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Impact Of The Media On The Senior Secondary School Students Performance In Speech Work In English Language

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Introduction.

Most Nigerian students learn English Language as a second Language (L2). They have acquired their mother tongues (L1) and are very proficient in them before entering the school. In most cases, many secondary school students do not have the opportunity to use English language at home. For such students, English Language learning and use is restricted to the classroom. Therefore, these students use their mother tongue more in the school environment, at home and for interpersonal relationships. These practices are negatively affecting the production of some sounds in English Language, which is the language of education, government, commerce and international communication.

Oracy skill is one of the four basic language skills. Spoken English was in the past, relegated to the background, but today the story has changed. In those days, students spent five years in the secondary schools with little or no knowledge of oral English. According to Onuigbo (1990) what was actually important to those students then was the ability to write correct English.

However, research has shown that mastery of both spoken and written forms is essential for proper language use. The spoken and written form are undoubtedly so closely related that improper manipulation of one, adversely affects the other. Furthermore, we must remember that in the process of language learning one learns to speak before thinking of writing. According to Gimson, (2008) the written form is an attempt to reflect the spoken form. Therefore, if the primacy of speech over written is not in doubt and if efficient speech habit presupposes efficient performance in the written form, there is a great need for proper control of the students' speech habits at the early stage of their English learning and use.

To be good speakers, the students need to master the sounds of the English Language; word, stress, rhythm, sentence stress and intonation. To process the oral skill. According to Gbenedio (1995) implies that one is able to express oneself clearly in flexible conversation language in the feature of which are nationally and internationally accepted.

In a multilingual nation like Nigeria, English Language has to be used, to speak to people from other ethnic groups. As a student, one need to speak to express oneself in the class and as a teacher, it is very compulsory to speak clearly for students to comprehend what they are being taught. Gbenedio (1995) said that, a good grounding in speech is therefore seen as consisting of a good basic for learning to read and write in a well planned language course.

The media is a vital source whereby good speaking can be learnt. Virtually all of the programmes broadcast on radio and television are through speech, some programmes broadcast on the radio can easily influence the oral skills of listeners. Radio and Television Stations like British Broadcasting Service, (BBC) Voice of America (VOA) Cable Network (CNN) Digital Satellite Television (DSTV) Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) could improve students speaking skills as they can listen to native speakers. On the other hand, local radio and television stations could also assist students in oral skills

as some of these stations would give the students spoken skills that are near-native speakers skill. Some of these stations are Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and African Independent Television (AIT) to mention a few. These media stations have programmes such as news, debate and comments on public affairs. Most of these talks are given by experts and highly educated individuals. These experts speak very good English, which can influence listeners.

Apart from the aforementioned programmes, there is educational broadcasting on radio and television. According to Adeosun (1998) educational broadcasting refers to the broadcast of educational programme through the process of mass communication to achieve specific objectives, which are supposed to reflect in the attitude of the listeners.

According to American Heritage Dictionary (2000), mass media is a means of public communication reaching a large audience through the television radio and the newspaper. Some media houses in Nigeria offer educational services to students. Specifically the Federal Radio Corporation Nigeria (FRCN) has a programme on English Language besides other educational services.

Educational radio (E.R) are the educational programmes broadcast through the radio. These are broadcast in Nigeria by the local radio stations and they are planned in line with the curriculum of the school. In most cases, the programmes are handled by specialists in specific areas of learning.

The educational radio seems to be advantageous for many reasons. It stimulates imagination as many students only hear but do not see the speakers' students are also able to listen to experts on the subject through the educational radio broadcast. They also acquire listening skills, which help them in the classroom when the teacher is teaching them. Moreover, if properly and consistently employed, it could be a good way of reducing the shortage of teachers.

However, the problem with educational radio today includes that of bad planning. Teachers are not often informed about the programmes, which are often relayed at odd times. Several schools do not even have the radio and where they do, they do not use it for classroom instruction.

Educational television refers to the transmission of educational programmes through the television. This has been employed in many countries with varying degree of success. Of note is the case of Cote d'Ivoire, (Ivory Coast), where educational television was gainfully employed to tackle the problem of under-enrolment in the primary school, Okunrotifa (1974).

There are several educational programmes on Ekiti State Broadcasting Service (ESBS) Ekiti State Television (EKTV) and National Television Authority (N.T.A), which are meant for primary and secondary schools. The EKTV air, school challenge, junior school debate and junior brain.

On N.T.A, there are programmes like school debate, windows, work-it-out, young scholars, take a step, the challenge, tale by moonlight

The debates seem to be a good way to develop oral skills, the school challenge on NTA and EKTV are in form of quiz in which participants are tested in all subjects, English Language inclusive. Sometimes, the oral skill is tested. The school on air is a programme designed to rotate the school subjects quarterly. Sometimes, oral skills are emphasized during the English Language lessons. The moonlit

tale is designed for primary school pupils. This programme is designed to influence the speaking skills right from primary school because the presenters are good speakers of the English Language.

This research work is to find out the impact of the media (Television and Radio on the oral skills of Senior Secondary School in Ado – Ekiti Local Government Area.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of poor and wrong articulation of English Language sounds had been noticed among secondary school students in Ekiti State. Teachers and educated parents had noticed this and had raised the issue at the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings. An observation by these researchers who went round the schools to interact with students and teachers discovered that most teachers do not teach speech work and some of those who taught it were not good models and did not use resources that could assist the students. Therefore, the study investigated the impact of media on the oral performance of senior secondary school students.

Research Questions

As a result of the problem discussed above, the following research questions were raised.

- i. Will there be any difference in the performance of students who listened to radio or watched television educational programmes in speech work?
- ii. Do the media education programmes influence female students more than male students in their oral performance?

Research Hypotheses.

Based on the research questions raised above, the following hypotheses were generated

- i. There is no significant difference between students who watched television or listened to radio educational programmes and those who do not in their performance in speech work.
- ii. There is no significant difference between the influence of gender on the performance of students in speech work as a result of listening to radio or watching television educational programmes.

Literature Review.

Language is very relevant in all aspects of broadcasting either on the radio or television. Oral production is the most important tool employed on the radio or television to communicate to the audience. For instance, the singers, preacher speaks to reach out to their audience.

The place of media for the purpose of this study focuses on radio and television. Radio and television are the most common electronic media found in almost every home in Ekiti State. This is more common than the print media like newspapers. The availability of these media houses provided avenue for the increased flow of information. Where the citizens have access to information through the mass media, the people are better equipped not only to bring about the liberation of man and his full development but also the overall development of the community. Bamigbose (1994) says that when the

people are well informed, they become more active participants and members of society. This is also true about learning that when students are taught through good channels; they learn better, therefore, the importance of both the electronic and print media in teaching language skills such as oracy skills cannot be over emphasized. Electronic media such as radio, television, tape-recorders, telephone and other audio-visuals and more recently to the computer are useful in the teaching of oracy skills to Senior Secondary School students.

Learning with media is a complementary process within which representations are constructed and procedures performed, sometimes, by the learner and sometimes by the medium. Media has certain characteristics that interact with learner and task. Such characteristics are the structure, formation and modification of mental models. Solomon (1993) says that media such as books and magazines, video media, computer software possess particular characteristics that make them both more and less suitable for the accomplishment of certain kinds of learning tasks. He analysed media in terms of their “cognitive relevant” capabilities, that is, in terms of those characteristics that affect the ways in which individuals present information. Salmon further states that these capabilities relate to three aspects of each medium: its technology, symbol system and processing capabilities. “Technology” refers to the physical, mechanical, or electronic capabilities that determine a medium function. “Symbol systems” are sets of symbolic text, pictures, numbers, graphs and musical scores that exemplify symbol systems. “Processing capabilities” refer to a medium ability to operate on symbol systems in specified ways – for example, by displaying, receiving, storing, retrieving, organizing, transforming, or evaluating whatever information is available through a particular symbol system. From the above, learning with media is complementary process within which a learner and a medium interact to expand or reform the learners mental model of a particular phenomenon.

The book still remains the most common medium encountered in school learning. The book as a learning medium can be characterized by the primary feature of its technology that is stability, by its symbol systems (printer text, pictures and graphics and by the way it influences specific processes (reading). The primary symbol system used in books and other print media consists of orthographic symbols that, in Western culture, are words composed of phonemic graphics, horizontally arrayed from left to right. This arrangement is stable in most printed school media. Reading processes including articulation of sounds interact with prior knowledge and skill in a way that relies heavily on the stability of text to aid comprehension, learning and articulation of sounds. Inclusion of pictures in texts have been found to aid reading and articulation of words. Stone and Glock (1981) found that the use and effectiveness of pictures are related to prior knowledge and more knowledgeable readers tend to build mental models from existing knowledge and to elaborate on them using information from the text. The less knowledgeable readers tend to rely more heavily on pictures or diagrams to construct mental representations of new information. Younger children who may not have sufficient prior knowledge from which to generate elaborate mental models may benefit most from pictures to aid this learning process.

Television or any audio visual medium differs from books in several ways that may affect cognitive structures and processes. The technology of these media makes both their verbal and visual symbol systems transient rather than stable. Linguistic information can be orthographic (as in captioned films) but it is more oral, like images on the screen disappear very quickly, the two symbols oral and images in case of television are presented simultaneously learners may process the information in video media very differently from the way they process similar information in books and magazines.

Anderson (1986) Barggett (1982) found that television and video influence the attention of children as children continually monitor the audio portion of a television presentation as a superficial level and their visual attention is triggered by particular audio cues such as women and children voices, peculiar voices, sound effects and auditory changes.

Video media seem to have particular effects on learners cognitive mechanisms, through the simultaneous presentation of auditory and visual information, the processing pace required by transient presentations of information, and the ways in which dynamic qualities might affect a learners mental models.

Baggett and Ehrefeuctt (1983) Dickson (1985) found that combined use of the two symbol systems (audio and visual, and audio only retains some of the characteristics of the original symbol system and that children recall sounds and expressive language from audio track and visual details from the track.

Computers are also important in the teaching of oracy skills. Computers can be distinguished from the television and video by what they can do with information, that is, by their ability to process symbols and symbol system. Computers can transform information in one symbol system to that in another and they can “proceduralize” information. Spiro and Jehny (1990) say that a computer with a voice synthesizer can change typed text (i.e print) into speech: using an integrated software package. This kind of computer will be good for speech work.

The radio and television, which are the commonest electronic media found in Nigeria today will be most appropriate for the teaching of oracy skills. Salau (2006) reported that the first major successful application of the media especially television in promoting literacy was undertaken in Italy. UNESCO (1976) described the project as the earliest large scale effort to use television in promoting literacy. Reports on the project by UNESCO states that “Television serves to stimulate learning, to pace the course, and to enrich the class with material not likely to be available to classroom monitor”

In Oyo State, television was used in literacy instruction. Salau (2006) citing Aderinoye says that the objective of that television instructional programme was to enable the adult learner to be able to read and write functionally. The report of the study showed that the programme was successful to the extent that communities that were not covered requested for the extension of the programmes to their areas. The implication of this, is that, the television programme enlisted and sustained the interests of the listeners in learning through television.

In Ekiti State, the Ekiti State Broadcasting Corporation (ESBC) broadcasts a programme, tagged, “Learn to Read and Write” in the mother tongue. Those who enrolled for the programme usually listen to the broadcast twice daily, morning and evening. There are primers that were specifically designed for the programme. The facilitator takes the listeners through the primers and give them assignments at the end of each broadcast. Okoye (1983) found that sex differences had little or no effect on performance in Mathematics and English Language and that the essential achievements by learners depend more on personal efforts. This implies that, the achievement of individual could be traced to the individuals’ efforts after a conducive environment has been created.

Adesoji (2000) in a study on problem-solving difficulties involving male and female found that more girls than boys had difficulties in three of the stages of problem solving. They concluded that boys are better at problem solving than girls.

In summary the place of media is very important in the teaching of oracy skills because it affords the learners the opportunity to do three things at the same time, that is, listening, seeing and doing (imitation of sound production)

Method of Study

The design of the study is a quasi-experimental design. It involved pretest and post test for experimental and control groups. The study was designed to highlight the impact of media on the achievements of Senior Secondary Schools students

Population and Samples.

The population of the study is all the Senior Secondary Schools in Ekiti State. The samples of the study consisted of 200 secondary school students who were purposively selected from four secondary schools. The samples were Senior Secondary School class two students. These schools were selected from both urban and rural areas. The samples for the study consisted of 200 secondary school students who were selected through purposively sampling technique. The students who have access to media like DSTV and radio were put in the experimental group while those who had no access to DSTV were in the control group.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was an achievement test in English \Language specifically on speech work. The instrument consisted of twenty five items which tested the students knowledge in the area of segmental features, that is, vowel and consonant sounds and supra segmental, that is stress and intonation.

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by experts in language education using criteria in terms of clarity, language length and relevance to the research hypotheses.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was established by selecting two senior secondary schools that would not take part in the real experiment. These schools were selected through stratified sampling technique.

A sample of 40 students were purposively selected as follows; 20 of the students in the experimental group were selected based on their access to DSTV and a specific radio station while 20 students in control group were selected from among students who had no access to DSTV and a specific radio station. Those in the experimental group were guided by the researcher on what to do with the DSTV stations and radio as they met the researcher thrice in a week in addition to instructions in speech work. The control group had no access to the DSTV and radio guidelines but were allowed to receive instructions in speech work. The experimental and control groups were in different schools in different locations. The experimental sessions lasted three weeks, the data collected were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical analysis. A correlation coefficient of 0.81 was obtained

which was considered good enough for the study.

Research Procedure

The experimental sessions lasted six weeks. The students in both experimental and control groups were subjected to pre-test before the commencement of the experiment. The experimental group in different locations had contacts with the researcher thrice in a week. The students in the experimental group were guided to watch some programmes on specific DSTV stations, in addition, they were to listen to specific programme on two different radio stations, one international and one national. The control group had no access to the DSTV and radio station but receive instruction on speech work.

At the end of the experimental sessions, the two groups were subjected to an achievement test.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the achievements test administered on the student were subjected to t-test statistics

Results and Discussion

There is no significance difference between the pre-test scores of students in the experimental group and the control group

Table 1

t-test analysis of pre-test scores of students in the experimental and control group

Group	N	X	df	t-cal	t-table	Remark
Experimental	100	63.87	198	1.54	1.96	
Control	100	62.94				

- * Not significant. $P \neq 0.05$

Table one above shows that the calculated 1.54 is less than the t- table value. Therefore the null hypotheses is retained. There is no significant difference between the pre-test scores of the students in the experimental and control group.

The second hypothesis stated that there was no significant difference between the achievement of students who watched television and listened to radio and those who did not.

Table 11

Analysis of post-test scores of students in experimental and control groups in speech work.

Group	N	X	SD	df	t-table	t-cal	Remark
Experimental	100	71.40	8.92	98	7.44	1.96	X
Control	100	61.50	9.82				

• = significant at $P \leq 0.005$.

The table above revealed that the calculated t-value 7.44 is greater than the table value 1.96. This means that there is significant difference between the performance of the subjects in the experimental group and the control group.

The third hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between the achievement of the male and female students in the experimental group and the control group.

Table 3

Analysis of achievement scores of male and female samples.

Group	N	X	SO	df	t-cal	t-table	Remark
Male	64	76.15	7.46	98	6.74	1.98	X
Female	36	68.62	8.36				

• = significant at $P \leq 0.05$.

The table above shows that the t-calculated is 6.74 while the t-table is 1.98. This implies that there is significant difference between the performance of male and female students.

Discussion.

The findings of the hypothesis one showed that the subjects in the experimental and the control were homogenous as at the commencement of the study. There is a slight difference in the mean scores of the students in the experimental group and control group. The findings from the analysis of the data collected in respect of hypothesis two showed that the students in the experimental group had higher achievement in the speech work than those in the control group. The implication is that listening to media, such as television and radio are effective means of improving students' performance in speech work. These findings buttress the findings of Salau (2006) that television programmes helped adult

learners to read fluently. They also corroborate the findings of Anderson (1986) that television and video influence the attention of the learners hence they are effective means of teaching oracy skills.

The study further buttressed the findings of Dickson (1985) that the use of two symbol systems, audio and visual results aid recall than audio only.

The findings about gender influence showed that male students in the experimental group have higher achievements than their female counterparts as reflected by the means of the achievement score. This study contradicted the view of Adodo (2005) Adesoji (2000) that females are better achievers when it comes to the study of language.

On the other hand, the study corroborates the findings of Okoye (1983) that sex had little or no effect on performance in Mathematics and English language and that the achievement by learners depends on the individual. The position of this study is that if individuals are exposed to good learning environments with equal opportunity the achievement of the individual will now depend on their personal efforts and commitment to the study. The findings of this study therefore suggest that media is a good resource for teaching of speaking skills

Conclusion

The issue of instructional strategy is very vital in learning. This study has proved that individuals can be encouraged to learn through resources that they can find in their environments.

Recommendations

As a result of the findings of this study, language teachers are advised to encourage their students to listen to radio and watch television educational programmes. They should also read newspapers in order to increase their vocabulary building. Government should provide enabling environment that could make the use of television and radio possible as aids to language learning.

The government also should encourage reading of newspapers by students by equipping the schools with funds with which to buy newspapers.

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