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## EDITORIAL

This edition of Education for Today is a rich collection of enviably well researched papers. The number of articles have been drastically reduced compared with previous issues to keep quality on the high side.

In this issue, Aremu, Salami, Ogbuagu and Olumoye have jointly reported that things like bust size, hip, height and age exert great influence on undergraduates' mate selection preferences, just as Idaka and Joshua have assembled empirical evidence to show how prepared Nigerian Academics are to be evaluated by their students.

The importance of using counseling to ensure the promotion of family stability has been driven home by Owuamnan and Osakunle while Ogođo has assembled fresh data to re-affirm the relationship between family background and students disciplined behaviour in school. Another contributor Abiodun brings to focus some strategies for effective teaching of English language to secondary school students, while Egu puts forward some valuable tips for helping Nigerian adolescents develop their identities. In this edition also, how poverty impacts on environmental degradation is discussed by Anthony and Bisong, while Isangedighi discusses Political Behaviour and Democracy in Nigeria.

Each article is highly digestible and thought provoking. Each opens new outlets for further research. The Editorial Board commends the contributors and thanks them for reaching out through the journal. Those who have articles for the next edition planned for March, 2006 should send their contributions on time. Wishing the readers a pleasant reading.

**ABANG. J. ISANGEDIGHI**

Editor

## MONOLOGUE PATTERNS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN NIGERIA

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### Abstracts

*In this study, a classroom interaction sheet was used to find out the proportion of teaching/ learning time the teacher spends talking non-stop (monologue). In the cases analyzed, an average of 4.25% of the teaching /learning time in social studies lessons of primary six was found to be the minimum time spent on monologue while as much as 26% of the teaching-learning time was recorded as average time for primary science in primary six. The samples used for the study cut across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria.*

### INTRODUCTION

Primary education is universally regarded as the first and the most important level of education, not only to the individual but also to the entire human race. Primary education provides a fundamental base for further schooling, training and self-education. It is the basis for developing the capacity to cope with the rapidly evolving and changing society. Different communities have their own stating objectives for their primary education, though one can still observe the common denominator in all.



In some parts of the world, Nigeria inclusive, the primary education is usually the first and the last level of education for some people. This is why primary education is universally known as a component, or even in itself as a whole, of basic education, since our basic education runs till the junior secondary school and some other supposedly non-formal education. Taking primary education, as a basic education, the primary school teachers therefore, should not spend much of the school time telling the child facts which he has to remember, but rather the child should be taught how to think for himself. While educating a child to think for himself, the teacher should not always tell the child answers to questions, but encourage the child to read books, find out about things through questioning and observation. It is after the child has put in some effort, that he should come to the teacher to clarify things and expect to be helped further. However, this is not so in many schools.

The primary education in Nigeria, according to the National Policy on Education (FRN1998) is expected to lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking, including the development of manipulative skills that will enable the child to function effectively in the society. The class teacher in the primary school classroom who during the primary science lesson creates an expression of varied activities, lively displays of reading corners and correction of material to give a visual equivalent to the complexities of learning (Thomas 1989) would definitely encourage the children to think and develop manipulative skills, one of the reasons being that it will eliminate monologue.

When teaching children language, there is the need to create opportunity for fluent oral communication (Ridgway 1976). Children should be allowed to be involved in apparently inconsequential chattering which soon leads to articulate conversation. To study a language, it is important not only to be

fluent in writing and listening but also in accurate and precise oral participation. Bot (1998) in his study recommended the use of non-verbal strategies to help teachers promote children's involvement and participation with longer attention in mathematics tasks. Furthermore, in an old book (Maxim 1977), it was reported, that one of the reasons why children are not excited about learning social studies is because a typical teacher talks three times as much as the students combined in social studies periods in primary schools. What do we still have today? Osokoya (2002) also while discussing ways to ensure effective teaching and learning of science in primary school cited Ogunniyi et al (1981), Ango (1982) and Inomesia (1984) where it was established that most of the ways that can be adopted to make teachers realize the objective of science, are child centered i.e. teachers need to make their teaching method child-centred and full of activities. All these show us that monologue is not desirable in teaching-learning situations especially at the primary level.

As earlier said, while teaching children at the primary school level, the children should not be made to sit passively in their chairs while the teachers regurgitate facts, that is talking non-stop (monologues). In every classroom session, the teacher should not out-talk the students. We often complain of bad foundation when children who had gone through primary education are not meeting up to expectation in the society or in the secondary education level. This could probably be because they were not given as much basic education as they should be. The essence of effective teaching is to minimize monologue (talking non-stop).

Poor performances among pupils in pre-primary and primary education have been attributed to poor environmental stimulation and probably the unexciting method of teaching, which is dominated by monologue (Koku and Nzewi, 1986). When

teachers out-talk students in the classroom, the students cannot be stimulated. To correct this situation, it is necessary to evaluate the extent at which the teacher talks non stop during lessons (Monologue) at the expense of other classroom activities which are meant to go along with individual student's work, student group activity or teacher prompting learning. It needs to be noted, that some teacher behaviours in the classroom may not facilitate learning.

Observation technique, in the school setting, involves procedures whereby systematic observation of classroom behaviour is used to obtain valid and reliable measurement of differences in typical behaviours that occur in different classrooms or in different situations in the same classroom. Observing teachers as they teach in class, one can gather first hand information about the scene or event-taking place. Observation of classroom climate has been the interest of many educators and researchers, because from there the teacher-student interaction can be observed as teaching and learning processes take place. In some studies (like Okebukola, 1982; Osokoya, 1998), the ratio of teacher-student involvement in classroom was used as a parameter for measuring the quality of instruction coming from the teacher.

## THE PROBLEM

The study utilized the observation technique to find out the proportion of teaching time teachers spent talking non-stop while teaching in primary school classroom. The study also investigated the relative proportion of time spent on monologue on the basis of class level and subject level. The following two questions were answered:

1. What is the proportion of the time spent on monologue while teaching in the primary school classrooms?

2. What is the relative proportion of time spent on monologue in the classroom, with respect to:
  - a. Class level
  - b. Subject taught

## **METHOD**

### **SAMPLING**

The country is made up of six geo-political zones, using judgemental sampling technique; four of the geo-political zones were selected, in the same way two states were identified from each of the selected geo-political zones. Through stratified sampling technique, four schools were selected from each of the identified states; giving random a total number of thirty-two schools in all.

### **Instrumentation And Data Collection Procedure**

The main instrument used was a classroom interaction sheet (CIS). Seven behavioural categories of classroom interaction were stated with 140 boxes in row in front of each behavioural category. Each of the boxes was to be ticked at interval of 15 seconds; as such behaviour became the prevailing activity. The behavioural categories were individual student work, teacher prompting learning and Monologue. Others were Teachers not facilitating learning, Confusion and others. Notes were given at the bottom of the rows to clarify the behaviours that fell into any of the categories.

The CIS is an adaptation of the classroom interaction sheet used by Yoloye (1970) and Onocha and Okpala (1990). The CIS has been validated and revalidated and used in a number of studies in classroom interactions (Yoloye, 1971; Falayajo et al, 1980; Odebunmi, 1986; Okpala and Onocha, 1988 & Onocha and Okpala 1990). Prior to the main study, the CIS was tested in a

pilot study undertaken by the investigators in selected primary schools in one of the states in the country. The data gathered revealed inter-rater reliability values within 0.82 and 0.91 range.

In each of the thirty-two schools participating in the study, a primary 3 and a primary 6 class sessions were observed separately for a full period (a period is made up of 35 minutes). This lasted for six weeks. In doing so, the investigator went round the selected schools in each state, with four (4) assistants that had earlier been trained on how to use the observation instrument developed for the purpose.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The data gathered was analysed using frequency counts and percentages

## RESULTS

### Research Question One:

What is the proportion of the time spent on monologues while teaching in the primary school classrooms?

**Table 1:** *Proportion of class period in minutes spent on monologues while teaching in primary 3 and primary 6.*

S/No	Items	Primary 3	Primary 6
1.	Total boxes/tallies obtained per period	140	140
2.	Total number of tallies on monologue for all cases	2527	2956
3.	Total number of cases	96	96
4.	Average number of tallies per period	26.3	30.8
5.	Number of minutes per period	35	35
6.	Average class time spent on monologue (in minutes)	6.58	7.7
7.	Percentage of time spent on monologue	18.8%	22%



As is shown in table 1, for a normal class period of 35 minutes an average of 6.58 minutes and 7.7 minutes are used in primary 3 and primary 6 classes respectively on monologue. This implies that in primary one about 18.8% of class time is spent on monologue while in primary 6, about 22% of class time is spent on monologue.

## RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

2. What is that relative proportion of time spent on monologue in the classroom, with respect to:

- c. Class level
- d. Subject taught

Primary 3 classes

The number of cases observed on the bases of subject taught in primary three was as follows:

TABLE 2: *Number of Classes Observed in Primary Three*

Subject Taught	No. of Classes
English	33
Mathematics	29
Social Studies	10
Primary Science	21
Home Economics	1
Health Education	1
Igbo	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>96.</b>

Actually the collection of data was set out on the four core subjects – Mathematics, English, Social Studies and Primary Science, but at times the classroom teacher did not seem to understand this or may be uncooperative.

The table 3 shows relative proportion of time spent on monologues in primary 3 on the basis of subject.

**TABLE 3:** Average time spent in monologue in Primary 3 Classes  
 (Total no of tallies per period = 140)

Subject	Min.	Max	Average	Average	%tage
English Language	0	67	25.7	385.5 seconds (6.4 mins)	18.4
Mathematics	0	70	25	375 seconds (6.25 mins)	17.9
Social Studies	0	72	33	495 seconds (8.25 mins)	23.6
Primary Science	10	72	26	390 seconds (6.5 mins)	18.6

(ii) Primary 6 classes

**Table 4:** The number of classes observed on the bases or subject taught

Subject Taught	No. of Classes
English language	38
Mathematics	27
Social Studies	8
Primary Science	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>

It was easier to get the co-operation of the primary six teachers to teach any of the four subjects, than those of primary 3.

Table 5 shows the time spent on monologue in primary six classes on the basis of subject taught.

**Table 5:** Average Time Spent on Monologue in Primary 6 Classes  
*N* (Total no of tallies per period) = 140.

Subject	Min.	Max	Average	Average	%tage
English Language	0	86	30	450 seconds (17.5 mins)	13.1
Mathematics	0	75	28	420 seconds (7 mins)	12.3
Social Studies	0	67	17	255 seconds	4.2
Primary Science	10	77	37	555 seconds (9.25 mins)	26

The two classes 3 and 6 are compared in table 6

**Table 6:** Comparison of Percentage Time Spent on monologue in  
 Primary 3 and Primary 6 Classes

Subject	Primary 3	Primary 6
English	18.4	13.1
Mathematics	17.9	12.3
Social Studies	23.6	4.2
Primary	18.6	26

## DISCUSSION

From the results a fairly low percentage was arrived at as the average time the teacher spent talking non-stop. Actually teachers will have to talk non-stop for some time as they introduce new topics or pass instructions but this is expected to be in its



barest minimum since we are expected to be following a curriculum that is child centered.

In primary 3, teachers spent an average of 7 minutes in a 35 minutes lesson talking non-stop (Table 1), similarly the primary six teachers talking non-stop spent an average of 7.7 minutes. Looking at Table 6, except in primary science lessons, it appears more time was spent in monologue (talking non-stop) in primary three than in primary six classes. This slightly contradicts answers to research question one. The reason for this could be because of the other subjects that were observed in primary three classes and was used to compute the results of research questions two. But from a general look, the primary three teachers seem to be spending more time on monologue especially in the case of social studies. It should also be realized, that while calculating the average number of tallies, wide ranges always exist between the minimum and maximum.

A normal classroom session in the primary classes should be full of activities like individual student work, student group activity and teacher prompting learning in form of questioning, aiding slow learners, demonstrations or explaining points that are not clear to the students. The total period on monologue should be less than 10% of the total teaching learning period. Going by the objective of the primary school education, a teacher who engages so much of the teaching- learning time on monologue will be depriving the children the opportunity to develop their observing and manipulating skills as expected.

Smith (1969) had submitted that classrooms are overwhelmingly dominated by teacher talks. Onocha and Okpala (1990) also established the fact that practicing integrated science teachers in junior secondary schools, like many other teachers spend a great deal of the lesson time (44%) on monologue. The study however gave a ray of hope by submitting that the pre-

service teachers of integrated science spent just a small proportion (11%) of the lesson time on monologue while greatest part (41%) of the lesson time was spends on teachers prompting learning. This is hoping that these pre-service teachers will continue in the same vein upon graduation.

From table 5, there is hardly any difference between the time spent on monologue in primary three English language and primary science (18.4% and 18.6 respectively), though in social studies as much as an average of 23.6% of time was spent on monologue. Mathematics class had the relatively least amount of time spent on monologue (17.9%). The pattern is somehow different in primary six. The least amount of time on monologue was observed for social studies (4.2%) while the highest recorded was for primary science (26%). English language and Mathematics had little or no difference here. The irregularity in the pattern especially in the case of social studies may however be due to the number of classes of social studies lessons observed (see table one). In English Language and Mathematics in spite of the difference in the nature of the two subjects, same time was observed on monologue. One would expect the primary science and mathematics lessons in the two classes to be full of other activities facilitating learning more than monologue.

Ikoku (1980) and Nzewi (1980) had attributed poor performance in science at the primary level to poor environmental stimulation and probably the unexciting methods of teaching science at this level. Okpala and Onocha (1988) separated the actual from the expected classroom interaction while assessing the quality of science teaching in Nigerian secondary schools. It was found out that the science teachers in Nigeria secondary schools actually tend to spend most of the teaching / learning time on monologue and on some other non-productive activities like punishment, use of negative reinforcement, giving roles. The

situation is however not as bad in the primary school as revealed in this study. Table 6 shows that the average time spent on monologue during primary science lessons in primary three and primary six is 18.6% and 26% respectively.

Using the five-minute interaction (FMI) classroom observation-coding instrument, Ogunkola (1999) found out that the class is dominated by teacher instruction and that participation of students in verbal interaction and demonstration of skills is limited. The group (students) initiated interactions by the male teacher differ a bit to the group initiated interactions by the female teacher, this was found to be 4.0% and 5.2% respectively out of the time spent on teaching-learning in the classroom. Conversely this study actually indicates that between 7% and 26% of teaching-learning time are spent on monologue by the teacher whether female or male.

There have not been many studies on classroom interactions in the primary school classrooms as we have in the secondary schools situation. We will therefore suggest that more studies are instituted in this area. Even on the same classroom interaction sheet used in this study, the other behavioural categories can also be focused. The empirical knowledge of what actually takes place in the classroom can go a long way to help teacher education specialists in the area of primary education plan better for more effective training for their students.

## CONCLUSION

The need for a more effective teaching/learning process through the study of classroom interaction has been stressed. Primary education is expected to lay a sound basis for effective thinking and as such teachers cannot afford to teach students at this level by just telling them facts which they will have to remember, but rather make their teaching child-centered as much

as possible. The proportion of the time teacher spent on talking non-stop in the class rooms was investigated in Primary 3 and Primary 6 for the four core subjects: English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Primary Science. No particular pattern was found as to whether the talking non-stop is more prominent in one setting than the other though the primary three classes seem to be relatively more of monologue than that of primary six classes. It was however suggested that for effective teaching and learning to take place, the time on monologue should be greatly minimized especially in mathematics and primary science lessons so that students can be given opportunities to learn through varieties of activities.

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