. It is in support of this that Ojeda (2006) asserts that too many ideas should not be conveyed in one illustration. However, the identified characteristics will be difficult to correct during the process of teaching and learning if the teacher is not professionally trained along this area.

Contributing further, Adediwura and Bada (2007) reiterates that nobody could teach what he does not know or understand and that teachers should of necessity understand what they teach. This goes further to explain the need for qualified teachers in specified subject areas to handle specific subjects which they understand and know. Croninger et al. (2007) who looked at specific teaching degrees in elementary education discovered that it positively correlates with pupil's achievement in reading. It could be suggested that academic qualification of teachers perhaps may show a lot of positive learning outcome in students, more especially when the teacher is handling his or her own area of specialization in a particular subject. This makes the learning environment stimulating and interesting to the learner.

When a textbook is difficult to read, understandability is at stake. Generally, it appears that some selected textbooks seem to be written at a higher readability level for the grade level the text is intended; thus, making the reliability of the readability levels of such published textbook questionable. Children who enter school struggling with reading, generally continue to struggle with reading throughout their schooling. Therefore, checking the types of textbooks learners use during English language lessons is of utmost importance. Going by the poor performance of learners in English language at the primary level of education in Rivers State made the researcher to wonder if the textbooks help teachers develop high reading ability skills in the pupils.

In the relevant literature consulted, there appears to be lack of empirical studies showing how readability levels of selected recommended English language textbooks in Rivers state were established. Determining the readability level will ascertain information on the sentence length, number of syllables contained in the words, the nature of the fonts, and the vocabulary content of the text.

In Rivers state, factors such as readability of selected recommended texts with respect to use of illustration, font size and syllable count, may constitute factors that affect the performance of pupils in primary schools. It is against this background that the study seeks to determine the readability level of English studies textbooks using cloze test for primary 3 pupils in Rivers state, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed in this study are:

- RQ 1: How readable are the English textbooks used by Nursery 3 pupils at the lower basic education with respect to Independent, Instructional and Frustration levels in Rivers State?
- RQ 2: How readable are the English textbooks used by Primary 3 pupils at the lower basic education with respect to Independent, Instructional and Frustration levels in Rivers State?

METHODS

The research design used for the study is ex-post facto. The ex-post facto design was used in establishing the readability level of the textbooks. This is because the passages selected were not altered but used in their original form. The ex-post facto research as described by Kerlinger and Lee (2000) is a systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulated. Inferences about relations among variables are made, without direct intervention, on the independent and dependent variables.

Instrumentation and Instruments

Cloze Test for Primary 3

The Cloze Test was used to select comprehension passages taken from recommended textbooks. It consisted of two sections A and B. Section A focused on the bio-data of the respondent such as local government area of school, name of school, type of school, location of school, and number of pupils in class. Section B consisted of the items based on the passage selected from text books for Primary 3 pupils. The pupils were allowed to read the selected passage in its original form. Afterwards, each child was given a test from the passage with some of the words deleted. Each pupil filled in the gap with the appropriate words or acceptable words according to the passage. It contained 25 multiple choice items.

Procedure for Constructing the Cloze tests for Pupils

The researcher selected a sample from chapters taken from the selected textbooks for Primary 3 class. Oller in Kurniawan (2008: 25) gives the guidelines on how to construct a cloze test:

- Selecting materials for the task. If a book is divided into chapters, it might make sense to take at least one sample from each chapter.
- Deciding on deletion procedure. Some researchers left a certain amount of one or more un-mutilated sentences at the end of the text.
- Administering the test. If the test is gauged appropriately in difficulty, it is usually possible for the slowest student to have ample time to attempt every item of a 50-item cloze test within a 50 minutes class period.

- Scoring procedures. There are two common ways to create the blanks in the text. The first is called rational deletion, where words are deleted on the basis of some rational decision. The second is called fixed ratio deletion or nth word deletion, where every nth word is deleted. For example, every fifth word may be deleted. The researcher then decides on the deletion process for the two classes selected. In the case of Primary 3, the rational deletion process was employed. The researcher ensured that each learner was given ample time to attempt the 20-item cloze test within 20 minutes class period.

Validation of the Instruments

All the instruments were given to experts for review to help establish the face and content validity of the instruments. Thereafter, the instruments were trial tested on a different population with similar characteristics with the intended and the internal consistency of the instruments established.

Scoring Procedure for Cloze test

After the test was administered, the researcher did the scoring. There are two types of scoring procedures. The first one is exact word method. In this scoring procedure, the words filled in the blanks have to be the same exact words as from the original text. The second procedure is known as the acceptable word method. Here, the test taker can fill in the blanks with the appropriate words or acceptable words according to the text. It is not necessary to fill in the blanks the same exact words based on the original text. In this study, Primary 3 pupils filled in the blanks with the appropriate words or acceptable words according to the text. Baseline for Cloze test: High readability (independent level): Estimate that yields a score of 90% upward will be regarded as having high readability level; while Low readability (frustration level) is the estimate that yields less than 70% (Readability formulas, 2018; Leslie & Caldwell, 2011).

Grade level of readability scores for cloze test

a) Independent level

This is the level at which learners can read successfully by themselves. At this level, learners do not need anyone to assist them. This level can be identified as an easy level for learners. They should be able to give at least 90% correct answers from the questions related to the passage within this level.

b) Instructional level

At this level, pupils need help from the teacher to comprehend a passage. They will face more challenging passage in this level. This level can be identified as a moderate level. The learners are expected to give at least 70% correct answers from the questions related to the passage within this level.

c) Frustration level

This level is defined as a difficult level for learners. They will have a hard time to understand the passage in this level. The pupils will not be able to give up to 70% correct answers from the questions related to the passage within this level.

Data Analysis

Cloze Test Analysis: The Cloze Test was used to determine the suitability and reading ability of the pupils. Based on the result of the test, the text was analyzed and classified indicating whether the text is at independent, instructional and frustration level for the readers. The level that emanates was used to establish whether the text was appropriate and readable for the intended readers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RQ1: How readable are the English textbooks used by Nursery 3 pupils at the lower basic education with respect to (Independent, Instructional and Frustration levels) in Rivers State?

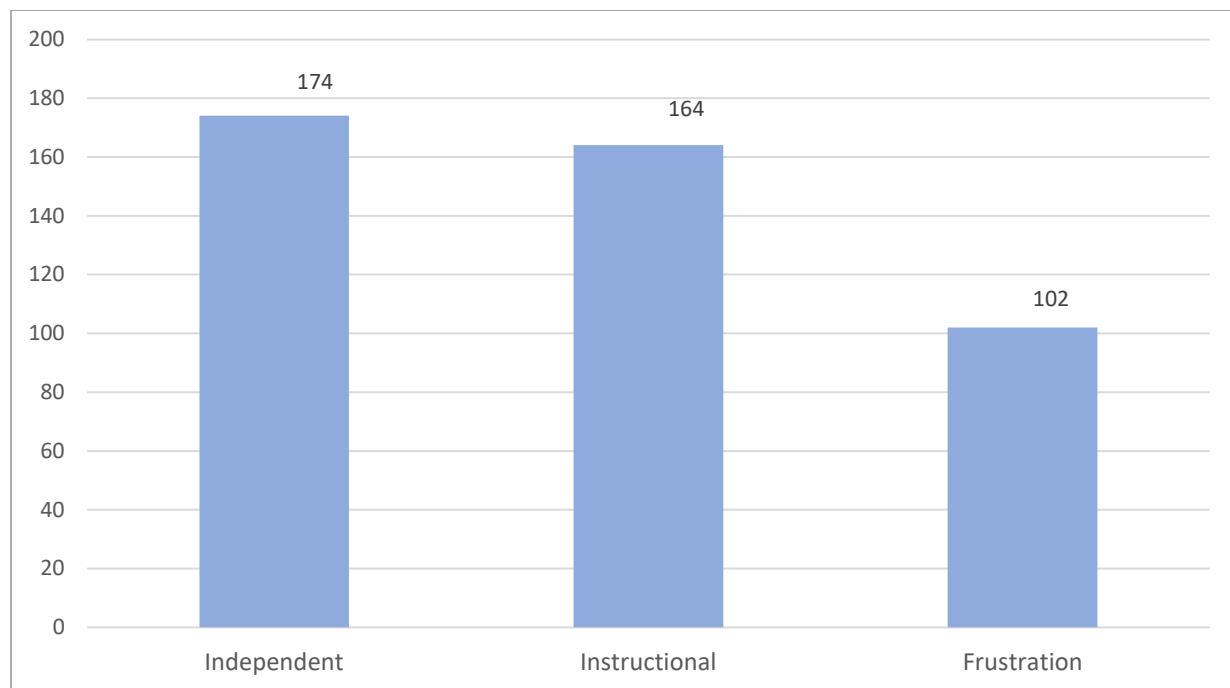


Figure 1: Extent of readable English textbook used by Nursery 3 pupils with respect to Independent, Instructional and Frustration Levels

N=440; Scores: 1 thru 9 = Frustration; 10 thru 17 = Instructional; 18 thru 25 = Independent

Figure 1 reveals the extent to which Nursery 3 pupils could read the English textbooks based on Cloze readability levels of independent, instructional and frustration. Results in Figure 1 shows that 174 (39.5%) of Nursery 3 pupils fell within independent level, 164 (37.3%) fell within instructional level and 102 (23.2%) fell within frustration level. This implies that 39.5% of

Nursery 3 pupils fall within independent level, which means that they could read and give at least 90% correct answers to Nursery 3 English textbooks while 37.3% of Nursery 3 pupils fall within instructional level, which means that they could read and give at least 70% correct answers to the Nursery 3 English textbooks and 23.2% of Nursery 3 pupils fall within frustration level, which means that they could not read and give more than 70% correct answers to the Primary 3 English textbooks used in Rivers State.

RQ2: How readable are the English textbooks used by Primary 3 pupils at the lower basic education with respect to (Independent, Instructional and Frustration levels) in Rivers State?

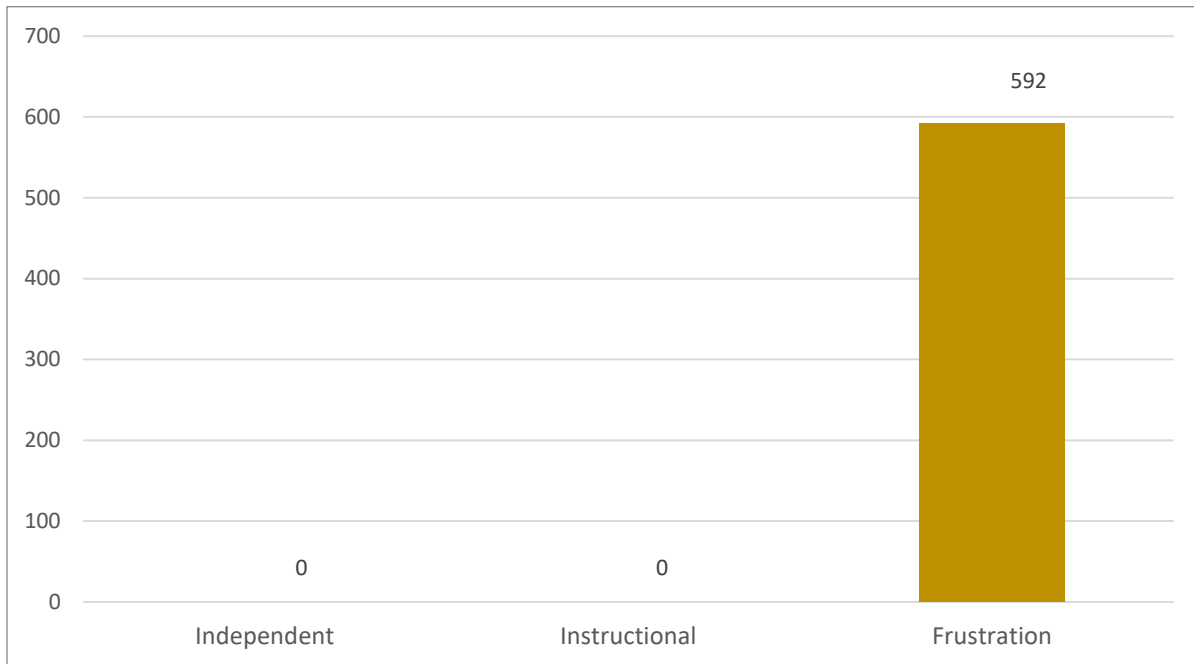


Figure 2: Extent of readable English textbook used by Primary 3 pupils with respect to Independent, Instructional and Frustration Levels
 N=592; Scores: 1 thru 9 = Frustration; 10 thru 17 = Instructional; 18 thru 25 = Independent

Figure 2 reveals the extent to which Primary 3 pupils could read the English textbooks based on Close readability levels of independent, instructional and frustration. Results in Figure 2 shows that 100 (100%) of Primary 3 pupils fell within frustration level and none fell within independent and instructional levels. This implies that Primary 3 pupils could not read and give more than 70% correct answers to the Primary 3 English textbooks used in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

It could therefore be concluded that the English textbooks used by nursery 3 and primary 3 pupils at the lower basic education level in Rivers State are not readable to a very high extent. The pupils were not able to read the textbooks. This might be as a result of the requirements that were not fulfilled by the authors such as colourful pictorial illustrations, large font sizes, and mono syllabic words that were not observed in the English textbooks. Also, it might be that the school did not select appropriate reading materials for the pupils. This statement corroborates

that of Ajayi (2002) which states that poor students' performance in English language could be associated with the teachers who are the center of attraction in teaching and learning process. But on the contrary, Olukoya (2011) argued that students' poor performance was not solely their teachers' fault, other factors such as school, home, students, textbooks used by the learners etc contributed towards it. In the contribution of Adewale (2004), the researcher asserts that the aim of any reading programme is to lay a strong foundation that can benefit pupils throughout their lives in academic pursuits. Renandya and Jacobs (2008), noted that it is important to consider the variety of topic and genre of the reading materials and the material level should be within the learners level of comprehension. However, it is appropriate to use a material that are near to their current level of comprehension. The reading material can be one level lower or higher from their current proficiency level. In a different study by Richards and Schmidt (2002) they assert that readability is influenced by some factors including: the average length of sentences in a passage, the number of new words a passage contains, and the grammatical complexity of the language used. Abonyi and Oluikpe (2013), pointed out that readability is simply referred to the assessment of the difficulties that readers of a certain level of skills may have in reading a piece of connected written discourse or text. Dubay (2007) asserts that readability generally tends to portray the effectiveness in communication between the author of a written text and the reader. Understanding what is readability, is essential to academic success in general and literacy development in particular.

Textbooks are very useful resources that learners and teachers can utilize according to their needs. However, the result is in disagreement with Lebrun et al. (2002) where they considered English reading textbooks as "primary vehicles for delivering content knowledge and for delivering in large measures what goes on in a class. Bano (2005) supported the findings of Lebrun et al. (2002) that textbooks may not only influence what and how pupils learn, but also what and how teachers teach. The researcher went further to say that textbooks are considered as the sole and legitimate source of knowledge for both learners and teachers. To Bano, information presented in textbooks plays a pivotal role in shaping the process of classroom teaching and learning, designing of assessment system and evaluating learners memorizing and reproducing the information presented in textbooks.

In another study by Sadoski (2004), it was reiterated that reading is an interaction between the reader and the text, infact the text itself plays a significant part in the process because that is where the message encode. The researcher believes that the text is like a portal that the reader must pass. Just as important as the background knowledge of the reader, so does the content of the text. The content of the text may affect the reader on how to process the information thereby affecting the academic achievement of the learner. The more imaginable, concrete, and real the things in the text are, the more readable the text for the readers. The reader will also likely have more understanding of the passage if the content is familiar with things around them.

Supporting these researchers, Salinger and Campbell (2002) affirmed that since reading is related to human visualisation, it is important to consider type setting or font size features and the medium through which the text is presented. The first thing people will see from the text is how the text appear before them. The appearance and the medium or size of the text can influence the reader whether they will read it or not. Things such as features of print, font, and lay out can be important in causing reading ease or difficulty which may make or mar academic achievement. Other researchers such as Isiugo-Abanihe and Labo-Popoola (2004), Ogunsaju (2004) said that the main idea of teaching English language at the basic level of education is to inculcate in learners permanent literacy in the language and also to lay a solid

foundation for their higher academic pursuit, English language teaching can yield the desired result if factors such as availability of qualified teachers who are experienced, conducive teaching and learning environment, among others, that could promote teaching and learning are ensured.

CONCLUSION

The study therefore concludes that English reading textbooks should be carefully selected by stakeholders in education in order to fulfil the requirements of standard measuring formulars like the cloze test readability formular.

REFERENCES

- Abonyi, O. S., & Oluipke, E. (2013). Socio-dynamic errors in the assessment of readability using the cloze approach. *Journal of Education and Practice* 4(28), 74-79.
- Adediwura, A. A., & Bada, T. (2007). *Perception of teacher's knowledge, attitude and teaching skills as predictors of academic performance in Nigerian secondary schools Ile- Ife*. University Press.
- Adeuja, A. A. (2017). *The readability and suitability of prescribed prose literature-in-English texts for senior secondary school students in Sagamu and Ikenne L.G.A, Ogun State*. An unpublished M.Ed. Project to Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, University Press.
- Adewale, G. (2004). Examination malpractice: a stigma on school effectiveness in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Research and Evaluation*, 5(1).
- Ahmad, Y. (2013). *A schema-thematic view of basic processes in reading comprehension*. University Press.
- Ajayi, L. (2002). Newspaper as (enrichment) material for (enhancing) students performances in English. In: A. Lawal, O.I. Isiugo-Abanihie, I.S. Ohia (Eds), *pespective on applied linguistics in language and literature*. Stirling Horden Publishers.
- Alderson, M. A. (2001). *The use of readability materials: Educational leadership*. NY Publishers.
- Amuseghan, S. (2007). ESL curriculum in secondary schools in Nigeria: Issues and challenges toward communication competence. *Nebula*, 4(2), 319-333.
- Applegate, A. J., & Applegate, M. D. (2004). The peter effect: Reading habits and attitudes of pre - Service teachers. *The Reading Teaching*, 57.
- Bano, Y. (2005). *Curriculum and textbooks.: Issues and chalenges in Pakistan*. University Press.
- Collins-Thompson, K., & Callan, J. (2005). *Predicting reading difficulty with statistical language models*. Uniuersity Press.
- Croninger, R., Rice, J., Rathbun, A., & Masako, N. (2007). Teacher qualifications and early learning: Effects of certification, degree and experience on first grade student's achievement. *Economics of Education Review*, 26, 312-324.
- Derman-Sparks, L., & Edwards, J. O. (2010). Understanding anti-bias education: bringing the four core goals to every facet of your curriculum. *Young Children*. 74(3), 1142-1157.
- Dubay, W. H. (2004). The principles of readability. <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/readab/readab.pdf>
- DuBay, W. (2007). *Smart language: Readers, readability, and the grading of text [electronic version*. Book Surge Publishing.

- Ereke, J. S., & Okonkwo, F. A. (2016). Cloze procedures and Nigerian secondary school students' achievement in comprehension of expository texts. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(6).
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2014). *National Policy on Education (6th Edition)*. Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC).
- Feng, L. (2010). *Automatic readability assessment*. CUNY Academic Works. https://www.academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/1934
- Feng, L.; Elhadad, N., & Huenerfauth, M. (2009). *Cognitively motivated features for readability assessment*. In the 12th Conference of the European Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (EACL2009).
- Fry, E. (2006). *Readability – reading hall of fame book*. International Reading Association.
- Harrison, C., & Salinger, T. (2002). *Assessing reading 1: theory and practice. international perspectives on reading assessment*. Routledge.
- Isiugo-Abanihe and Labo-Popoola. (2004). School types and location as environmental factors in learning English as a second language in West Africa. *Journal of Education*, xiv(1).
- Kerlinger, F. N., & Lee, H. B. (2000). *Foundations of behavioral research*. Harcourt College Publishers.
- Kurniawan, S. (2008). Older people and mobile phones: A multi-method investigation. *Int. J. Human-Computer Studies*, 66(8), 889–901.
- Lebrun, J., Lenori, Y., Laforest, M., Larose, F. Roy, G. R., Spallanzani, C., & Pearson, M. (2002). Past and current trends in the analysis of textbooks in a Quebec context, *Curriculum Inquiry*, 32(1), 51-83.
- Leslie, L., & Caldwell, J. (2011). Qualitative reading Inventory-II (QRI-II). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234661679_Qualitative_Reading_Inventory-II_QRI-II
- McLaughlin, H. (1969). SMOG grading a new readability formular. *Journal of Reading*, 22, 639-646.
- McNamara, D. S., & McCarthy, P. M. (2006). Discriminating between second language learning text-types. American Association for Artificial Intelligence. <http://www.aaai.org>
- Oakes, J. and Saunders, M. (2004). Educations most basic tools. Access to text-books and instructional materials in California's public schools. *Teachers College Record*, 106(10), 1967-1988.
- Obanya, P. (2002). Curriculum overload in the language education programme for basic education. In Adebayo L., Isiugo- Abanihe, I & Ohia, I (eds) *Perspectives on applied linguistics in language and literature*. Stirling-Horden Publishers.
- Ogenyi, M. (2011). *Reading with meaning*. Cheston.
- Ogunsaju, S. (2004). *A guide to school effectiveness in Nigeria*. Lanville Publications.
- Ojeda, J. (2006). *Vocabulary of success in EFL Textbooks*. *Actas VIII Congreso de la sociedad Espanola de la Lengua y la Literatura*. Universidad de la Habans Cuba, 974-983.
- Olukoya, M. (2011). Is the minister wrong to blame teachers for mass failure in nigerian schools? Sun News Paper, Friday 4th February 2011.
- Petersen, S. E., & Ostendorf, M. (2009). A machine learning approach to reading level assessment. <https://www.doi.10.1016/i.csi.2008>
- Renandya, W. A., & Jacobs, G. M. (2008). Extensive reading: why aren't we all doing it? In Richards, J. C., and Renandya, W. A. *Methodology in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. Pearson Education.
- Richards, V. C., & Schmidt, B. F. (2002). Tools for measuring readability in English Comprehension. *Ohio State University Journal*, 2(86), 178-185.
- Sadoski, M. (2004). *Conceptual foundations of teaching reading*. The Guilford Press.
- Salinger, T., & Campbell, J. (2002). The national assessment of reading in the USA. In Harrison, C., and Salinger, T. *Assessing reading 1: Theory and practice*. Routledge.
- Si, L., & Callan, J. (2001). A Statistical model for scientific readability. University Press. http://www.csc.villanova.edu/~mdamian/Past/csc3990fa08/papers/nlp/si_callan_2001.pdf
- Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to teach Vocabulary*. Longman.
- Ugwu, R. (2009). Chain preserving deletion procedure in cloze. *Language Testing*, 23(1), 62-68.