

**Impact of Creative Dramatic Techniques on Listening skills of  
Private Nursery School's Pupil in Ondo-West Local Government,  
Ondo State**

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**Abstract**

Poor acquisition of listening skill has been lamented by stakeholders in the education system in recent years especially at the primary schools level. Evidence has shown that, this problem could be traced to nursery education. Though, researchers have observed that improving this scenario requires doing activities, a learning and teaching process that creative dramatics techniques could achieve. More so, there is a dearth of studies on creative dramatics techniques as it relates to listening skill in private nursery schools in Ondo State. It is against this background that the study investigates the impact of creative dramatics techniques (Pantomime and Dramatization of Poem) on listening (comprehensive listening and discriminative listening) skills among private nursery school's pupils in Ondo West Local Government, Ondo State.

Questionnaire was used to gather data from 105 teachers purposively selected from 53 private nursery schools. The results showed that creative dramatics techniques and listening skills have strong correlation ( $R = 0.556$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), and that Dramatization of poem ( $\beta = 0.51$ ,  $t = 9.998$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) contributes significantly to listening skills than pantomime ( $\beta = 0.14$ ,  $t = 4.238$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). It is therefore recommended that government and stakeholders should put in place training that will improve teachers' knowledge in creative dramatics, especially for nursery schools' teachers. In conclusion, adopting pantomime and dramatization of poem in nursery school will stimulate the learning capacity of the pupils in nursery school to easily capture the skills required to cultivate comprehensive and discriminative exercises.

**Keywords:** Creative dramatics, dramatization of poem, listening skills, pantomime.

### **Introduction**

Fundamentally, quality nursery education serves as bedrock upon which quality primary education can be sustained and promoted. The need for quality nursery education in Nigeria has never been greater than this dispensation at which both registered and unregistered nursery schools spring up at every corner of the cities. It is important to know that if the foundation is faulty, it will systematically and structurally affect the whole educational system. It is saddened to know that most nursery education in Nigeria is left in the hands of private individuals and groups whose main objectives are monetary benefits (Unuigbokhai & Jimah, 2011). In this scenario, where the administration of nursery education is left in the hands of private individuals with little or no supervision from the government, effective implementation of the policy on nursery education is bound to be a failure.

Nursery education is the care, protection, stimulation and learning promoted in children from 0-4 years in a crèche or nursery (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2012). Those early years are the best opportunity for a child's brain to develop the connection they need to be healthy, capable and successful adults. The connections needed for many important abilities like motivation, self-regulation, problem solving and communication are formed in early years. If not formed, it is harder for these essential brain connection to be formed later in life. With these peculiarities and importance of nursery education in Nigeria, Obiweluozor (2015) laments that there is no standard curriculum to guide the activities of teachers and where the curriculum has been improvised, the teachers are neither trained nor qualified as an early child care specialists.

Moreover, there are many ill-equipped as well as substandard private nursery schools littering all over Nigeria. It was also noticed that many schools, in trying to impress the parents, exposed the children to academic activities meant for older children (Salami, 2016). Despite the situation of nursery education in Nigeria, the socio-economic problems in the nation compelled parents to work regardless of the ages of their children. Parents are aware that physical, mental and emotional development of their children are important at these stages, hence, compulsory enrolment of their children in nursery school. Though, the parents believe that quality child development that can replace home nurturing can only be actualized in a well organised nursery school with quality facilities as well as cleaned and hygienic environment but it is unfortunate that most nursery schools lack these qualities.

In terms of quality of nursery education, Oyeyemi (2014) posits that there are exceptions. There are few nursery schools established by some universities, colleges of education, companies and a few rich individuals. Domike and Odey (2012) observe that the curriculum of a typical nursery school owned by most private individuals include alphabets, numbers, nursery, rhymes, colouring and story time and, in some cases, rudiments of reading and arithmetic. The emphasis of most nursery schools is on the intellectual development of the pupils. They revealed that once pupils can recite and memorize poem, verses and passages, the school is adjudged as quality school.

From the above observations, it is evident that for the children to memorize and recite poem verses, rhymes and passages, their listening skills need to be developed. Pearson (2010) notes that literacy for young children begins with speaking and listening to words and sentences, while Roskos, Tabors and Lanhart (2009) affirm that oral language is the foundation of learning to read and write. According to Wilson (1997), children who do not develop good listening and speaking skills will have life-long consequences because of their defect. Therefore, there is a real need for listening skill training of young children today.

Several studies have shown that, there is more to listening than the physical process of perception and modification of sound waves by the human ear. As claim by Gaines (2007:74), listening is not only done in order to set up communication, but at the same time it develops learning, understanding and mental skills. In the same vain, Selma and Nazli (2015) maintain that listening means making choices from among what is heard, organizing them, integrating what is transferred by the speaker with background knowledge and structuring them mentally. Meanwhile, through history there seems to have been a deficiency in the development of listening skill (Feagin, 1986). This concern was expressed as far back as shakespeare's time when he remarked, "it is the disease of not listening .... That I am troubled withal" (King Henry iv, 1603; Feagin, 1986:1).

It is disheartening that the issue of poor acquisition of listening skill in nursery schools still remains unsolved mystery in Nigeria. To this end, researchers are searching for more creative and doing activities to improve the listening of students at all levels of education. Presently, several studies have concentrated attention on the applicability of creative dramatics to improve listening skill among students .Unfortunately, different creative dramatics techniques have been empirically studies with little or no study\_on the impact of pantomime and dramatization of poem on listening skill among pupils in nursery schools. Studies have found that pantomime could enhance listening among secondary and primary schools (Hartaty, 2018; Zdatev, Zywczyriski\_&Wacewic, 2020) while little or no empirical studies exist on the impact of both pantomime and dramatization of poem on listening skill in nursery schools.

With this in mind, the present study therefore, investigates the impact of creative dramatics (Pantomime and dramatization of poems) on listening (comprehension and discriminative listening) skills in nursery education in some selected schools in Ondo West Local Government, Ondo State.

### **Statement of the problem**

Though, researchers have observed that improving poor listening skill among pupils requires doing activities, a learning and teaching process that creative dramatics could achieve. It is disheartening to know that the creative dramatics as a teaching method is sparingly used in nursery education in Nigeria. In fact, nursery schools where creative dramatics are used only concentrate on improvisation and role play techniques. Moreso, there is a dearth of studies on pantomime and dramatization of poem as a creative dramatics techniques as it relates to listening skill in nursery schools in Ondo State. It is against this background that the study determines to investigate the impact of creative dramatics techniques (Pantomime and dramatization of poem) on listening (comprehensive listening and discriminative listening) skills in nursery schools in Ondo West Local Government, Ondo State.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of creative dramatics techniques on listening skill in nursery schools in Ondo State. Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following purposes:

- a. To investigate the relationship between creative dramatics and listening skills among nursery school pupils in Ondo West Local Government Ondo State.
- b. To examine the relative contribution of dramatization of poem and pantomime on listening skills among nursery school pupils in Ondo West Local Government State.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: there is no significant relationship between creative dramatics and listening skills among nursery school pupils.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: there is no relative contribution of dramatization of poem and pantomime to listening skill among pupils of nursery school.

### **Significance of the Study**

It is obvious that in any system, which education is, the dysfunction of a part will operationally affect the whole issues of student's deficiencies in listening and speaking skills at different level of the education system have become the concern to all stakeholders. Thus, an investigation into the impact of creative dramatics on listening among nursery schools in Ondo State would be significant in the following ways:

First, this study will sensitize the nursery school teachers on possible teaching method to improve the listening of their pupils.

Secondly, the proprietors and head teachers of nursery schools will find the study of great benefit as the implementation of the recommendations can create a new strategy and technique of improving the quality of teaching and learning in nursery classes.

Finally, the policy makers will also find the results of the study useful in the planning of Early Child Care and Development Education and the Basic Education's curriculum and syllabus in the state and nation at large.

### **Methodology**

This study used a descriptive survey design. This design was also suitable for this study because the sampled pupils had undergone the same experience of learning in nursery one. The population of the study consisted of all teachers of private nursery schools in Ondo West Local Government Area.

In order to get a manageable sample that served a good representative of the study, purposive sampling technique was used to sample 105 teachers of 53 private nursery schools based on accessibility,

proximity, qualified and experienced nursery school teachers and officially registered nursery schools.

Data for the study were collected from primary source. The instrument that was used to collect data is named **Teacher Creative Dramatics Questionnaires (TCDQ)** in which only 97 were completely filled and returned by teachers. Thus representing 92.38% rate of returns. The data collected was analysed using inferential statistics. Hypothesis 1 was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) while hypothesis 2 was tested with Regression at 0.05 level of significance.

## Result

### Testing of the Hypotheses

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between creative dramatics and listening skills among nursery school pupils.

**Table 1: Summary table of correlation analysis between creative dramatics and listening skills.**

	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Correlation (R)	Sig
Creative Dramatics Techniques	97	28.443	2.91531	.556**	.000
Listening Skills	97	31.6804	4.07622		

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

The correlation of analysis on the relationship between creative dramatics and listening skills shows strong correlation between the variables ( $R = 0.556$ ). The P-value = 0.000 is less than 0.05 alpha level, this shows a significant relationship between creative dramatics and listening skills.

Also from the mean difference, it can be deduced that creative dramatic techniques mean value (28.443) is less than listening skills mean value (31.6804). This implies that creative dramatic techniques have a significantly impact on listening skills of pupils in nursery schools. In view of this,  $H_{01}$  was rejected.

$H_{02}$ : Dramatisation of poem and pantomime have no relative contribution to listening skills among pupils of nursery school.

**Table 2: Relative Contribution of Dramatisation of Poem and Pantomime on Listening Skill.**

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	6.852	2.007		3.415	.001
Dramatisation of Poem	.510	.051	.660	9.998	.000
Pantomime	.135	.032	.280	4.238	.000



Table 2 shows the relative contribution of independent variables on dependent variable (listening skill). Dramatisation of poem ( $\beta = 0.51$ ,  $t = 9.998$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) and Pantomime ( $\beta = 0.14$ ,  $t = 4.238$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) contributed significantly to listening skill. This implies that the two independent variables contributed significantly to the dependent variable. Nevertheless, the result shows that Dramatization of poem contributed significantly to listening skills than pantomime among pupils of nursery school.

### **Discussion of Findings**

From the finding, it can be deduced that creative dramatics techniques have a significant relationship with listening skill among nursery school pupils. Activities involved in both creative dramatics techniques positively stimulate the pupils towards the development of discriminating and comprehensive listening skills. These findings corroborated CSikszentmihalyi's (1997) theory of flow which observed that there must be a balance between the person's ability to do something and the opportunity to do it. The challenge should not be too high, because that might cause frustration and anxiety.

On the other hand, if it is too low, people can get too relaxed or bored. Yavuz (2017) supported CSikszentmihalyi's observation that creative dramatics motivates and lower anxiety level of learners. However, the finding did not collaborate with Alice's (1998) observation that using creative dramatics techniques of dramatization of poem and pantomime had no statistical significance to listening skill.

The reason for the insignificance of creative dramatics techniques in listening skills in Alice's (1998) observation may be the contributions of other creative dramatics processes such as story creation, sensory impressions, mood development and the grade fifth students sampled for the study.

Nevertheless, the study revealed that dramatization of poem contributed significantly than pantomime in the teaching of nursery school's pupils listening skills. One of the reasons that can be adduced to this is the perception that the activities of pantomime was stressful in teaching listening skills. It can also be concluded that dramatization of poem has constantly be used by some of the teachers in teaching rhythms and poem.

### **Summary of Findings**

The findings are as follows:

Firstly, There was a strong correlation between creative dramatics and listening skills. This implies therefore that creative dramatics techniques have a significant relationship with listening skills.

Secondly, pantomime and dramatization of poem were found to significantly contributed to listening skill. Surprisingly, dramatization of poem contributed significantly than pantomime in listening skills.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Although, teaching nursery pupils was not an easy task for any teacher especially when considering the learning environment in the nursery schools, nevertheless, the results of this study has shown that adopting creative dramatics techniques in the classroom will have a remarkable impact in the development of comprehensive and discriminative skills of the pupils.

In adopting creative dramatics technique with pupils in nursery classes, there are several factors that need to be considered and challenges that need to be resolved. Even though, the study was considered objectively achieved, not all expectations based on the rigidity of activities involved were accomplished. In addition, mastery of activities involved in pantomime would in turn increase the pupils' enthusiasm in solving complex task as they advance in their studies. Premised on the findings

that dramatization of poem would help better in improving the pupils' listening skills as it contributed significantly. Thereby, it is recommended that government and stakeholders should endeavour to put in place training that will improve teachers' knowledge in creative dramatics, especially for nursery schools' teachers.

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