

# Effect of Audio-Lingual Teaching Approach on Reading Difficulties Performance Among Learners of Public Schools in Kaduna State

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**Abstract:** The study focuses on the effects of Audio-Lingual teaching Approach on Reading difficulties among primary school pupils in Kaduna State. The design of the study was quasi experimental study. The population of the was 1379 primary school pupils identified with the problem of reading difficulties. One hundred and twenty (120) pupils were selected for the study using a multi stage sampling technique. Audio- Lingual teaching was developed by the researchers to improve the reading ability of the pupils with reading difficulties. Questionnaire for measuring reading difficulties was developed and validated for data collection. Independent t-test was used to analyse the data. The results reveal a significant effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading difficulties, reading comprehension and reading fluency. It was concluded that Audio- Lingual teaching Approach has effect on reading difficulties of learners. Thus, it was recommended that Audio- Lingual teaching Approach should be used by teachers to improve the word reading accuracy, reading comprehension and reading fluency of pupils.

**Keywords:** Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual Teaching Approach, Reading Difficulties, Dyslexia.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Reading difficulties among primary schools seems to be at increase. The researchers observed that up to basic 4, 5 and six, pupils struggle to read just two letter words, three letter words, and so on. Many of the even do that by cramming. To read the letter sounds is a problem much more to read sentences and comprehension passages. Reading challenges encompass a spectrum of issues that hinder learners' abilities to engage with written texts and comprehend their content. These difficulties may vary from common challenges among English language learners to more specialized conditions like dyslexia. It is characterized by persistent difficulties in learning to read despite intelligence and eagerness to learn, remains a prominent concern.

The researchers wonder how possible such a problem is existing and what could be done to remedy the situation. Preliminary investigations reveal that many pupils find it difficult to read because they are suffering from dyslexia and if such an issue is not addressed, it will pose a serious threat to the academic progress of the child. Therefore, the researcher suspect that such a problem could be remedied by the use of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach. Though, there are many studies on the reading difficulties but no sufficient researches that made attempt to provide a solution to it by using Audio- Lingual teaching Approach as the present study did. Even the few that did, only used pre-test and post-test design. The present study used experimental and control group which is the uniqueness of the study. Therefore, the focus of this research is to delve into the prevalent reading difficulties, including dyslexia and use Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach how to treat the problem.

According to Beaten (2024), reading difficulties can be referred to as specific learning disabilities that make reading challenging. The types or components of reading difficulties are drawn from Beaten (2024) that the most well-known type of reading disability is dyslexia. But not all reading disabilities are dyslexia. People with a reading disability typically have challenges in one, two, or all three areas below:

➤ *Word Reading Accuracy*

The ability to read a word accurately. People who have trouble with word reading accuracy struggle to break down the sounds of spoken language. They can also struggle to match those sounds with written symbols. This is known as phonological awareness. Not all reading difficulties are caused by a reading disability. For example, trouble with focus can make it hard to concentrate on reading. Vision problems can make it hard to track words. Therefore, it can be a cause of word reading accuracy.

➤ *Reading Comprehension*

The skills of reading a comprehension passage meaningfully. Reading comprehension means understanding what's been read. People who struggle with reading comprehension may have difficulty with: Word meanings tying information together Monitoring their understanding, making inferences, remembering what they read.

Challenges with word reading accuracy often overlap with reading comprehension issues. But some people with reading comprehension difficulties have no trouble decoding words — they just don't understand what they've read. Some people who struggle with reading comprehension may have related challenges. For example, they may have a language disorder, which can impact how people use and process language. Or they may have trouble with working memory, which can make it hard to remember what's been read.

➤ *Reading Fluency*

The flow a pupil exhibits when reading. Reading fluency means reading with speed, accuracy, and the right expression. Reading speed, also called reading rate, is the number of words a person can read correctly per minute. Fluent readers are able to read accurately at a good pace. When they read aloud, they do it in a way that shows they understand the sentence structure and punctuation. People who have trouble with fluency take longer than others to read words accurately and understand their meaning. They might also read aloud without expression.

Many people with dyslexia have trouble with fluency. Trouble with fluency can also be related to slow processing speed.

Reading difficulties or dyslexia manifests as remarkable reading skills yet struggles with comprehension, often accompanied by social and cognitive challenges. Furthermore,

some reading difficulties emerge even before a child formally begins reading, while others may result from brain damage affecting the language centers, leading to conditions like alexia. Beyond dyslexia, this research acknowledges a spectrum of reading disorders, encompassing challenges in deciphering words, fluency in reading with appropriate expression, and comprehension of text. Each of these reading difficulties poses unique obstacles to a pupil's academic journey. The study encompasses dyslexia and other reading challenges, with focus to a broader spectrum of reading impairments.

International Dyslexia Association (2017) States that the degree of difficulty a child with dyslexia has with reading, spelling, and/or speaking varies from person to person due to inherited differences in brain development, as well as the type of teaching the person receives. The brain is normal, often very "intelligent," but with strengths in areas other than the language area. This "difference" goes undetected until the person finds difficulty when learning to read and write. Each individual with dyslexia is unique, but the multisensory approach is flexible enough to serve a wide range of ages and learning differences. A multisensory approach can be valuable to many; to the dyslexic child it is essential. The expertise of the teacher is the key.

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia usually experience difficulties with other language skills, such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words. Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; however, its impact can change at different stages in a person's life. It is referred to as a learning disability because dyslexia can make it very difficult for a student to succeed academically in the typical instructional environment, and in its more severe forms, will qualify a student for special education, special accommodations, and/ or extra support services.

Eyo and Nkanga (2020) said that the challenges associated with learning is neurobiology. Learning disability, also called specific learning disability, is defined by the Diagnostic Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) (American Psychiatric Association, n.d.) as "difficulties in reading, writing, arithmetic, or mathematical reasoning skills during formal years of schooling." Adam et al. (n.d.) say that the U.S. Government described a learning impairment in Public Law 94-142 as a: disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, speak, read, spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, or mental retardation, emotional disturbance or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantages.

To explore reading difficulties or dyslexia among pupils in public schools in Kaduna, it is essential to acknowledge the fundamental differences in child learning processes. As Nicolson (1999) pointed out, the analogy of the "brain as a computer" falls short when considering self-adaptation, which plays a crucial role in child learning. At birth, infants are exposed to a sensory-rich environment, facilitating multisensory information processing, including sight, taste, smell, sound, and muscular sensations (Nicolson, 1999).

In contrast, adult learning occurs within pre-existing cognitive structures, with new information incrementally absorbed into these structures (Nicolson, 1999). This poses a challenge when addressing reading difficulties in children whose cognitive faculties are already established and may not adapt to change in the same way as infants. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the differences in response to new environments and adaptations is crucial for addressing reading challenges and dyslexia in pupils. Developmental dyslexia, as characterized by Nicolson and Fawcett (2001) in "Dyslexia as a learning disability," refers to a condition observed in children who, despite conventional classroom exposure, struggle to attain language skills in reading, writing, and spelling that align with their intellectual capacities (World Federation of Neurology, 1968). Hultquist (2006) distinguishes between acquired and developmental dyslexia, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of reading difficulties. Acquired dyslexia can occur when an individual, previously proficient in reading and spelling, experiences a brain injury (Hultquist, 2006). This form of dyslexia may result from factors like stroke or accidents and is characterized by a decline in reading and spelling skills. In contrast, developmental dyslexia manifests from an early age, where pupils struggle with reading and spelling (Hultquist, 2006). While hereditary factors may contribute, studies indicate that environmental factors like lead poisoning, brain injuries, or preterm delivery can also play a role in its development (Hultquist, 2006). It is noteworthy that reading difficulties extend beyond dyslexia and encompass various patterns and challenges. Specific word-reading difficulties (SWRD), specific reading-comprehension difficulties (SRCD), and mixed reading difficulties (MRD) represent prominent categories (Shaywitz, Shaywitz, Fletcher, & Escobar, 1990). SWRD individuals struggle with reading words specifically, while those with SRCD exhibit low reading comprehension despite average word-reading skills. MRD encompasses deficits in both comprehension and word-reading abilities (Share, Bishop, & Stanovich, 1996). A recent study by Akise (2023) found that most teachers in Kaduna State do not know that dyslexia starts in early childhood and needs to be treated early on (International Dyslexia Association, 2017; Catts & Petscher, 2018). Only 3% and 26% of the researcher's respondents know that dyslexia can occur between the ages of 0 and 2 and 3 and 6.

Husam (2024)) states that audio-lingual Method is an oral-based approach. However, it is very different, in that rather than emphasizing vocabulary acquisition through exposure to its use in situations, the Audio-Lingual Method drills students in the use of grammatical sentences patterns. Also, unlike the direct method, it has a strong theoretical base in linguistics and psychology. University of Michigan led the way in applying principles from structural linguistics in developing the method, and for this reason, it has sometimes been referred to as the 'Michigan Method'. Later in its development, principles from behavioural psychology were incorporated. It was thought that the way to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language was through conditioning- helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement so that the learners could overcome the habits of their native language and from the new habits required to be target language speakers. Objectives of the Audio-Lingual Method Teachers want their students to be able to use the target language communicatively. In order to do this, they believe students need to overlearn the target language, to learn to use automatically without stopping to think. Their students achieve this by forming new habits in the target language and overcoming the old habits of their native language.

#### ➤ Problem Statement

Reading difficulty is becoming a serious issue in most schools. The researchers observe that problem of reading difficulties among pupils in Kaduna is alarming. Preliminary investigations revealed that there exists a cause for concern over the reading difficulties that primary school learners. Within the educational landscape of Kaduna State, a significant concern has emerged. Many pupils attending public schools within the state face challenges in reading and distinguishing various sounds, raising concerns among parents, educators, and stakeholders alike. These concerns have intensified, in recent times due to the effects violent conflicts and banditry as well as other socio-political or ethno-religious banes leading to high rate of out-of-school children in Kaduna State.

The researchers became worried what could be done to remedy the problem. Thus, they suspect that using Audio-Lingual teaching Approach could play a good role in improving reading difficulties of the pupils. Little study have been done in this area which the present study bridged. On this background arose the need to carry out this study which focuses the effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach reading difficulties of pupils in Kaduna State.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study include:

- find the effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on word reading accuracy among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.
- examine the effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading comprehension among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.
- determine the effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading fluency among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.

### ➤ Hypotheses

- **Ho<sup>1</sup>:** There is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on word reading accuracy among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.
- **Ho<sup>2</sup>:** There is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading comprehension among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.
- **Ho<sup>3</sup>:** There is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading fluency among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The study was Experimental and control group quasi experiment design. This design was suitable for the study because it allow the researcher to manipulate the experimental group and compare the result with that of the control group in order to ascertain the effect of independent variable on the dependent variable. The population of the study consists of all 1379 pupils identified with problem of reading difficulties in twelve selected primary schools across the three geopolitical zones of Kaduna state. Multi- stage sapling techniques was used to purposefully select the four schools from each geopolitical zone and randomly selected 10 pupils from each to make the sample size of 120 pupils used for the study. This is in line with Charitaki (2015) in Yohanna (2023) who states that the sample size of thirty or more is suitable for any type of experimental research. More so, does not also violate central limit theory which states that the higher the sample size, the better the result would be. A package for treatment of the experimental group was designed in the form of audio-lingual teaching which an instrument was also developed, validated and pilot tested for data collection. It was in the Likert rating scale of five points from SA, A, U, D and SD. The instrument has three sub sections for word reading accuracy, reading comprehension and word fluency. Independent t-test was used to analyse the data. This was suitable because it enables a researcher to determine a significant difference in the mean scores of two independent variables.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the analysis of the data, results and discussions as displayed as follows:

- **Ho<sup>1</sup>:** There is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on word reading accuracy among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.

Table 1: t-test Result of Effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual Teaching Approach on Word Reading Accuracy Among Primary School Pupils

Variable	N	Mean score	t-val	df	p-val
Experimental group	50	45.12	3.00	98	.000
Control Group	50	26.04			

Table1 reveals  $t=3.00$  and  $p=.000$  at .05 level of significance. Since the  $p$ -value is less than the .05 level of significance, it shows that the difference in the mean scores between the experimental and the control group is significant. This shows the effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on word reading accuracy among primary school pupils. Thus the null hypothesis rejected

- **Ho<sup>2</sup>:** There is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading comprehension among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.

Table 2: t-test Result of Effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual Teaching Approach on Word Reading Accuracy Among Primary School Pupils

Variable	N	Mean score	t-val	df	p-val
Experimental group	50	42.26	2.00	98	.003
Control Group	50	27.04			



Table1 reveals  $t=2.00$  and  $p=.003$  at .05 level of significance. With the  $p$ -value less than the .05 level of significance, it shows that the difference in the mean scores between the experimental and the control group is significant. This shows the effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading comprehension among primary school pupils. Thus the null hypothesis rejected

- **H0<sup>3</sup>:** There is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading fluency among primary school pupils in Kaduna State.

Table 3: t-test Result of Effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on Reading Fluency Among Primary School Pupils

Variable	N	Mean score	t-val	df	p-val
Experimental group	50	44.26	1.02	98	.003
Control Group	50	26.04			

Table1 reveals  $t=1.02$  and  $p=.003$  at .05 level of significance. The  $p$ -value is less than the .05 level of significance. This shows that the difference in the mean scores between the experimental and the control group is significant. This shows the effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading fluency among primary school pupils. Thus the null hypothesis rejected

## V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings can be summarized as follows:

- There is a significant effect of, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on word reading accuracy among primary school pupils in Kaduna State with ( $t=3.00$ ,  $p=.000$ ).
- There is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading comprehension among primary school pupils in Kaduna State with ( $t=2.00$ ,  $p=.003$ )
- There is a significant effect of, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading fluency among primary school pupils in Kaduna State ( $t=1.02$ ,  $p=.003$ )

## VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The present findings reveals that there is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on word reading accuracy among primary school pupils in Kaduna State. This is line with the findings of Beaten (2024) which earlier showed that there are many strategies that assist children who are suffering from dyslexia and all kinds of reading difficulties Husam, (2024) also found significant effect of audio lingual teaching on reading difficulties of learners. Theoretically, in Mukherjee (2014), Watson, states that to change a behaviour, a target behaviour is conditioned by an intentionally provided learning facilities to improve The study also found that there is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading comprehension among primary school pupils in Kaduna State. Since, it reading comprehension, ordinarily, it is not surprising to have significant effect of audio lingual teaching Approach on learning difficulties. The present study also reveals that there is a significant effect of, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading fluency among primary school pupils in Kaduna State. This in congruence with the study of Husam, (2024) and Hultquist, (2006) who found that, Audio-

Lingual teaching Approach is effective in teaching children with poor reading fluency.

## VII. CONCLUSION

➤ *In Line with the Findings, the Following Conclusions were Drawn:*

There is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on word reading accuracy among primary school pupils. It is also concluded that there is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading comprehension among primary school pupils. On the basis of the findings, the researchers conclude that there is a significant effect of Audio- Lingual, Audio- Lingual teaching Approach on reading fluency among primary school pupils.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are put forward:

- Teachers should be trained on use Audio- Lingual, teaching Approach to improve word reading accuracy among primary school pupils
- Government and Education providers should provide training to teachers on the use of Audio- Lingual, teaching Approach to improve reading comprehension among primary school pupils.
- Education policy makers and curriculum designers should emphasize the use of Audio- Lingual, teaching Approach to enhance the reading fluency of primary school pupils.

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