

Dictogloss Strategy and Listening Comprehension Performance of Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The study investigated the effect of dictogloss strategy on the academic performance of secondary school students' listening comprehension. It also examined the effect of gender and location on the academic performance of students' listening comprehension. The study adopted the quasi-experimental design of pretest posttest and control group type. The population for this study consisted of all Junior Secondary School Two (JSS11) students in the co-educational public secondary schools in Ekiti State. One hundred and eighty (180) students were sampled for the study. An instrument titled Achievement Test in Listening Comprehension (ATLC) was used to generate data for the study. The validity of the instrument was ascertained, while the reliability of the instrument was ensured using test-retest method. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research question raised, while t-test statistics and Analysis of Co-variance were used to test the hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study revealed that dictogloss strategy has positive effect on students' academic performance in listening comprehension. The result revealed significant effect of gender on academic performance of students when exposed to dictogloss. In contrast, there was no significant effect of location on academic performance of students when dictogloss was used. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers of English Language in Secondary Schools should adopt the use of dictogloss strategy in teaching the students to aid their comprehension. Similarly, government could conduct workshops to train teachers in the use of dictogloss strategy in teaching students to aid their comprehension.

Keyword: Listening skill, Speaking skill, Dictogloss, Listening comprehension, Gender and Location

1. Introduction

It is very vital to relate with people at all times. One of the reasons for sustaining such relationship is for survival, sense of belonging and the ability to express oneself without any difficulty. Such persons can understand others and be easily understood. One is able to relate with others, receive information and supply information. This process is basically the essence of communication. Communication is a two-way process between a decoder and an encoder. Communication is done through the use of language.

Language is a medium of conveying ideas, thoughts and intentions. To Oyewo, (2000) language is a rule-governed system of symbols that allows the users to generate meaning and in the process, to define reality. Language is generally taught, learnt and assessed in terms of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and reading are known as receptive skills while speaking and writing are known as productive skills.

In Nigeria, English Language is the official language that is accepted nationally and used as a medium of instruction. Among over 500 indigenous languages used in the country, English Language takes its place as the official language of justice, commerce, education and subject of study at all levels of education. Due to this fact, English language is introduced to children right from pre-primary level of education. Though, the National Policy of Education (2004) places uttermost importance on the study of English Language as a major medium of instruction and as a school subject at all levels of educational system except at the pre-primary level of education. The main objective of teaching and learning English language in schools is for students to communicate well either internally or externally. This shows their ability to understand and speak the language. For learners to communicate in speech, they must have listened effectively. Also, for them to be a good writer, they must be able to read well efficiently.

Therefore the basis of any communication either by speaking or writing is listening, which determines the success of learners in learning process. Listening skill is also linked to speaking skill. These two skills are necessary pre-requisite needed for effective communication. Listening is one of the fundamental skills for acquiring knowledge at all levels of education. Listening is a skill that aims at facilitating the acquisition of literacy skills needed for effective communication. As the society changes the need for communication becomes vital. Therefore, we must listen well and understand in order to keep up with what is happening around us. On the other hand, speaking is an act of conveying information and expressing one's feelings in speech. Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary but also that they understand when, why and in what ways to produce language. It is an expressive language skill. Chronologically, speaking comes second among the four language skills. A person ability to speak well is a clear evidence of his/her literacy level. The organs of speech are used in the production of speech sounds which make up the utterances made in speaking. The supra-segmental features of the language like: stress, tone, and duration also give more meaning to a particular speakers' attitude or to what the speaker is saying.

In the same vein, the more learners speak the more their paralinguistic properties are developed. Nordquist (2017) views paralinguistic as the study of vocal and non-vocal

signals beyond the basic verbal message or speech. The paralinguistic features are: accent, pitch, volume, speech rate, fluency. In other word, speaking skill of learners when properly developed will reflect in their intonation, pitch and speaking rate. These features add more meaning to what people say.

The researchers believe that for someone to be a good speaker; he/she has to cultivate a good speaking skill. Before a child acquires speaking skill, he/she must have learnt to listen in order to imitate what he/she has heard. Therefore a good speaker must have been a good listener. Also the ability of a good speaker to speak well will reflects in his/her writing and reading. That is, when a speaker understands the rudiments of the language he/she uses; it will be a guideline for such speaker to write logically and accurately, which will also affect his/her comprehension.

Despite the fact that in learning of English Language, emphasis is placed on language skills, students still perform woefully in examination. Scholars have observed that listening and speaking skills are neglected in the school curriculum especially the listening skill, this in turn affects the students listening comprehension. Emphasis is placed more on reading and writing. Gbenedio (1996) asserts that only a fleeting mention was made to listening skill in the English curriculum.

Spooner and Woodcock (2010) affirm that learners are distracted in the classroom because they listen to two different things. They affirm that low levels of background noise can affect a child's ability to listen. Noise within and outside the classroom settings tend to affect the learners' listening ability. Similarly, the researcher observes that students are not also bold enough to communicate well within and outside the classroom using English Language. Some students who speak outside the classroom often commit some phonological error like replacing the consonant /f/ to /p/ sound. Also some commit grammatical error and semantic error. This is supported by Fahad (2013) findings that students find it inappropriate to speak in the class because of fear to be seen as verbally challenged.

Hence with all these problems mentioned above, learners' listening comprehension is badly affected. When the listen process of the learner is not active, it will in turn affect the listening comprehension. Comprehension is the ultimate reason for any learning effort. If learners can listen to a given text but do not understand what was said, then they have not really listened.

Listening comprehension is one's ability to recognize another person's view through sense, aural organs and allocate a meaning to the message to understand it (Azmi,Celik,Yidliz, and Tugrul 2014). Hamouda (2013) emphasizes that comprehension of speech is a very difficult activity for students. Learners face a lot of problems when they listen to a language which in turn affects their speaking ability. However, studies have shown that poor teaching method by teachers can affect the learners' listen and speaking ability. Adepoju (2002) asserts that comprehension is grossly misunderstood and mishandled by teachers. Teachers often talk about the text than the learners. Most teachings done on listening and speaking skills are basically teacher centered. Students are not really involved in the teaching for them to practice on their own. Therefore, for the learners to speak well and eloquently, the listening comprehension of the students must be worked upon for them to overcome the difficulties in understanding spoken passages. Therefore for

a learner to comprehend, such learner must listen attentively well during the learning process.

However, studies have shown that gender tends to influence the learners' listening comprehension during learning process. Gruber and Gaebelein (1997) stipulate that males tend to recall better than females in listening comprehension in a public speaking situation. While some researchers rated the female speakers significantly more effective than their male speakers. In the same vein, the rural-urban disparities in academic performance reflect in the comprehension of the students. Students in the urban areas have access to modern technological devices that aids learning such as laptop, modern laboratories etc. which get the students prior knowledge to learning and also develop their reasoning ability. Whereas, students in the rural areas may not have access to the use of modern devices for learning this affect the performance of the students. Also conducive learning environment, good infrastructure facilities and qualified and competent teachers are enjoyed by the students in urban areas which are lacking in rural areas could make students perform better than those in rural area. However, since it is the believe of people that students in urban areas tend to perform better than students in rural areas because of the type of school attended, the result of the study may form the basis of given the weak group more attention in order to improve on their academic performance. This is the motivation for this study. This researcher holds the view that if learners are exposed to dictation method, using dictogloss to teach listening and speaking skills; it will enhance the listening comprehension of learners.

Dictation is a device used to test a language learners' listening comprehension. Dictation in its simplest form refers to a process of reading aloud so that listeners can write down what is said correctly. Dictation is used to measure the level of proficiency of what the learners have learnt and detect problematic areas especially in spelling. The use of dictation in the classroom will make the learner active and not passive during the learning process (Rost 2002). Although many teachers see dictation as an old instructional tool, the effectiveness of dictation in the classroom depends on how it is used to impact knowledge. In view of this the researcher intends to use "dictogloss" as a strategy under dictation to teach the listening and speaking skills of the students.

Dictogloss is a language teaching strategy that is used to teach grammatical structures in which students form small groups and summarize a target –language text (Richards& Schmidt 2009). It is a method whereby the teacher prepares a text that contains examples of the grammatical form to be studied. The teacher then reads the text to the students at normal speed while they take notes. Students then work in small groups to prepare a summary of their work using the correct grammatical structures and finally each group presents their work to the rest of the class (Ellis 2003).

It is with this view that the researchers sought to critically examine the use of this instructional tool to solve the problems affecting students' listening comprehension; if there will be changes in the academic performances of junior secondary school students.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Listening is one of the major means by which learners receive information, facts, and ideas in all subjects. When a teacher speaks, learners listen and when the learners are speaking during a lesson, the teacher would be listening. In spite of this, it is very

unfortunate to note that listening is not taught in Nigerian schools. The general assumption is that learners are good listeners and must listen carefully to all lessons without any instruction. One of the major problems affecting students today is that they are easily distracted in the classroom which leads to lack of comprehension. Ineffective listening comprehension has affected the students' ability to comprehend what they have learnt or heard; this tends to pose a great problem among the students.

Also, these days, some students in secondary schools are unable to speak fluently with correct tenses in English. Some cannot even recall what they have heard or listened to. From the researchers' observations, it is discovered that students' poor performance in English language is due to their inability to listen well and use their speaking skill in order for them to comprehend what they have learnt. This attitude may be due to the nonchalant attitude of the learners and inappropriate approaches used by many teachers in teaching listening and speaking skills of the students.

Observation also revealed that learners derived pleasure in copying notes down without necessarily understanding the notes they copied. They do not listen to the point of comprehension that will assist them to vocalize what they have learnt through imitation. The use of conventional teaching methods whereby students sit passively in the classroom and the whole lesson is teacher-centered seems to affect the performance of students in listening and speaking skill because students are not taught how to speak independently, brainstorm, draw inferences and generate ideas of their own in the English Language classroom which can then be transferred to other courses of learning. Due to these problems stated above, there is need to find out the effect of dictogloss on the students' academic performance in listening comprehension. The study therefore investigated:

1. The effect of dictogloss on the academic performance of the students' listening comprehension.
2. Whether there will be gender difference in the academic performance of students exposed to dictogloss strategy.
3. The effect of location on the academic performance of students exposed to dictogloss strategy.

1.1.2 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study:

- (1) There is no significant difference in the performance mean scores of the students exposed to dictogloss package and their counterpart exposed to conventional method.
- (2) There is no significant difference in the performance mean scores of male and female students taught using dictogloss strategy.
- (3) There is no significant difference in the performance mean scores of students taught in rural and urban areas using dictogloss strategy.

1.1.3 Research Method

The research design for this study was quasi- experimental, pretest, post pretest and control group design, in which there was no randomization. The population of the study comprised all junior secondary school students in Ekiti State. The sample for the study consisted of 180 JSS2 students. The selection of the sample involved the use of multi-stage

sampling procedure. The first stage involved the use of simple random sampling technique to select three local government areas in Ekiti State. The second stage was done with the adoption of simple random sampling technique to select co-educational Junior Secondary Schools from each of the local government areas selected.

At the third stage, stratified random sampling technique was used to select JSS2 Students as participants from each school according to their gender. One school each (one from the urban area and one school from the rural area) were used for the experimental group while the school served as the control group.

The instrument that was used to gather data for this study was Achievement tests in Listening Comprehension (ATLC). The reliability of the instruments was determined by administering the instruments on two different occasions at two weeks interval. The scores obtained from the two tests were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis and a reliability coefficient of 0.83 was obtained.

The data collected for the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation while, the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using inferential statistics of t-test and Analysis of Co- variance (ANCOVA).

1.1.4 Results and Discussion

Question 1: What is the effect of dictogloss on the academic performance of students in listening comprehension?

In answering the question, mean scores on students' performance in listening comprehension before and after being exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy and the conventional method were computed and compared. The result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 revealed that students taught using dictogloss teaching strategy had mean score of 8.60 in listening comprehension prior to treatment while those in the conventional group had mean score of 5.83. On exposure to treatment, students taught using dictogloss teaching strategy had score of 10.08 while students taught using the conventional method had posttest mean score of 9.08 in listening comprehension. This implies that the use of dictogloss teaching strategy will improve the performance of students in listening comprehension.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the performance mean scores of students exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy and their counterpart exposed to conventional method.

In testing the hypothesis, score relating to posttest mean scores of students exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy and the students not exposed in listening comprehension were computed and subjected to statistical analysis involving t-test at 0.05 level of significant. The result is shown in Table 2. Table 2 revealed that there is significant difference in the posttest mean scores of students exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy and the group not exposed in listening comprehension ($t_{cal} = 3.47; P < 0.05$). The null hypothesis is thus rejected. Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the performance mean scores of male and female students taught using dictogloss teaching strategy.

In testing the hypothesis, scores relating to the performance of male and female students exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy were computed and subjected to statistical analysis involving t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significant. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 revealed that there is significant difference in the performance of male and female students exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy ($t_{cal}=2.261$; $P<0.05$). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the performance mean scores of students taught in rural and urban areas using dictogloss.

In testing the hypothesis, scores relating to the performance of students in rural and urban areas exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy were computed and subjected to statistical analysis involving t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significant. The result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 revealed that there is no significant difference in the posttest mean scores of students in rural and urban areas exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy ($t_{cal}= 1.173$; $P> 0.05$). The null hypothesis is not rejected. The findings of this study revealed that the students' academic performance in listening comprehension prior to the experiments was low. The findings of the study also showed that the use of dictogloss had a significant effect on students' academic performance in English Language. The students taught using dictogloss achieved significantly higher than those taught using the conventional method. This result is in agreement with the result of Zheng (2006) who reported that dictogloss positively affects the written performance of English Foreign Language (EFL) learners in English Language. The result of this study also showed that the use of dictogloss enhances both students' academic performance and comprehension in English Language.

The findings also revealed that there is significant difference in the posttest mean scores of students exposed to dictogloss teaching strategy and the group not exposed in listening comprehension. The result of Hypothesis 1 revealed that the group exposed to dictogloss performed better than the group exposed to the conventional method. It helped to depict the impacts of the treatment on the academic performance of the students.

Dictogloss also had been found to be effective before and during the treatment. Jibir-Daura (2013) examined some students on dictogloss focusing on their listening comprehension and discovered that there was a significant positive effect of dictogloss on students' academic performance.

The findings also revealed significant effect of gender on academic performance of students exposed to dictogloss strategy. The findings also show that male students learned and performed more with dictogloss than their female counterparts. In this study, students in the dictogloss group were grouped and asked to share interest and compare knowledge; female students tend to be timid than their male counterpart, this might have assisted in their better academic performance using dictogloss. The outcome of gender influence in both experimental groups was contrary to the findings of most studies outside Nigeria. For instance, Liu (2006) recorded significant better performances of girls in comprehension and English Language than boys.

The findings show that there is no significant differences in the posttest mean scores of students exposed to both strategies in rural and urban areas. Urban school students performed significantly better than rural school students when dictogloss strategy was used.

The finding is in line with Iyioke (2008) finding who found that students in the urban areas comprehend better than those from rural areas, most of who are preoccupied with menial jobs and farm work a lot of times. These must have influenced the outcome on the effect of location when dictogloss strategy was used.

This implies this strategy used for the study had positive effect on the students' performance in listening comprehension as the students exposed to this strategy performed better than those in control group. This study revealed that students in rural area performed low when exposed to dictogloss. On the other hand, students in urban area performed better in dictogloss. Despite the differences in the scores of students when exposed to this strategy, students from these locations still performed better than students exposed to the conventional method.

1.1.5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that dictogloss strategy used in this study is effective in enhancing academic performance in listening comprehension instruction. This means when the teachers use dictogloss strategy, the academic performance of students' listening comprehension will significantly improve. It is also concluded that gender has no significant effect on academic performance when dictogloss strategy was used. Also, location has significant effect on academic performance when dictogloss was adopted.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers of English Language in Secondary schools should adopt the use of the dictogloss in teaching Listening Comprehension.
2. Government should conduct workshops on the use of the dictogloss strategy for teachers of English Language so as to get them acquainted with the strategies in the teaching of listening comprehension.
3. Curriculum planners and textbook writers should identify studies that incorporate the skills necessary for listening comprehension in textbooks which will ease gradual depart from the conventional method of teaching.

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Table 1: Effect of Dictogloss Teaching Strategy on Students' Academic Performance in Listening Comprehension.

Group	N	Pretest		Post test	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	SD
Dictogloss	60	8.60	5.257	10.08	4.147
Conventional	60	5.83	4.633	9.08	4.435

Table 2: T-test Showing Posttest Mean Score of Students' Listening Comprehension in Dictogloss Teaching Strategy and the Control Group

Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	t _{cal}
Dictogloss	60	10.08	4.147	118	3.47*
Control	60	9.08	4.435		

P<0.05

Table 3: T-test showing the Performance of Male and Female Students exposed to Dictogloss Teaching Strategy

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	df	t_{cal}	Sig
Male	36	10.33	3.286	58	2.261*	0.028
Female	24	7.92	5.004			

P<0.05

Table 4: T-test showing the Performance of Students exposed to Dictogloss Teaching Strategy by Location

Location	N	Mean	S.D	df	t_{cal}	Sig.
Urban	30	10.00	4.418	58	1.173	0.245
Rural	30	8.73	3.930			