



## EFFECTS OF LISTENING STRATEGIES' INSTRUCTION ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TO LISTENING

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### Abstract:

The use of conventional instructional strategy has failed to address negative attitude to listening comprehension. This study, therefore, determined the effects of listening strategies' instruction on senior secondary school students' attitude to listening comprehension. This research adopted a pretest, treatment and posttest quasi-experimental factorial design. A total sample of one hundred and twenty participants were randomly selected and assigned to three treatment groups of listening strategies, discourse markers instructions and the control which was not exposed to instruction. The instruments used were: The Listening Attitude Questionnaire, Teachers' Instructional Guide on listening strategies' instructions; Teachers Instructional Guide on Modified Conventional Strategy and Evaluation sheet for Assessing Teachers' Performance on the use of the Strategies (ESAT). Data were analyzed using ANCOVA at 0.05 level of significance. There was a significant difference in the attitude to listening [ $F(1, 117) = 94.64, p < 0.05$ ]. Those exposed to listening strategies instruction had a better attitude to listening and a better listening comprehension than those exposed to other instructions.

**Keywords:** attitude to listening comprehension, discourse markers' instruction, secondary schools

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## 1. Introduction

There are words for specific things, emotions, expressions and it appears as though we have words for everything when thinking about it. In each language, words are constructed in a certain way. When working with language, it is quite possible to determine whether a word belongs to one stem or another just by looking at it even if the person has no clue of the word's meaning which is quite fascinating. Through time, society has gone through great changes which have influenced our languages.

New vocabularies have been added to our languages and old-fashioned words have been replaced. Each language has its characteristics and reflects society to a great extent. Many studies have been carried out through the years. During the 1970's, vast sociolinguistic investigations were made and one focused mainly on syntactic, phonology and morphology variations. At first, gender was regarded as a sociolinguistic variable, just like social class, age, ethnicity and social status. It was not until the midst 70's when Robin Lakoff's essay *Language and Woman's Place* was released, science about gender and language was established (Nordenstam, 2003).

It is expected that the classroom interactions should bridge the gap between the observed reality and the curriculum. Contrary to expectation, listening comprehension instruction seems not to be was not expressly state as part of the objectives of Senior Secondary School English Language Curriculum. For instance, the terminal objectives stated in the Senior Secondary School English Language Curriculum include to:

1. provide students with a *sound linguistic basis* for further learning in tertiary and vocational institutions.
2. equip school leavers with a satisfactory level of proficiency in English language *usage* in their places of work.
3. stimulate love for *reading* as a pleasurable activity.
4. promote the art of *spoken* English as a medium of national and international communication.
5. enhance and develop further the *various skills and competences* already acquired at Junior the Junior secondary school level (NERDC.p.10)

Attitude is viewed as the evaluative dimension of concept, is acquired through learning, and can be changed through persuasion using variety of techniques. Attitude can also be described as a state of readiness, a tendency on the part of individual to act in a certain way (Adesina and Akinbobola, 2005). Attitude as a factor could be viewed as the totality of an individual's inclination towards object, institution or idea. Attitude could be learnt or formed and acquired from member of the family, teacher and peer group. The learner acquires from the teacher's disposition to form attitude towards learning which could positively or negatively affect his performance.

Attitudes are expressed in three ways, through beliefs, emotions and actions. The belief component of attitude is what a person believes about the attitudinal object. The emotional component consists of feelings towards the attitudinal object. The action component refers to one's actions towards various people, objects and institutions.

Listening is the first in order of acquisition among the four fundamental language skills. Others are speaking, reading and writing. It is the medium through which children, young persons and adults receive a large portion of their education their information, their ideals, sense of values, appreciation of human affairs and their understanding of the world. The listener characteristics have been perceived wrongly by authors such as Pearson, Nelson, Titsworth and Harter (2003). They describe a listener as a passive processor of speech sounds. This must have been based on the thinking that the listener only perceives speech sounds without much effort. This cannot be the true characteristics of a listener. The listener activates his/her background knowledge as soon as the speech sounds are perceived. The attachment of relevant experiences with the speech sounds brings about understanding of the intended message of the speaker. In this wise, the listener cannot be said to be a passive processor of speech sounds.

In addition to the physiological influences on listening, listeners may bring psychological variables to comprehension. The listener's attitudinal state may well be one of the most significant psychological influences on the listener's behaviour. Attitudes have three components which are the cognitive which has to do with the ways which a listener thinks about himself or herself, the listening environment and the context of listening. The second component is the way the listener feels about himself or herself, the purpose of listening, the speaker, and the goal of listening and so on. The way the listener thinks or feels conditions the way he or she behaves. The behavioral attitude of the listener is one of the components that constitute the attitude to listening

Attitude has a scale of negative, moderate and positive. The negative attitude has been tagged ineffective attitude to listening. This is usually exhibited by the following behavior, inattention, which occurs usually by lack of ability to sustain attention while, lack of interest in listening to someone, lack of giving a close attention to details, forgetting things easily, inability to observe quietness, blurting out answer when a question has not been completed excessive talking, interrupting conversations, wandering thought, believing that you know it all, and wandering thoughts. The other side of the continuum is the positive attitude. This is usually signaled by attentiveness, sustained attention, selective, quietness, and avoidance of mental wandering (Colorado, 2012). A positive listening attitude, along with listening knowledge, is a critical ingredient of effective listening. Positive attitude is said to give the listener, a willingness to listen. Positive attitude is said to facilitate effective listening

(Amuseghan, 2007). Very frequently, the listener sometimes tunes out with the excuse that the topic of interlocution is not interesting. A high level of attitude with an active listening are regarded as a responsible approach to listening (Carter and Nunan, 2001).

The view expressed above captures the important characteristics of a good listener. It shows that the listener is at the centre of communication. He or she requires a sustained attention and focus in order to derive the meaning of the spoken or non-verbal message. The listener is not expected to merely hear the spoken words, but to attach meaning to the oral or nonverbal messages. In addition, the listener is also expected to have the ability to retain the information received in the short or long-term memory and provide appropriate response or feedback to the spoken or nonverbal messages.

However, many a time, this researcher has noticed the embarrassing experience of a teacher having to engage students in listening comprehension, whereas the student is only pretending to listen without actually being able to activate the relevant stimuli that can bring about understanding of the passage. In some cases, such students might have wandered in thoughts while the teacher is busy trying to connect their known experiences to the unknown. The usual scenario is to see the students gazing at the teacher in a way that suggests that they do not have a single idea of what the answer should be. There are times when the aural sounds might go into the students' ears but their brains might not comprehend the content because the new information has not been able to connect with the past experiences of the listener. Such students may be regarded as absent-minded listeners that have attention deficit. It is attention to listening stimuli that may prop the brain to activate the background schema, which might aid the comprehension of the content. The teacher seems overwhelmed by the breakdown of comprehension as there appears to be no clear tested solution to such lull in comprehension.

The scenario above shows that listening comprehension in the classroom is complex. The complexity occurs between the student's perception of the speech sounds and the cognitive process of overt response by the student. As the ears perceive the speech sounds, they are quickly processed in the working memory, which attaches meaning to the speech sounds. The short and long-term memories are quickly activated. The moment the speech sounds find related information in the memory, the speech sounds become meaningful.

Moreover, aside from listeners knowing the strategies to use to catch up with the comprehensible input, research clearly shows that a listener's knowledge of text structure and discourse markers has significant effects on reading or listening Comprehension (Raymond, 1993). In the listening process, parallel to the interaction

between the listener and the content, an interaction also takes place between the listener and the speaker.

Hyland (2005) believes that discourse marker embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods or services, but also involves the personalities, attitudes and assumptions of those who are communicating, and, in this way the speaker is not simply presenting information about the suggested route, by just listing changes of direction, but taking the trouble to see the discourse from the listener's perspective. Ädel (2006) believes that discourse marker should be regarded as one type of reflexivity in language which is the capacity of any natural language to refer to or describe itself. In this way it can be argued that, as speakers speak, they operate on two different levels. On the first level, they focus on what it is that they are communicating to the listeners, and on the second level, they focus on how they are communicating with the listeners. The first level is called primary/discourse level and the second level is called discourse marker level (Ädel 2006). The understanding and assessment is also called metadiscourse, and satisfies the textual and interpersonal functions of language proposed as cited in Hyland (2005), also believes that metadiscourse is at the service of the interactive plane of discourse, the plane which deals with the ways people use language to negotiate with others and present their texts interactively in order to create a relationship with the listeners. He distinguishes this plane of discourse from what he calls the autonomous plane, the plane which refers to the gradual unfolding of a record of experience through the organization of text structure. In the same fashion, Crismore (1989) claims that as writers write they work on two levels. On one level, they convey information about their subject matter (propositional content) and, on the other level, they show their readers how to read, react to, and evaluate what was spoken or written about the subject matter. She calls the first level primary discourse level and the second level metadiscourse level which is represented in the markers used in the discourse. This second level which the markers point attention of the readers or listeners to may, therefore, be called direction about talk, writing or text.

The discourse markers are said to have different implications on the understanding of the texts as they provide the direction of the discourse. Some of the signals which they provide include, introduction of the discourse, e.g. "Today, I want to talk about....," giving background information in form of revision of what has been said e.g. "you'll remember"....: It may also be a form of clarifying or explaining information in a different way such as; "...Let me put it briefly..." it could be a means of changing direction e.g. "Let's now look at ..." giving contrasting information such as, "However, nevertheless, on the other hand etc".

In spite of the wide variety of terms used in the literature to describe this construct, there seems to be a broad consensus that listening is an active rather than a passive skill and, what is more, Vandergrift (2003) declares that listening comprehension is anything but a passive activity. Alderson (2000) suggests the same notions in terms of metaphors, regarding listeners as 'active model builders' rather than 'tape recorders'.

The next step in defining the listening construct is to look into how 'active model builders' interpret, infer, test hypotheses and construct shared beliefs. It is obvious that a number of different types of knowledge are involved, both linguistic knowledge (phonology, lexis, syntax, semantics, discourse structure, etc.) and non-linguistic knowledge (knowledge about the topic, about the context, general knowledge about the world, etc.). The latter categories are frequently referred to as schemata; mental structures that organize the listeners' knowledge of the world those listeners rely on when interpreting texts. Much research has been conducted on the apparent dichotomy between two views as to how these two types of knowledge are applied by listeners or readers in text comprehension (Alderson, 2000). These views refer to the order in which the different types of knowledge are applied during listening comprehension. The bottom-up model represents the traditional view of comprehension and has been typically proposed by behaviourists in the 1940s and in the 1950s. It assumes that the listening process takes place in a definite order, starting with the lowest level of detail (acoustic input, phonemes, etc.) and moving up to the highest (communicative situation, non-linguistic knowledge).

Both Alderson (2000) and Buck (2001) rely on a third model of comprehension in their most comprehensive books on assessing reading and listening respectively. They outline comprehension as the interaction of bottom-up and top-down processing and emphasise that these complex mental actions can be performed in any order, simultaneously or cyclically rather than in any fixed order. Alderson (2000) reports recent research tends to emphasise the important contribution of bottom-up or data-driven text processing. Buck's (2001) summary of the listening construct constitutes the most widely accepted model in testing listening comprehension: to summarise the process, the listener takes the incoming data, the acoustic signal, and interprets that, using a wide variety of information and knowledge, for a particular communicative purpose; it is an inferential process, an ongoing process of constructing and modifying an interpretation of what the text is about, based on whatever information seems relevant at the time.

Good listeners recognize that they are partners in the communication and that they share in the responsibility for meeting the goals of the interaction, but bad listeners are not. Good listeners also remain open-minded, willing to listen to differing points of

view and to speakers whose styles are not necessarily attractive or engaging. Good attitude to listening is not directed only at the other communicator but also influences listener's self-concept. Ironically, listening appears not a highly-valued communication skill in Nigerian, as teachers and parents seldom reward good listening behaviour. Rather, some teachers inadvertently reinforce negative listening in schools by conditioning their students to acts that discourage listening such as not being allowed to stare at the elders in the face while talking, while some parents inadvertently reinforce it at home, especially when they utter utterances that encourage their wards to be frightened rather than being engaged in meaningful listening activities. Such a negative reinforcement may be associated with communication apprehension. A listener who suffers communication apprehension may not be a receptive listener. An unreceptive listener may not be a listener at all.

Phillips, Lowe, Lurito, Dzemidzic, and Mathews (2001) demonstrate that men and women bring some very real differences in attention styles and cognitive processing styles to the communicative interaction. As researchers explore more deeply the biological influence of the male and female genetic makeup, however, the social influence model continues to dominate our understanding of gender variables. Research reveals that men and women listen for different purposes and have different listening goals. The primary contrast appears in task versus interpersonal understanding: Males are said to pay much attention to facts while females are said to devote more attention to the mood of the communication (Booth-Butterfield, 2004). Dykstra (2006) also examines the role of gender in pragmatic listening. It is observed that gender differences occur in listening as female had a higher score than male in listening exercises.

The Manitoba Standard Tests indicate that boys typically score lower than girls in standardized tests in the language arts. The results of the Senior English Language Arts Standards Test administered in January 2004 and June 2004 showed that boys do not perform as well as girls in reading and writing.

Again, the assessment report of the progress in International Reading Literacy Study (IRLS) conducted in 2001 revealed that girls performed better than boys in all thirty four (34) countries where the assessment was administered including Canada, where two Canadian provinces Ontario and Quebec, participated in the study (UK Department for Education and Skills).

In addition, the results of the Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) conducted in 2000 showed that girls performed better than boys on the reading test in all countries. Result show that there are considerable gender differences among 15 years olds. In particular, female students were more interested in reading and

perform better in reading and literacy across countries while males perform better in mathematics (PISA website).

## 2. Statement of the Problem

The research studied the effects of Discourse markers instructions with other personal variables of listeners such as gender on attitude to listeners' comprehension of English texts.

## 3. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were generated to guide the study:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the attitude to listening comprehension of students exposed to Discourse Markers or Conventional Instructions.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the attitudes to Listening Comprehension at pretest and posttest stages of male and female students.

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Research Design

The population of the study included all public Senior Secondary School students in Ondo State. The target population was Senior Secondary School II students in Ofedepo High School, Okitipupa, Jubilee Grammar School, Ondo, and St. Patrick Grammar School, Oka- Akoko. The schools were chosen based on the following criteria:

1. a second-generation public secondary school,
2. having same year of establishment,
3. offering similar curriculum,
4. being a mixed school,
5. being in a semi-urban environment and
6. each being representative of the three zones of the state

### 4.2 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample was 120 (one hundred and twenty) participants selected through multi-stage sampling techniques, which comprised purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used to select three schools based on the criteria of school location, type and grade. Purposive sampling was equally used to select an intact class each per school and 120 participants who were regular throughout the six week training. The participants had similar exposure to English Language learning. They all



use their native dialects of Yoruba as media of communication in homes and in schools, while they reserve English for learning in the classroom.

#### **4.3 Instruments for Data Collection**

The research instruments were;

- Listening attitude questionnaire (LAQ);
- Teachers' Instructional Guide on discourse markers' instructions;
- Teachers Instructional Guide on Modified Conventional Strategy and
- Evaluation sheet for Assessing Teachers' Performance on the use of the Strategies (ESAT).

#### **4.4 Listening Attitude Questionnaire:**

This questionnaire covered attributes of inefficient listener, such as un-teachable attitude, in-attention, wandering thought, decay or forgetfulness, inability to transit from perceptual skill to cognitive skill, inability to activate previous knowledge, inability to discriminate speech sounds, inability to transcode auditory perception and inability to comprehend. The scale consisted 30 items rated on a modified 4-point likert scale (1 = strongly agree; 2= agree, 3 = disagree and 4 = strongly disagree). The total score obtainable was 103. The scores within the range of 46-59 was regarded as low, 60-80 was regarded as average and 81-94 was regarded as high attitude at the pre-test; while the scores within the range of 49-66 was low, 67-93 was regarded as average and 94-103 was regarded as high attitude at the post-test.

#### **4.5 Validation of the LCQ Instrument**

This instrument was subjected to face and content validity by giving copies to experts in educational evaluation and language education with bias in English language education. These experts were asked to determine its suitability in terms of clarity, breadth and language. Only the 30 items that were found suitable were used.

#### **4.6 Reliability of LCQ**

The test was administered on sampled 50 SSII students in a school outside the ones to be used for the study using Cronbach Alpha and the reliability coefficient determined was 0.75.

#### **4.7 Teachers' Instructional Guide on Discourse Markers Instruction**

- Using Context Clues to Determine Meaning.
- Using Synonyms and Antonyms to Determine Meaning.
- Determining Word Meaning by Examples

- Using a General Sense and Knowledge of Topic to Determine Meaning of Word
- Topic Sentence.

#### **4.8 Teachers' Instructional Guide on Conventional Strategy**

- **Step 1:** Teacher writes the topic on the chalkboard.
- **Step 2:** She/he takes the students through the examples given in their reading text.
- **Step 3:** She/ he sets them to do the exercises in their notebooks.
- **Step 4:** Teacher goes round to mark their work.
- **Step 5:** She/he does correction with them

#### **4.9 Evaluation Sheet for Assessing Teachers' Performance on the use of the Strategies (ESAT)**

These are the guidelines for evaluating the performance of the trained research assistants on the effective implementation of the instructional guides. Any research assistant that scores 60 marks and above in any of these strategies will be adjudged to have mastered the contents of the instructional guides.

#### **4.10 Validity of ESAT**

The instruments were given to experts on the field of Language Education for their input. Corrections were made, and it was factored into the production of the final draft of ESAT.

#### **4.11 Reliability of ESAT**

The instruments were trial tested to ensure its reliability. It was administered on teachers outside the sampled schools. Inter-rater reliability was determined using scott pie as follows:

- Listening Strategies was 0.80;
- Discourse Markers Instruction was 0.83;
- Conventional Strategy was 0.82.

### **5. Procedure for Data Collection**

The study was divided into three phases: Phase one – Pre-test, Phase two-- treatment and Phase three- post-test stages.

#### **Phase I**

Stage One: This stage started with a visit to the selected schools for permission to use the schools for the research. After obtaining the permission of the school authorities,

three research assistants were immediately recruited, one per school, for 40-minute class periods for 8 days over eight weeks that the study lasted.

**Stage Two:** This stage started with a purposive assignment of the selected schools to different treatments. This was followed by the training of the research assistants on the topics to be treated in each school. The research assistants who were English Language teachers in their respective schools were coordinated properly with the different package per school.

**Stage Three:** This was the stage where an intact class was chosen per school for the training. After the class had been selected listening comprehension questionnaire was administered on the class.

### **Phase II**

This was the treatment stage. The training held between 3.00pm – 4.00pm on Mondays in Iwaro, 3.00pm-4.00pm on Wednesdays in Ondo and 2.30pm-3.00pm on Thursdays in Okitipupa. It took place once per week as approved by the different school authorities. The Participants in the experimental group one was taught listening strategies for six weeks while experimental group two was taught discourse markers. The following arrangements were made from week one to week eight for group one:

#### **Experimental group 1 Discourse Markers Instruction**

- Using Context Clues to Determine Meaning.
- Using Synonyms and Antonyms to Determine Meaning.
- Determining Word Meaning by Examples
- Using a General Sense and Knowledge of Topic to Determine Meaning of Word
- Topic Sentence.

#### **Control Group: Conventional Strategy**

- **Step 1:** Teacher writes the topic on the chalkboard.
- **Step 2:** She/he takes the students through the examples given in their reading text.
- **Step 3:** She/ he sets them to do the exercises in their notebooks.
- **Step 4:** Teacher goes round to mark their work.
- **Step 5:** She/he does correction with them

However, the control group was not exposed to listening instructions; they were given the same pretest and posttest.

### **Phase Three**

**Stage One:** This was the post treatment stage. All the participants were asked to respond to the same instruments which they had earlier responded to in phase one, which was listening comprehension questionnaire.

### 5.1 Data Analysis Techniques

Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, mean and standard deviation for the research questions. Also, inferential statistics of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test all the hypotheses. All hypotheses would be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

## 6. Results

### 6.1 Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the attitude to listening comprehension of students exposed to DM or Conventional Instructions.

**Table 1:** Summary of ANOVA on Listening Comprehension and Attitude for Post-test Analysis

Source of Variations		SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Post-test on Attitude	Between Groups	12405.02	1	12405.02	94.64	< .05
	Within Groups	7667.98	117	65.54		

Source: Fieldwork

The data in Table 1 show that there was a significant difference in the attitude to listening [F (1, 117) = 94.64, p < 0.05].

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the attitudes to Listening Comprehension at pretest and posttest stages of male and female students

**Table 3:** Summary of ANOVA on Listening Comprehension of Male and Female Students

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	P
Gender	105.296	1	105.296	3.690	> .05
Error	3224.103	117	27.555		
Total	4804.992	119			

Table 3 shows that gender difference was not significant on students' performance in listening comprehension [F(1, 117)= 3.690, p > 0.05].

**Table 4:** Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Attitude to Listening and Listening Comprehension by Gender and Types of Instruction

	Gender	Types of Instruction			
		DM		Conventional	
		X	SD	X	SD
Attitude to Listening	Female	79.95	4.99	71.92	10.59
	Male	80.00	8.23	66.04	8.38

The data in Table 4 shows that male subjects exposed to DM instruction had just a little higher performance in attitude to listening with a mean score of 80.0 compared to their female counterparts with mean score of 79.95, while female students exposed to conventional instructions had better performance in attitude to listening with a mean score of 71.92 compared to their male counterparts with a mean score of 66.04.

## 7. Discussion

The study tried to find out the attitude of students to listening before and after the treatment. The results showed that majority of the students exhibited average attitude to listening before the treatments. After the treatment, there was a slight increase in attitude of students to listening. This means that there was a correspondent influence of instructions on attitude to listening. The study further confirmed that negative attitude can be changed through an intervention like instruction and, thus, as this study confirms Krahe and Altwasser's (2006) finding that attitude can change through training intervention.

Concerning the influence of gender on attitude to listening, the finding revealed that gender had no influence on attitude to listening comprehension, as female gender had a better attitude to listening than male. This is support to the findings of Richard and Do-Yeong (2006) who found no gender difference at individual level. It also contradicted Richard and Do-Yeong who found that male would show a stronger pro-risk position than female.

However, the finding confirmed Hatoon and Mahmood (2011) who found that females hold more comfort, confidence and more positive attitude towards computer than males. It also disagreed with Selim's (2006) finding that gender had slightly significant influence as female subjects revealed a more positive attitude to non-native gender accents.

This also confirmed Anders and Berg (2005) who found that positive attitude change resulted from motivated behaviour, like training, while negative attitude change resulted from less motivated behaviour of no training.

The finding also aligned with that of Barbara and Colette (2006) who found that cognitive intervention resulted in greater attitude change no-intervention condition.

## **8. Conclusion**

This study investigated the effect of discourse markers on attitude to listening comprehension of Secondary School Students in Ondo State, Nigeria. Findings from this study vis-à-vis the earlier findings and views in the background literature showed that students could benefit much from instructions in listening skills.

It can also be concluded that attitude to listening will impart negatively or positively on listening comprehension. The implication is that it should be the entry point to instruction in listening comprehension. Teachers should devote many efforts to remediating observed negative attitudes that can discourage effective listening.

Although gender was not significant in the study, it can also be said that gender has a unique influence on listening comprehension. Therefore, gender should be kept as a constant factor in any training programme for students on listening comprehension. There is the need to promote activities that will encourage male and female to listening without distractions whatsoever.

### **8.1 Recommendations**

The results gathered from this study could be of importance to some significant stakeholders like teachers of English, curriculum planners, teacher trainers and parents. On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations are suggested to different stakeholders:

#### **8.2 English Language Teachers**

The teacher of English should take into cognizance the significant role of a language teacher as a teacher of all language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). He/she should, therefore, see the language skills as integral parts of English Language. This study should be an eye opener to English Language teachers who always assumed that listening is a skill not necessarily to be taught. The teacher should partner curriculum developers as well as parents towards bringing their attention to the importance of the chronological first language.

### 8.3 Curriculum Planners

Curriculum planners are to be fully aware that listening skill can no longer be neglected on the school curriculum if it is truly to be regarded as the first of the language skills acquired by every child. It should therefore be given equal attention like other language skills on the curriculum. The attention should go beyond the usual passing one given to such ones that would touch on the process of perceptual skill to the cognitive process of interpreting and responding to the speech perception appropriately. Listening should not be seen as a mere perception of sounds alone. It should be seen holistically in terms of what an individual does with the speech sounds that are perceived, how they are interpreted and how appropriate the response to the discourse.

### 8.4 Teacher Trainers

The pre-service teacher's attitude to listening skills begins from school. If the pre-service student teachers are made to attach equal importance to listening skills, this would go a long way in changing the general orientation to listening.

### 8.5 Parents

Parents should be encouraged through this study to enhance the general listening behavior of students. They should desist from behaviour that kills tendency to develop a good listening behaviour by reinforcing children that have developed good attitude to listen, especially children that listen without cutting in during interpersonal communication.

### 8.6 Contributions to Knowledge

This work has made three contributions to knowledge. They are:

1. **Theoretical Contribution:** The belief that once a student has a mastery of the grammar of the second language, it would be sufficient enough to benefit maximally from listening comprehension activities can no longer hold. The outcomes of this research have shown that knowledge of discourse markers will not be sufficient enough for students to benefit from listening comprehension activities without the corresponding knowledge and application of listening strategies.
  - a) **Practical Contribution:** Language behaviours of the learners have been shown to be of importance to learning. Classroom activities have been further enriched by not limiting instructions to English Language contents only without looking at language behaviours of the learners. Therefore, student's attitude to listening should first be determined and remediated before instructions in the content areas.

2. **Methodological Contribution:** This research has shown that a combination of descriptive survey and quasi – experiment design could be useful. This is different from other researches before it which were either a descriptive survey or quasi-experiment design only.

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