

## Dictogloss: A Motivational tool for Listening Comprehension among Secondary School Students in Kuta, Niger State

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### Abstract

*This study investigates students' perceptions on the impact of dictogloss technique as a motivational tool for listening comprehension in secondary school education in Kuta, Niger State. A descriptive survey design was adopted in this paper with a total population of 1,201 students. Through stratified sampling, a sample of sixty students (60) of Senior Secondary Students II was used for the study. A researcher-designed instrument was used: "A Thief in the Night" and administered to gather data from a sample population to describe existing opinions related to using dictogloss for listening comprehension. Analysis of the research questions were carried out with descriptive statistics of frequencies count, percentages, and mean and standard deviation. The findings indicated that dictogloss significantly enhanced students' motivation in listening comprehension, leading to improved performance. Students perceived dictogloss as a motivating, interactive and challenging activity that fostered a sense of accomplishment and boost their enthusiasm for language learning. The study recommends the potential of dictogloss to promote students' motivation and listening comprehension skills, providing insights for language teachers and educators seeking innovative and effective pedagogical approaches.*

**Keywords:** language teaching, dictogloss, motivation, listening comprehension

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## Introduction

Language pedagogy has evolved to the point that more communicative approaches and techniques are used. However, neither the traditional methods nor the more recent communicative approaches, used alone have been able to address the scope and level of English proficiency required for participation in today's global community. It seems plausible to integrate both (Kim & Junaidi, 2020). Collaborative tasks like dictogloss require learners to get involved in deliberate and cooperative comprehension and production of the language. The use of dictogloss can be a way of integrating both traditional and collaborative methods. Ellis and Nassaji (2019) assert that recent findings of classroom research also appear to demonstrate that interactive instruction is beneficial to learners in modifying their inter-language prowess. This will lead to improved linguistic accuracy in language use. Furthermore, using collaborative tasks require learners to get involved in deliberate and cooperative comprehension and production of the language. Teachers need to pay attention to the facilitation of language learning and not to be regarded as the only source of knowledge.

Active and interactive learning, discovery and knowledge building are part of the constructivist theory of learning that motivates students to discover principles for themselves. They construct knowledge by working to solve realistic problems found in self-directed transformational and experiential learning (Radin & Diaz 2019). The employment of interactive techniques in the classroom can be challenging for both teachers and students. Teachers give up their centralized learning role as experts or source of authority as they become facilitators. Students take responsibility for not only what but also how they learn. The second language should be taught in such a way that learners are enabled to express themselves freely in the four skills of language. Such ability is acquired through direct exposure to the English language to enable spontaneous development in activities like conversations, dialogues, language games, listening skills etc. (Olugbodi, 2016). Learning listening is one of the important processes in language learning. By this, the students can learn the target language - English. The application of dictogloss in teaching listening comprehension is advantageous for learners to enhance their language skills. It is demonstrated that the students who have learnt language based on this technique develop their ability in listening and speaking skills. Dictogloss will be put to test to investigate learners' opinions on the impact of the technique on their motivation in listening comprehension.

## **Concept of Dictogloss**

Dictogloss can be defined in two words: “**dicto**” (from Latin which means speak or dictation) and “**gloss**” (from Latin/Greek, meaning paraphrase, explanation or interpretation). This signifies that dictogloss is a technique in teaching listening process through dictation. A piece of text is read out to students and in small groups reconstructs the text through glossary related to the text (Cardoso, 2021). Dictogloss is presumed to be an effective way to teach listening and improves students’ comprehension in listening. It involves interactive teaching method using dictation where learners listen to a passage, note down keywords and work together to reconstruct another version of the text. Dictogloss was originally introduced by Ruth Wajnryb in 1990 as an alternative method of teaching grammar (Vasiljevic, 2018). Radin and Diaz (2019) posit that dictogloss method borrows a little from traditional dictation but in fact is quite distinct from dictation both in its procedure and objectives. It is really in contrast with traditional dictation in which the learners are not permitted to take note. No paraphrasing is prompted in traditional dictation and students must copy what exactly they listen to. The use of dictogloss can be a way of integrating both traditional and collaborative notions. Smith (2018) and Jacobs and Small (2017) assert that texts and songs are good materials to be used in a dictogloss lesson. As a listening activity, dictogloss is quite promising and likely to increase learners’ motivation to learn and develop their listening skills (Jacobs & Small, 2017). However, learners need to be motivated so that they will be fully involved in the activity (Wajnryb, 2003). Dictogloss procedure has six stages viz: initiation, input, independent, interdependent, performance and reflective. (Stewart, Silva, & Gonzalez, 2020).

## **Impact of Dictogloss in a Listening Context**

Buck (2018), states that listening requires the utilization of both systematic and schematic knowledge. In order to interpret the discourse, the listener must have a sufficient knowledge of the language system and general knowledge of the world. This means understanding of the phonological, syntactic and semantic aspect of knowledge. At the initial stages of language learning the major goal of listening instruction is to help learners understand the acoustic input. Listening activities are designed to give the learner practice in identifying correctly different sounds, sound-combinations and intonation patterns. As the learners’ proficiency increases, meaning based activities become more important.

Mewald, Gassner and Sigott (2017), posit that meaning-based activities can be divided into activities that assess direct meaning comprehension and those that measure inferred meaning comprehension. Direct comprehension means the understanding of surface information and facts that are explicitly stated in the input text. Some examples are listening for gist, listening for main points and listening for specific information. Inferred meaning comprehension includes implicit understanding and drawing inferences from input texts. The information required is not clearly stated. The listener must go beyond the surface information to see other meanings which are not explicitly stated in the text. These are inferring a speaker's intention or attitude towards a topic, relating utterances to their social and situational contexts, recognizing the communicative function of utterances. The dictogloss listening procedure falls into the first category, and has different procedure and objective from the traditional dictation that a student recreates a dictated text, word for word. Learners in dictogloss are expected to retain the content or gist of the short text, and then apply their own linguistic and grammatical knowledge to form a parallel text. This is important as the type of listening activity has direct implications for the selection of the listening materials.

### **Dictogloss and Learners' Motivation**

It is considered a matter of great importance for language teachers whether or not a certain language activity in class is accepted favourably by students. An activity which is implemented in class should have beneficial impact on motivation and proficiency. Does dictogloss actually lead to increased motivation to learn English? The Theory of Self-Determination (Deci & Ryan, 2019), which has attracted a lot of researchers' attention in motivation studies, posits three basic psychological needs. These are: competence, relatedness and autonomy. Competence refers to being effective in dealing with environment a person finds himself or herself in. Relatedness is the universal want to interact with and be connected to others. Autonomy is the universal urge to a casual agent of his or her own life. These needs are regarded as universal necessities that are innate and seen in humanity across time, gender and culture. If a certain language activity allows satisfaction of the three basic needs, learners are likely to increase their motivation to learn.

To satisfy the need for competence, learners should deal with a task which leads them to creatively think. Learners should be aware that the task which they are now working on is challenging and demanding enough to match their competence. Taking notes while listening to a text at a normal

speed is not easy and learners have to make an appropriate decision on what to write down. When they reconstruct a text and compare their reconstructed work with the original they listened to, they have to use their thinking skills. For example, analyzing, composing, thinking and making a decision and comparing. It is evident that making use of the afore-mentioned thinking skills is much more challenging and satisfying than just doing what the teacher tells them to do or just learning a certain linguistic form or grammatical rule by heart.

Dictogloss facilitates cooperation among learners, which helps satisfy the needs of relatedness. While engaged in dictogloss, learners work together in pairs. A number of studies have shown that there are both pedagogic and social gains for most learners working in small groups (Storch, 2020). If they can work collaboratively with their partners, the need for relatedness is likely to be satisfied.

Learner autonomy involves learners having choice and feeling responsible for their own learning (Storch, 2020). Dictogloss is a learner-centred activity and includes factors which promote learner autonomy. While they are engaged in dictogloss, learners have to decide on what to write down and how to reconstruct a text by themselves. They are not allowed to depend on teachers for help. Teachers play a supporting role and learner-centred learning environment is created. If the technique is implemented in class regularly, learners are likely to be more responsible for their own learning.

The impact of classroom environment which satisfies the three psychological needs on learners' motivation to learn English has been investigated by Iwanaka (2021). Dictogloss was employed as an activity to promote participants' autonomy and establish a desirable relationship between them. After the treatment, the participants' motivation for English increased significantly. It can be considered that dictogloss, if it is implemented carefully and matches learners' psycholinguistic readiness, satisfies the three basic psychological needs. This encourages learners to increase their motivation to learn English. As a listening activity, dictogloss is quite promising and likely to increase learners' motivation to learn and develop their listening skills (Someya, 2018). However, learners need to be motivated so that they will be fully involved in the activity.

## **Research Questions**

1. What are the demographic characteristics of respondents?



2. What are the opinions of students on dictogloss as a motivational tool for listening comprehension?
3. To what extent do students perceive improvement in their listening comprehension skills after using dictogloss?

## Methodology

A descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population comprised 1,201 SS2 students of the six senior secondary schools in Kuta (Principals of the Various Schools, 2024).

A two-stage sampling was used for the study; the first stage involved simple random sampling of four (4) secondary schools. Also, the stratified sampling of 15 respondents each from the schools was done to give a total 60 respondents to represent the population of the study. The sample was derived from Mugenda and Mugenda (2016) who suggested that a class size of at least thirty (30) students is required for a research that seeks to investigate participants' opinions. A researcher-designed questionnaire was designed using a 4-point Likert type rating scale of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagree and Strongly Disagree to retrieve information from the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, mean and percentages respectively. A mean score of 2.5 was set as decision rule to help analyze the research questions. This means that any item with a mean score of 2.5 and above was termed agreed and items with less than 2.5 mean was termed disagreed.

The study used a dialogue titled: "A Thief in the Night" as major instrument for the collection of data for the study. This is to determine the opinions of students on the impact of dictogloss technique on their motivation in listening comprehension. The choice of the instrument was informed by the assertions of Vasiljevic (2018) and Jacobs and Small (2017) that texts and songs are good materials to be used in dictogloss.

## Results

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents (n =60)

Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
14-15	16	27.0
16-17	26	43.0
17-18	18	30.0
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	30	50.0
Female	30	50.0

**Source: Field survey, 2024.**

Table 1 showed that a total of 60 students completed the questionnaire, out of which 30 (50%) were males and 30 (50%) were females. The age distribution of the respondents was as follows: 16 (27%) were aged 14-15 years, 26 (43%) 16-17 years, and 17-18 (30%).

**Table 2: Students' Responses on Dictogloss as a Motivational Tool for Listening Comprehension**

Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
1. The use of dictogloss makes listening exercises more engaging and interesting.	60.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	Agree
2. I feel motivated to participate actively during dictogloss activities because of its interactive nature.	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	Agree
3. Dictogloss encourages me to pay attention to details while listening to the text.	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	Agree

4. Working collaboratively has inspired me to learn more effectively.	57.5	22.5	20.0	0.0	3.4	Agree
5. There is a sense of accomplishment and motivation after successfully reconstructing a text during dictogloss.	52.5	27.5	17.5	2.5	3.3	Agree
6. Dictogloss in listening is not only motivating but easy.	20.0	25.0	32.5	22.5	2.4	Disagree

**Source: Field survey, 2024.**

Results indicated in the table above showed that 60 (100%) of the students had the perception that they were highly motivated to participate actively during dictogloss activities in listening comprehension because of its interactive and collaborative nature. However, 55% disagreed dictogloss in listening comprehension is not only motivating but easy. These responses from the students revealed that majority of the students were highly motivated using dictogloss as a motivational tool in listening comprehension. This is in line with Jacobs and Small, (2017) and Someya's (2018) statements that as a listening activity, dictogloss is quite promising and likely to increase learners' motivation to learn and develop their listening skills.

Table 3: Responses of Students' Perceived Improvement in Listening Comprehension Using Dictogloss.

Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
1. Dictogloss has helped me to better understand spoken English compared to traditional listening exercises.	47.5	50.0	2.5	0.0	3.5	Agree
2. Dictogloss has improved my ability to identify key points and main ideas in spoken text.	30.0	27.5	20.0	22.5	2.7	Agree
3. My overall listening comprehension	20.5	30.0	40.0	10.0	2.6	Agree



	skills	have	developed	after						
	participating in dictogloss activity.									
4.	Dictogloss has helped me to focus more effectively on details in the spoken text during listening tasks.	52.5	27.5	17.5	2.5	3.3	Agree			
5.	Dictogloss lessons should replace other subjects in schools.	10.0	17.5	55.0	17.5	2.2	Disagree			

Source: Field survey, 2024.

Results presented in Table 2 showed that there was significant improvement in students' listening comprehension as a result of dictogloss exercises. Participants expressed that dictogloss has improved their ability to focus on main points and details in spoken text during listening tasks.

### Discussion of Findings

The study examined the perceptions of students of dictogloss as a motivational tool for listening comprehension in secondary schools in Kuta, Niger State. A group of sixty students participated in the dictogloss lesson. The teaching of listening comprehension is important to students' academic achievement at all levels of education. This is why the improvement and facilitation of its teaching in secondary schools is imperative.

The findings in the research questions revealed that students were highly motivated and involved in listening comprehension using dictogloss technique. The learners cooperated, concentrated and willingly participated in the tasks. The participants' listening was analysed with positive responses. Responses such as "Dictogloss has improved ability to identify key points and main ideas in spoken text," "Dictogloss has helped me to better understand spoken English compared to traditional listening exercises," "Dictogloss encourages me to pay attention to details while listening to the text," "My overall listening comprehension skills have developed after participating in dictogloss activity," etc came from the students. It can be said that the fulfillment of the three basic psychological needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy as posited by the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2019), contributed to the learners' motivation. The results of this study showed that engaging in motivating activities repeatedly in class, learners feel satisfied with the class and their motivation for learning at a higher level increases. Therefore, regular incorporation of dictogloss in class, if

implemented properly, fulfils learners' basic psychological needs and brings about increased motivation to learn English. This is due to the fact that motivation plays a significant role in enhancing and expediting students' language learning.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this paper provides valuable insights into students' perceptions on the impact of dictogloss technique as a motivational tool for listening comprehension. The findings suggest that dictogloss has a positive influence on students' motivation leading to improved performance in listening comprehension. Students perceived dictogloss as an enjoyable, interactive and challenging activity that fostered a sense of accomplishment and boosted their enthusiasm for language learning.

The results of the study have implications for language teaching and learning, highlighting the potential of dictogloss as a pedagogical tool to enhance students' motivation and listening comprehension skills. By incorporating dictogloss into teaching practices, teachers can create a more engaging and effective environment, promoting students' academic success and linguistic confidence.

## **Recommendations**

1. It is crucially important for language teachers to maximally utilize dictogloss technique in the teaching of listening comprehension which has not been given much attention over the years. This cannot be effectively achieved until language teachers are intimated with the current strategy of motivating and facilitating learners' performance in the classroom. When teachers are equipped with the technique, they would be of help to students to interactively and collaboratively learn from their mates. This can be realized by organizing series of training for the language teachers to adopt the technique at the primary and secondary levels of education.
2. Secondary school students are better beneficiaries of the dictogloss teaching technique because their intellectual curiosity is fulfilled in the teaching technique. Early introduction, involvement and participation of learners in dictogloss lessons could get them exposed to listening comprehension. They will also appreciate the way all the language skills are made purposeful. Low-level and average learners' listening skills are improved greatly.
3. Language curriculum planners need to revisit the English language curriculum with a view to paying more attention to dictogloss teaching technique and learners' need. This is because for

a curriculum to be learner-centred, the learners' subjective needs and perceptions about the learning process must be considered. The inclusion of dictogloss in the curriculum will help in students' motivation and facilitate their listening comprehension in English language teaching and learning.

4. The effective use of dictogloss as a teaching technique needs resources (human and material). Government at all levels can do this by enriching schools with qualified teachers, radios, pictures, records of good models for dictogloss lessons, etc. It is also recommended that other relevant materials for the enhancement of listening comprehension performance of learners in schools be made available.

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