

Curriculum implementation: strategies for mounting listening skills among junior secondary school students

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| Article Info | Abstract |
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| <p>Article History Submitted: 22 January 2018 Revised: 29 March 2018 Published: 13 April 2018</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords Education Curriculum implementation Classroom Listening Listening skills</p> | <p>Education requires rethinking as the country faces the demands of educational and socio-economic transformation of different kinds such to provide learners' opportunities to acquire knowledge; to have skills for literacy, numeracy, creativity and ability to have free communication and listening skills. The purpose of this research was to examine the strategies that can be used to develop listening skills needed for junior secondary school students. The methodology used for the study was survey research design. The sample consisted of staff and junior students with the total of 271. The majority of those who filled the questionnaires reported that many students were not found to be willing to be in the class. It was only a few who responded to their teacher. Many students remain dull because teachers are not using the appropriate method of teaching thereby making the class bored for them. Majority of the respondents disagree that teachers don't give instruction in the class. It was therefore, recommended that teachers/staff should instruct the students to have more extensive listening in their spare time, provide media and other resource that can aid teaching and enhance students' comprehension in class. These can give them a quick flash back even while at home, hence supporting improved curriculum implementation and ultimately improved listening skill, for academic success comes from listening and from what is or has been thought either inside or outside of the classroom.</p> |

1. Introduction

Education requires rethinking as the country faces the demands of educational and socio-economic transformation of its kinds; to provide learners' opportunities to acquire knowledge; to have skills for literacy, numeracy, creativity and be able to have free communication and listening skills. The objective of this study was to examine the strategies that can be used to develop listening skills needed for junior secondary school students. Learning listening has been mounted and advanced especially in media and in learning materials used in the cities. There are many choices of listening materials such as CD, DVD, or video applied in the classroom. However, there are many evidences that listening lacks attention of teachers. When they applied many learning competencies in the classroom, listening skill was always accelerated or reduced. Learning course methodology was discussed and analyzed slightly, and there was a tendency for the teachers that listening was ordinary activity in life. The other factor was lack of teachers' commitment to apply an appropriate approach in listening like using integrative skills which affect listening as an indicator to teach it in haste. Reading and listening skills are as primary in learning language skill.

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According to Howatt and Dakin (1974), listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This process involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, the speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously. Thomlison's (1984) definition of listening includes "active listening," which goes beyond comprehending as understanding the message content, to comprehension as an act of empathetic understanding of the speaker. Furthermore, Gordon (2005) argues that empathy is essential to listening and contends that it is more than a polite attempt to identify a speaker's perspectives. Rather more importantly, empathetic understanding expands to "egocentric prosocial behavior". Thus, the listener altruistically acknowledges concern for the speaker's welfare and interests. Ronald and Roskelly (1998) define listening as an active process requiring the same skills of prediction, hypothesizing, checking, revising, and generalizing that writing and reading demand; and these authors present specific exercises to make students active listeners who are aware of the "inner voice" one hears when writing.

People spend more than 45 percent of their communication time for listening, according to Lee and Hatesohl (1993). The relevance of critical listening with learning listening is to prepare the students in order to be the best solver, make the better decision, and maintain long life education. Listening is very important in communicating with others. According to Miller (2003), more than forty percent of our daily communication is spent on listening, thirty-five percent on speaking, about sixteen percent on reading, and only nine percent on writing. In the five respects of learning English, listening (understanding), speaking, reading, writing and translating, which represent university students' general ability of English, listening is the most important. However, listening is usually the weakest point for most students because of less and incompatible practice.

It is important for the students to be independent thinker since there are many jobs needed skillful workers which have critical listening ability. All this time, critical listening ability has not absorbed yet to the students' soul, so it could not be function maximally in the society. Meanwhile, high level cognitive learning could help the students to be independent students which could develop reflective and logical thinking to decide some problems.

Listening did not only comprehend the utterances of speakers, but also understood visual aspects in activities of listening comprehension. Based on those explanations, listening is a process included activity of listening sound of language and visual aspect, identify, interpret, value, and do reaction for the content of meaning. This term was used as the fundamental in development of active integrative listening learning model.

1.1. Literature review

Listening did not only comprehend the utterances of speakers, but also understood visual aspect in activities of listening comprehension. Based on those explanations, listening was a process included activity of listening sound of language and visual aspect, identify, interpret, value, and do reaction for the content of meaning. This term was used as the fundamental in development of active integrative listening learning model.

Some theories of active integrative listening learning referred to Vandergrift's theory (1999) (Flowerdew & Lindsay, 2005; Harris, 2007; Thompson et. al., 2009) explained that active integrative listening learning was focused on meta-cognitive knowledge started from planning, directed attention, selective interest, monitor, and evaluation. Flowerdew and Lindsay (2005) paid attention much to integrative listening learning like pre-listening, while-listening, and post listening. Thompson et al. (2009) also described active integrative listening learning which could be done into some steps like prepare for listening activity, apply listening model, value listening effectiveness, and implement new goal in listening activity.

There is a growing concern nowadays about the type of students schools produce. The industry is now questioning the integrity of the present day teachers. The policy makers, educators and the parents have also joined the chorus. In this article, critical theory was used to understand the nature of problems attributed to the students' low performance. Critical theory is based on the fact

that the respondents are human beings who need to be given freedom from the circumstances which seem to enslave them; and prescribe the type of behavior a democratic society is expected to entail. The approach is in agreement with the idea that; critical theory “provides the descriptive and normative bases for social inquiry aimed at decreasing domination and increasing freedom in all their forms” (Stanford Encyclopaedia, 2005). This seems to suggest that with critical theory the disempowered individuals are empowered. In this sense teachers have been criticized for the students’ poor academic performance because they are duty bound to make students go through all forms of testing. They have been isolated from other education stakeholders and students’ achievement is used to determine the teachers’ effectiveness. Teachers have been threatened with job losses every time when the results are not pleasing the parents and the public. They are facing ‘inequality’ and ‘discrimination’ in spite of the fact that students’ performance is determined by a number of factors which some teachers have no control over them. So, critical theory seeks to advance freedom and democracy for the betterment of individuals and society (Basit, 2010).

1.2. Curriculum implementation

The term curriculum implementation had been defined in different ways by different scholars. Garba (2004) viewed curriculum implementation as the process of putting the curriculum into work for the achievement of the goals for which the curriculum is designed. Okebukola (2004) described curriculum implementation as the translation of the objectives of the curriculum from paper to practice. In a nutshell, he also sees curriculum implementation as the translation of “theory into practice”, or “proposal into action”. In a similar concept of curriculum implementation as the actual engagement of learners with planned learning opportunities. It is the actual carrying-out of societal culture and/or government policies spelt out in the curriculum. It is a stage in curriculum process when in the midst of learning activities, the teacher and learners are involved in negotiation aimed at promoting learning. This is the interactive stage of the curriculum process which takes place in the classroom through the combined effort of the teachers, learner, school administrators and parents. It also integrates the application of physical facilities and the adoption of appropriate pedagogical strategies and methods. The quality of curriculum implementation of any society is the bedrock of its political, economic, scientific and technological well-being. Little wonder, it is always said that no society can rise above the standard of its education system.

The collaboration of parents, teachers and school leaders can enhance adequate teaching and learning thereby enhancing student listening skills while giving them education with quality in the classroom. As an affirmation on the above, it is stated that; one of the indicators of quality education being provided is cognitive achievement of learners through active listening to their teachers (Kimani et al., 2013). It has been said previously that school leaders, teachers and parents have a critical role in providing quality education for students. But it can be argued that for quality education to prevail all education stakeholders should take part in the translation, interpretation and implementation of policies regarding achievement of high standards of education, including students listening skills.

1.3. Concept of listening

Listening can be defined as the most important skill required for obtaining comprehensible input in one's first and any subsequent languages. It is a pervasive communicative event (Rost, 1991). She further stated that we listen considerably more than we read, write, or speak and discussed the importance of listening and how English learners need to listen to English in different situations and for different purposes in their real life, depending on each situation. Pierce (1998) stated that listening as an interactive, not passive process that the students need to make much effort and practice. In order to do well in listening, the listeners must have sufficient knowledge of the language. The listening is not a passive skill but an interactive process, which requires learners to have adequate knowledge of the language to decode the message, and the ability to apply different

strategies. Listening in language learning has undergone several important stages, from being assumed acquisition through exposure but not really taught to be viewed as a primary vehicle for language learning.

Richards (2002, as cited in Desouky, 2012) states that during the decades, developments in education, linguistics and sociology have led to the powerful theories of the nature of language comprehension and the active interest in the role of listening comprehension in second language acquisition. The following discussion elaborates on the topic from two aspects, namely, the relationship between listening and other language skills, and the practice of comprehensible input theory in listening.

In listening, the most widely used language skill, is often used in conjunction with the other skills of speaking, reading and writing. It is not only a skill area in language performance, but also a critical means of acquiring a second language. Listening provides opportunities to hear voices other than the teachers', enables students to acquire good speaking habits as a result of the spoken English they have absorbed, and helps to improve their pronunciation. Listening texts often provide excellent examples of functions such as apologizing, inviting and refusing. The process of listening, especially the bottom-up and top-down model, and schema-building activities are also applicable to reading. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, applied linguistics recognized that listening was the primary channel by which the learner gained access to L2 data, and that it therefore served as the trigger for acquisition (Rost, 1991).

To extract meaning from a listening text, students need to follow four basic steps as observed by (Nelson, 2003, as cited in Mejilla, Calero, & Salgado, 2014). Students need to;

- i. figure out the purpose for listening. Activate background knowledge of the topic in order to predict or anticipate content and identify appropriate listening strategies.
- ii. attend to the parts of the listening input that are relevant to the identified purpose and ignore the rest. This selectivity enables students to focus on specific items in the input and reduces the amount of information they have to hold in short-term memory in order to recognize it.
- iii. select top-down and bottom-up strategies that are appropriate to the listening task and use them flexibly and interactively. Students' comprehension improves and their confidence increases when they use top-down and bottom-up strategies simultaneously to construct meaning.
- iv. check comprehension while listening and when the listening task is over. Monitoring comprehension helps students detect inconsistencies and comprehension failures, directing them to use alternate strategies.

1.4. Concept of listening

It is important to look through the listening process, and know how listeners react when they are listening to a listening text. This importance is due to the fact that listeners are not tape recorders (Anderson & Lynch, 1988). But they are supposed to be active participants who process and create meaning by comparing the listening input to their prior linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge.

This can be highlighted that listening has three broad sets of processes as follows:

1. Perception of aural stimuli that refers to the physiological aspects of listening. It is a necessary aspect of listening comprehension, but it cannot be equated with it.
2. Attending to aural stimulus that involves active concentration by the listener. The listener must concentrate on the aural stimuli and must select what to pay attention to and what to disregard. Like perception, attending to stimuli is a necessary aspect of listening but, by itself, not a sufficient one.
3. Assigning meaning to aural stimuli is an interpretative act that involves personal, cultural, and linguistic matters interacting in complex ways.

Assigning meaning to aural stimuli can also involve the construction of meaning, even though something specific was not said and this is called inference. Also, listening process can be divided into 'bottom-up and 'top-down' processing. 'Bottom-up' means interpreting the lowest-level units first, and then proceeding to an interpretation of the rank above, and so on upwards.

Here, one relies on his knowledge of grammar, syntax, and lexis in order to achieve comprehension. On the other hand, 'top-down' means interpreting discourse starting with general units first, and then moving downwards. In this process the listener uses his background knowledge to understand the meaning of the message. This background knowledge may be previous knowledge about the topic, situational or contextual knowledge, or knowledge stored in long-term memory about the overall structure of events and the relationship between them (Richards, 2008).

According to Madkour (1991, as cited in Desouky, 2012), using the two processes of top down and 'bottom-up' associated with speaking includes these three levels as follows. The first level involves these skills:

- i. To combine all the separate pieces of information so as to understand the whole message.
- ii. To make inferences.
- iii. To understand the main idea and the organization of the speech.

The second level involves these skills:

- i. To understand the meaning of individual pieces of information in the text.
- ii. To understand the meaning of particular grammatical structures in the text.
- iii. To understand the meaning of the vocabulary used in the text.

The word "skill" refers to the way language is used, and is traditionally conceived as consisting of reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Richards, Platt, & Platt, 1992). Listening skills vary according to the purpose of listening, the listener and the context. However, one can put one's hand on the outstanding classifications of these skills. The literature is full of lists of listening skills that go around and orbit the same core. Rixon (1992) pointed out that in order to understand the message, students may need to be able to do the following:

"To hear all the words the speaker says; Understand the plain sense of the information; Deduce the meaning of unknown words and phrases by using the context; Understand what is implied but not stated in so many words; recognize a speaker's mood or attitude; Recognize the degree of formality with which the speaker is talking."

Anderson and Lynch (1998) showed that there are three main skills in listening as follows:

- i. The skills of recognizing the topic of the conversation
- ii. The skills of making predictions about likely developments of the topic to which he will have to respond
- iii. The skills of recognizing and signaling when she has not understood enough of the input to make a prediction or a response

According to Abdel-karem, (1995, as cited in Desouky, 2012) there are ten sub- listening skills, these skills are:

- i. following and understanding instructions and oral directions given by native speakers in informal situations;
- ii. selecting the gist of the spoken language "getting the main idea".
- iii. selecting and ignoring information: in other words, to search for purposeful information
- iv. drawing inferences: this can be shown through paraphrasing given information in the listening text.
- v. guessing information.
- vi. identifying the purpose of the speaker.
- vii. extracting specific ideas.
- viii. understanding the communicative functions of the target language.
- ix. predicting outcomes and what might come next;
- x. interpreting given information.

1.4. Concept of listening

"I Hear You, But I'm Not Listening." Most of us retain only one-fourth of what we hear. Hearing and listening is not the same thing. Think of it in this way: Hearing can be compared to listening just like seeing can be compared to reading. A person who is dyslexic can see the letters on a page, but

unless he receives proper training, he can't really understand their meaning. Most of us are not natural listeners even though much of our day requires this skill. We learn how to read and write, but how many of us have ever taken a class on listening? Yet, it's been aids that up to 80% of our waking hours are spent communicating in some way, and over half of that time is spent listening. Studies describe most people as poor listeners. It's as though we could say, "I hear you, but I'm not listening." Why? One reason is because we can think faster than we speak. Most of us can speak up to 125 words per minute, but we have the ability to understand the spoken word at gusts of up to 400 words per minute. The vast difference between speaking speed and thought speed means that when we listen we're only using about 25% of our mental capacity, so our minds tend to wander. In general, we understand and retain only one-fourth of what we hear.

1.5. Problems associated with the teaching of listening skills

According to Ali (2000, as cited in Desouky, 2012), learners often complain that listening is the most difficult to acquire for many reasons:

- different speakers produce the same sounds in different ways, e.g. dialects, accent, stress, rhythms, intonations and mispronunciations, etc;
- the listener has little/ no control over the speed of the input of the spoken material;
- the spoken material is often heard only once;
- the listener cannot pause to work out the meaning;
- speech is more likely to be distorted by background or the media that transmit sounds;
- the listener sometimes has to deal simultaneously with another task while listening e.g. note-taking, etc.

Ali (2000, as cited in Desouky, 2012) claimed that, listening is the most difficult linguistic task to acquire, so teachers has to stress their work on acquiring this task to face student's listening problems.

The problem of this study is the perception of the strategies used by the teachers in developing listening skills among junior secondary school students in municipal area council which has no doubt hanged the face of teaching and learning of school subjects globally. Almost ten years ago Johnson and Johnson (1984, as cited in Wumi, 2015) observed that "we are in a period of educational crisis with a wide discrepancy between the instrumental methods used in schools and the instructional methods used in schools and those verified by research as most effective". One must ask why there is still such as a disconnection between theory and practice when there is even more pressure on teachers to perform than ever before.

The teachers presently teaching in secondary schools face a challenge in keeping abreast of development in teaching and being able to ascertain their potential contributions for the improvement of instrument at the classroom level. These teachers face the challenges of dealing with today's youth who hailer becomes more curious, more sophisticated and more demanding in their approach to learning, thereby complicating the teaching function.

The main purpose of the study is to determine the strategies used by the teachers in developing listening skills among junior secondary school students in municipal area council. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To examine the listening skills needed for junior secondary school students in Municipal Area Council
2. To examine extents in which the effectiveness of a suggested strategy in developing the listening in Municipal secondary school students

The present study attempted to answer the following main questions:

1. What are the listening skills needed for junior secondary school students in Municipal Area Council?
2. What is the effectiveness of a suggested strategy in developing the listening skills of the students in Municipal Area Council secondary school students?

3. How can listening skill enhance students' academic performance in Junior Secondary School in Municipal Area Council FCT?

The contents of Listening texts often provide excellent examples of functions such as apologizing, inviting and refusing. The process of listening, especially the bottom-up and top-down model, and schema-building activities are also applicable to reading. It is important to look through the listening process, and know how listeners react when they are listening to a listening text. This importance is due to the fact that listeners are not tape recorders as this study seek to examine strategies used by the teachers in developing listening skills among junior secondary school students in municipal area council.

2. Method

2.1. Research design

A descriptive survey design was used for this study. Olayiwola (2007) states that descriptive survey as a research method described a given state of affair at a particular time. This research designed was enabling the researcher to administer questionnaires to many respondents at the same time. In this case, the researcher was not having direct control over independent variables because they were inherently not manipulable. The study examined the strategies used by the teachers in developing listening skills among junior secondary school students in Municipal Area Council FCT-Abuja, Nigeria.

2.2. Population of the study

The target population of this study comprises of all teachers and Junior Secondary School Students. The population of the study consists of selected secondary schools in Municipal Area Council in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja which consists of government schools. This few Secondary Schools was selected for convenience among many others because of financial, mobility and time constrain in order to obtain adequate data on the strategies used by the teachers in developing listening skills among junior secondary school students in Municipal Area Council.

2.3. Sampling size and sampling procedure

The sample size for this study consisted of one hundred and twenty six (126) which was selected randomly; among the government own secondary schools in Municipal Area Council, in Federal Capital Territory. Eight (8) schools (sample) each; were be selected randomly out of other secondary schools, for limitation in logistic and distance. For the purpose of obtaining meaningful, relevant and reliable data generation from different schools on the research questions within the limit period of time, cost and convenient, a stratified simple random sampling techniques was used to select respondents from all the target secondary schools in the area council. The researcher ensured that members (respondents) of the population have equal opportunity of being selected.

2.4. Instrumentation

The researcher designed structured questionnaire title: "Strategies used in developing listening skills among junior secondary school students in municipal area council FCT-Abuja." The instrument used for study was a questionnaire. It contains two sections. Section A contains demographic information about the respondents such as: name of school, age, sex, and marital status. Section B elicited responses to the following: academic qualifications, teachers' years of experience, teachers' development programs, and classroom population. The questionnaire was administered randomly to the teachers and students in the selected schools, the items which the questionnaire seeks to answer were placed on rating scale and were converted to percentage of various data obtained from the respondents.

2.5. Data collection procedure

A letter of authority was designed to the Department of Education for permission to enable the researcher to conduct the study in the selected junior secondary schools. Upon approval of the letter from the appropriate authority, time was scheduled for the administration of the questionnaire. The researcher however engaged three assistants whom were all trained for few hours to aid in administering and collection of the questionnaires from the participants on behalf of the researcher.

2.6. Data analysis

Standard statistical method was employed in analyzing the data collated. The results collected from the respondents were converted to percentages, compared, aggregated and presented in both tabular and graphical format with the aim of making the facts visible. Since the type of questionnaire that was used in this study is structural-questionnaire, the method employed in order to analyze the data were descriptive, i.e. the use of frequency table, cross tabulation, and percentage. The item means have been examined as low/high according to the cut point of 2.5 for the interval from 1 to 4.

3. Results

The relevant questions for the strategies used in developing listening skills among junior secondary school students in municipal area council were collated and quantified. The quantified percentage-responses are presented in tabular forms with the mean-values for public schools indicated. The other parameters were also computed and presented in the relevant sections.

Research Question one: What are the listening skills needed for junior secondary school students in Municipal Area Council?

Table 1 shows the listening skills of secondary school students.

Table 1

*The listening skills of the participants**

| S/N | Variables | SA | A | SD | D | Mean | Remark |
|-----------------------|--|-----|----|----|----|------------|--------|
| 1. | Different speakers produce the same sounds in different ways | 20 | 11 | 62 | 27 | 2.5 | High |
| 2. | Striking against the school authority | 71 | 14 | 35 | 0 | 3.3 | High |
| 3. | Understand the meaning of individual pieces of information in the text. | 80 | 28 | 2 | 10 | 3.6 | High |
| 4. | Speech is more likely to be distorted by background or the media that transmit sounds. | 41 | 22 | 49 | 8 | 1.8 | Low |
| 5. | Listener sometimes has to deal simultaneously with another task while listening | 66 | 20 | 4 | 30 | 2.9 | High |
| 6. | Attentiveness in class for student assimilation | 55 | 31 | 41 | 4 | 2.5 | High |
| 7. | Environmental influence | 80 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 3.7 | High |
| 8. | Purposeful listening skill | 65 | 17 | 8 | 30 | 2.8 | High |
| 9. | Self-diligence listening skill | 101 | 9 | 10 | 0 | 4.0 | High |
| 10. | Teachers and students determine listening skill | 98 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 3.9 | High |
| Sectional Mean | | | | | | 2.8 | |

*SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree

The table above shows that respondents agreed that different speaker produces the same sounds in different ways, striking against the school authority, understanding the meaning of individual pieces of information in the text, listener sometimes has to deal simultaneously with another task while listening, attentiveness in class for student assimilation, environmental influence, purposeful listening skill, self-diligence listening skill and teachers/students determine

listening skill. Whereas respondents disagree that speech is more likely to be distorted by background or the media that transmit sounds with the mean score of 1.8. The sectional mean of 2.8 indicates that respondents strongly agreed on the above variables as the listening skills needed for junior secondary school students in Municipal Area Council.

Research Question two: What is the effectiveness of a suggested strategy in developing the listening skills of the students in Municipal Area Council secondary school students?

Table 2

The effectiveness of a suggested strategy in developing listening skill

| S/N | Variables | SA | A | SD | D | Mean | Remark |
|-----------------------|---|-----|----|----|----|------------|--------|
| 1. | Staff/teachers should guide the students to have a right listening habit. | 61 | 23 | 11 | 25 | 2.6 | High |
| 2. | Teachers should also be aware student's weakness forms and assimilation, elision, redundancy, noise, colloquial language and be ready to help learners with it. | 73 | 41 | 0 | 6 | 2.9 | High |
| 3. | Help the student to improve their listening ability with more reading. | 97 | 10 | 0 | 12 | 3.7 | High |
| 4. | Teachers should instruct students to have more extensive listening in their spare time. | 105 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 4.0 | High |
| 5. | They monitor their comprehension and the effectiveness of the selected strategies. | 99 | 10 | 1 | 10 | 3.9 | High |
| 6. | Evaluate by determining whether they have achieved their listening comprehension goals. | 40 | 54 | 20 | 6 | 2.5 | High |
| 7. | Establish a closed school climate. | 41 | 22 | 49 | 8 | 1.6 | Low |
| 8. | Parental attitude toward their children. | 4 | 19 | 67 | 30 | 2.0 | Low |
| 9. | Harsh school rules and regulation. | 4 | 31 | 39 | 57 | 1.4 | Low |
| 10. | Teachers should also be aware of learners' difficulties as opposed to native speakers' ways of listening. | 20 | 11 | 62 | 27 | 2.2 | Low |
| Sectional Mean | | | | | | 2.9 | |

*SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree

The above table shows that respondents agreed that staff/teachers should guide the students to have a right listening habit; teachers should also be aware student's weakness forms and assimilation, elision, redundancy, noise, colloquial language and be ready to help learners with it; help the students to improve their listening ability with more reading; teachers should always instruct students to have more extensive listening in their spare time; they monitor their comprehension and the effectiveness of the selected strategies; evaluate by determining whether they have achieved their listening comprehension goals, while respondents disagreed about establishing a closed school climate; parental attitude toward their children; harsh school rules and regulation, and that teachers should also be aware of learners' difficulties as opposed to native speakers' ways of listening. The sectional mean of 2.9 revealed that the above strategies can be used in the classroom students should be encouraged to develop their sense of anticipation and prediction in order to prepare for using the language in the real world. This can be done by stopping the tape in the mid-flow and asking the students to guess what is coming next.

Research Question three: How can listening skill enhance students' academic performance in Junior Secondary School in Municipal Area Council FCT?

Table 3

Method of enhancing listening skills

| S/N | Variables | SA | A | SD | D | Mean | Remark |
|-----------------------|---|-----|----|----|----|------------|--------|
| 1. | Provision of counseling rooms | 83 | 30 | 0 | 7 | 3.4 | High |
| 2. | School authorities to be of good models | 72 | 37 | 5 | 6 | 2.9 | High |
| 3. | Learners can be encouraged to make predictions about what they are going to hear | 56 | 25 | 35 | 4 | 2.5 | High |
| 4. | Learners can be given a purpose for listening | 90 | 28 | 2 | 0 | 3.8 | High |
| 5. | Emphasis on extracurricular activities. | 40 | 22 | 49 | 9 | 1.9 | Low |
| 6. | Positive teacher/student relationship. | 62 | 20 | 8 | 30 | 2.8 | High |
| 7. | Learners can be given various kinds of support for listening. | 4 | 31 | 39 | 57 | 2.3 | Low |
| 8. | encourage learners to employ successful strategies, ways of coping when they couldn't understand everything | 105 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 4.0 | High |
| 9. | The reading materials should be similar to the listening materials in difficulty. | 70 | 41 | 3 | 6 | 2.9 | High |
| 10. | Students may benefit from listening to the radio or listening to text as they read it | 92 | 10 | 6 | 12 | 3.7 | High |
| Sectional Mean | | | | | | 3.2 | |

*SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree

The table above shows that respondents agreed on the provision of counseling rooms; school authorities to be of good models; learners can be encouraged to make predictions about what they are going to hear; learners can be given a purpose for listening; positive teacher/student relationship; encouraging learners to employ successful strategies, ways of coping when they couldn't understand everything; the reading materials should be similar to the listening materials in difficulty, and students may benefit from listening to the radio or listening to text as they read it. Similarly, respondents disagree that emphasis on extracurricular activities and giving students various kinds of support for listening cannot enhance listening skill among students. Hence, the class teacher and researcher attitude towards student on listening skill shall be compared as followed.

Table 4

Comparing students' willingness in the learning environment with their class teacher and the researcher

| Rating | Class Teacher | | Researcher | |
|-----------|---------------|-----|------------|-----|
| | f | % | f | % |
| Very High | 22 | 18 | 28 | 20 |
| High | 30 | 24 | 37 | 25 |
| Average | 25 | 20 | 18 | 12 |
| Very low | 40 | 32 | 28 | 20 |
| Low | 8 | 6 | 35 | 24 |
| Total | 125 | 100 | 146 | 100 |

From the table above, majority of the respondents were 37 (25%) who were willing to listen to the researcher and responded accordingly while most of the respondents (n=40, 32%) shows very low willingness to learning environment to their teachers. This can therefore, be deduced that most students in the junior secondary school were not willing to listen to their class teacher. Many

students were not found to be willing to be in the class. It was only a few who responded to their teacher. Many students remain dull either because teachers are not using the appropriate method of teaching thereby making the class bored for them. Teachers therefore, did not provide many students opportunity to wholly involved or engaged in the class.

Table 5

Comparing students' complaining that listening is the most difficult to acquire in classroom between class teacher and the researcher

| Rating | Class Teacher | | Researcher | |
|-----------|---------------|-----|------------|-----|
| | f | % | f | % |
| Very High | 14 | 11 | 30 | 21 |
| High | 41 | 33 | 42 | 29 |
| Average | 33 | 26 | 27 | 18 |
| Very low | 32 | 26 | 23 | 16 |
| Low | 5 | 4 | 24 | 16 |
| Total | 125 | 100 | 146 | 100 |

From the table above, majority of the respondents were 41(33%) who showed high complain about the difficulty of learning listening skills in classroom while most of the respondents (n=42, 29%) also showed high difficulty of learning skills to the researcher which indicate an agreement between teachers and the researcher. This can therefore, be deduced that most students in the junior secondary school can only learn listening skill through persistent effect by teachers by enforcing them to learn by the teachers.

Table 6

Comparison between teachers' and researchers' behavior in term of lesson presentation

| Rating | Class Teacher | | Researcher | |
|---------------------|---------------|-----|------------|-----|
| | f | % | f | % |
| Friendly and lively | 55 | 44 | 68 | 47 |
| Unfriendly | 30 | 24 | 37 | 25 |
| Average | 30 | 24 | 32 | 22 |
| Boring | 10 | 8 | 9 | 6 |
| Total | 125 | 100 | 146 | 100 |

Table 6 indicates that teachers' behavior during lesson presentation was critical in determining the level of friendliness and freedom in the learning environment. Majority (n=55, 44%) observed by class teachers in the course of their classroom lesson was observed to be friendly and lively to their student. Likewise for the researcher, respondents agree with the teachers exhibition of friendliness to be lively with 68(47) respondents. This can therefore be deduced that teachers' excitement for lesson in a learner-friendly environment would have raised learner enthusiasm as per influence to students' listening ability in class.

Table 7

Teachers' use of media/resources while delivering lesson in the classroom

| Uses of Media/Resources | f | % |
|---|-----|-----|
| Use for teaching and learning | 14 | 10 |
| Presented in schools but not functioning | 11 | 8 |
| There are no media/ resources except lesson note | 99 | 67 |
| Teachers instruct students to listen while in class | 22 | 15 |
| Total | 146 | 100 |

Table 7 reviewed that only 14 (10%) of the respondents reported that media and material were available and used to aid teaching and learning. Majority (n=99, 67%) of the respondents reported that there are no media and other resources present in schools except the text books and lesson note they go with it for teaching. Twenty two (15%) of the respondents also reported that teachers give instruction to listen in the classroom.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

From the analysis, it was reviewed that only 10% of the respondents reported that media and material were available and used to aid teaching and learning. Majority of the respondents reported that there are no media and other resources present in schools except the text books and lesson note they go with it for teaching. Some of the respondents also reported that teachers give instruction in the classroom. But majority of the respondents disagree that teachers don't give instruction in the classroom. From the analysis above, it can be deduced that there are lack of media and other resources that can aid teaching and enhance students' comprehension in class as these can give them a quick flash back and remembrance even while at home. It can also be concluded that most of the teachers in public junior secondary schools do not give instruction to students, either because of the arrogance of the students or because those children are not their biological children.

Moreover, this study correlates with the studies conducted in Hong Kong by Chapple and Curtis (2000). They adopted strip film as teaching material for 31 students and 67.8% of the students said that they had positive impact in listening skill within 13 weeks learning. Therefore, teaching with intensive multimedia could raise students' listening skill comprehension. It could be seen that there were many less developed students in listening English; hence use of internet, computer, or multimedia could help students. Some listening activities have been applied in listening practice but most of them used listening material from cassette, television, and radio whereas using technology was seldom in learning listening. These were happened because using internet was still lack for listening media and there was not software for learning listening model.

It is important to train students to listen effectively rather than to test their listening skills. This can be done in various ways that are outlined below (Thompson, 2004, as cited in Desouky, 2012). The texts that learners listen to should be authentic to have features of spontaneous speech. Texts can be graded in a way that ensures that they are appropriate for the learners:

- Learners can be given a purpose for listening.
- Learners can be encouraged to make predictions about what they are going to hear.
- Learners can be given various kinds of support for listening teachers should actively teach micro-skills or sub skills and strategies.
- Similarly, we should actively encourage learners to employ successful strategies, ways of coping when they couldn't understand everything
- Teachers should also be aware themselves of the features of natural speech such as weak forms and assimilation, elision, redundancy, noise, colloquial language and be ready to help learners with it.
- Teachers should also be aware of learners' difficulties as opposed to native speakers' ways of listening. Student's participation is an important principle in teaching. In the classroom students should be encouraged to develop their sense of anticipation and prediction in order to prepare for using the language in the real world. This can be done by stopping the tape in the mid-flow and asking the students to guess what is coming next.

Effective listening can be a tough skill to master. It involves body language, mental awareness and active listening behaviors rather than passive habits. Good listeners are receptors of information presented by speakers. First of all, let the students to have habit of expectation in hearing practice. Expectation refers to that the listener gives a quick judgment to the unknown information according to the known information. Teachers should instruct the students to preview the questions given so that they can be prepared and have some expectation to what will be heard

with specific environment and cultural background. Besides, teachers should pay more attention to training the students to have the habit of catching key words and important information in listening practice. In fluent English the pronunciation of some words will have some changes influenced by weak beat, assimilation, and the loss of burst of some stop consonants so that it is impossible for the listeners to hear every word clearly. The students should listen to some materials selectively. When listening to essays, the listeners should pay attention to the key sentences at the beginning and the end. They should try to make the questions clear, such as "who, where, when, what and why" and so on.

The popular problems the students often come across are as follows: new words, some key words are great obstacle for students to understand the sentence or the paragraph; sentence structure (grammar), the coexistence of several grammar structures in one complete sentence will affect the proper understanding of the sentence. How to overcome those obstacles? Those obstacles can be overcome by more reading because reading, as listening, requires a general ability consisting of speed, memory, judgment, summary and understanding and they follow similar way of thinking. Reading can help the students to enlarge their vocabulary, make better understanding of the word meaning, grammar rules, and widen the range of their knowledge, which are very helpful to the students to have better understanding of the reading materials (Hyslop & Tone, 2008; Omar, 2008). By reading, the students can train their ability of thinking, comprehension and summary and thus to increase their speed and accuracy in listening practice. Extensive reading and quick reading might be the most helpful way for students to improve their hearing. In practice, students should try to enlarge their vocabulary based on understanding and train the ability to shift from one sentence to another. Students should pay equal attention to speed and understanding. When reading, the students should not always consult the dictionary whenever coming across a new word in order to keep a smooth consistent understanding. The reading materials should be similar to the listening materials in difficulty. Students may benefit from listening to the radio or listening to text as they read it. They could try reading text aloud and using a tape recorder to play it back themselves.

In secondary schools, the students have limited listening classes, usually one class every week, which is not enough for the students to improve their hearing effectively. Teachers should give the students instruction for their after-class practice, such as watch English program on TV and English videos, listening English radio and English songs so that the students can get familiar with people of different accents, different sexes, different ages, and different cultural background. In this way, the students can widen their range of knowledge and train their good literary sense and thus to improve their hearing ability. Remen (1997) stated: "The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give to each other is our attention."

Language learning depends on listening. Listening provides the aural input that serves as the basis for language acquisition and enables learners to interact in spoken communication. Effective language instructors show students how they can adjust their listening behavior to deal with a variety of situations, types of input, and listening purposes. They help students develop a set of listening strategies and match appropriate strategies to each listening situation. Listening strategies are techniques or activities that contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of listening input. Strategic listeners also use *metacognitive strategies* to plan, monitor, and evaluate their listening.

- They plan by deciding which listening strategies will serve best in a particular situation.
- They monitor their comprehension and the effectiveness of the selected strategies.
- They evaluate by determining whether they have achieved their listening comprehension goals and whether the combination of listening strategies selected was an effective one.

There are three things that we can do to help ourselves stop wasting thought power and become a better listener.

- First is to anticipate the speaker's next point. If you anticipate correctly, learning has been reinforced. If you anticipate incorrectly, you wonder why and this too helps to increase attention.
- Secondly, is to identify the supporting elements a speaker uses in building points. By and large, it can be used only in three ways to build points: We explain the point, we get emotional and address the point, or we illustrate the point with a factual illustration. A sophisticated listener knows this. He or she spends a little of the differential between thought speed and speaking speed to identify what is being used as point-supporting material. This becomes highly profitable in terms of listening efficiency.
- Thirdly, the way to improve yourself as a listener is to periodically make mental summaries as you listen. A good advantage of short pauses to summarize mentally what has been said. These periodic summaries reinforce learning tremendously.

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