



IMAGINATIVE AND CREATIVE ABILITIES IN WRITTEN AND ORATORY DEVELOPMENTS IN STUDENTS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

J. O. Udeigwe

Department of English Language/Literature, Abia State University, Uturu

Jo.udeigwe@abiastateuniversity.edu.ng

Abstract

Imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory skills in the study of English language is of utmost importance. The purpose of this study is to ensure that the students are taught by highly qualified teachers of English language as to acquire the best knowledge of it. The study's aims and objectives is to examine the perceived roles of English Language teachers in imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory development, creative abilities in writing and oratory development in English Language. The researcher made use of two research questions. The sample of the study was 60 English teachers in the public schools in Imo State in Nigeria, drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling techniques. A self-constructed likert 4 – point scale questionnaire containing two clusters with a total of 30 items was used to collect data from respondents. The instrument was first validated by two Senior Lecturers one from English Language and the other from Measurement and Evaluation Department, all from Abia State University Uturu. The Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The instrument yielded a co-efficient of 0.92. The results were analysed using the mean scores. The result shows that the perceived ways English teachers help students to develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory skills are through the following: Folktales, storytelling, exposure to English play or drama, English music, English dance and acquisition of artistic expressions in English and above all English conversation and others. In addition, the findings revealed that the perceived basic knowledge, English Language teachers inculcate in students to guide them in creative writing and oratory in English language include letting them know that the writers' thought patterns must be rooted in English culture, the work must have a specific function and a target audience and must be original.

Keywords: Imaginative Development, English Creative writing, Oratory in English, English Cultural Practice.

1.0 Introduction

Originally humans are born with inquisitive tendencies, we are highly curious to know about the surrounding of the world we are living in. Our ability to imagine a different world and create new possibilities sets us apart from other creatures. In a country like Nigeria for example, English language is a

mode of communication and serves us as a lingua-franca and thus should be a language of instruction. Nigerian Youth are supposed to speak the English language fluently as it enables them to be creative in the language since it is believed that people reason better through the use of language.



Nneji, (2017) posit that creativity itself is the hallmark of imagination, creativity and imagination are essential capacities, which have a vital role to play in the development of any child at all levels. Having good ideas, putting the imagination to work, planning and making things happen are all capabilities that are essential in a world, where the pace of change demands adaptability, resilience and risk-taking as knowledge alone is not enough.

Human beings are endowed with natural capacity to be inquisitive and curious about their world. The ability of humans to create and imagine different worlds makes us different from the lower animals. Human beings have intelligence and intuition (instinct) other species have instinct only. English language is a second language of an Igbo man. English as a second language is a lingua-franca, a mode of communication and thus should be a language of instruction. Igbo youths are supposed to speak the English language fluently as it will enable them to be creative in the language, since it is believed people reason better when they are exposed to many languages. Developing imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in English Language is very essential for Igbo youths especially in modern world, English language is now universal.

Literature Review

Imaginative and Creativity

Play essential role across curriculum and at every age. Thus, there is need to help children develop them. Urula (2016) opines that imaginative capability of finding ways in which one might adopt what they have to help create spaces that excite curiosity and stimulate thinking, while creative ability is the capability of an individual to adapt to a challenging task making it more interesting by engaging in deep thinking, researching,

working out and presenting a novel idea or object. Eddy (2016) adds that imaginative ability of a child determines the child's creative ability and therefore, is better encouraged and supported in children using imaginative play. According to Williams (2017) imaginative and creative play is one of the many areas of play that are critical to child development. Infants, toddlers and young children acquire developmental skills like fine and gross motor abilities and hand-eye coordination through contact with the real world, when they move and interact with their environment. Most skills can easily be learned through play, which is a natural way of development and growth. Abel (2017) assert that outside from motor skills (skill that relate to movement) children also need to develop their imagination, their logical thinking and in the other words, mental skills. This means that imaginative and creative play help children in physical, emotional intellectual and social developments.

Imaginative play involves children in role playing and acting out various experiences that they may have had or sometime is of some interest to them (Babatunde, 2015). In imaginative play, children are experimenting with decision making on how to behave and also practicing their social skills. Babatunde further states that children learn from experience: from what happens around them, from what they see, hear, smell, taste and touch. To absorb those experiences and make sense of the world. In the opinion of Mbachi (2017) role play may appear to be a very simple activity, yet within it young children learn practical skills such as dressing themselves, cooperating and sharing with others, and developing creative ability in so many areas. In support of the idea, Enejo (2017) Opines that developing imaginative ability depends on learning



environment and resources available, thus the need to channel child's imaginative play to their culture and belief system. Language is the vehicle for such transmission. To this effect, Abel (2017) asserts that this imaginative play can be encouraged by providing a place to play, providing props and materials, being the child's playmate and providing with experience to role play. English teachers should be able to identify the type of environment and resources that will help students to unfold this imaginative and creative ability from them, especially as it concerns writing and oratory in English language.

There are many types of imaginative and creative play, according to Udoh (2017). He opines that children play imaginatively and creatively in various different ways based on many factors such as age, conducive environment, toys provided among others. Children can engage in imaginative and creative play by themselves or with others. Imaginary play happens when children use their imagination to create and make-believe scenarios. Children can engage in this type of play using toys, figures, puppets, dolls or stuffed animals, which in essence can act out a particular role themselves and become part of a play drama. Ukeje (2017) observed that active play happens when children use their large muscle and move around rather than staying in one place. This type of play releases energy and develops coordination. Arts, crafts and construction/building play are ways children express their creativity that encourages focus and concentration and also develop fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination. It allows children to be proud of themselves and also gain a sense of mastery after they have created something. Udoh (2017) adds that the type of play known as games with rules, include board games, card games and structured sports

activities. This kind of game becomes important for children as they grow older. With this type of play the focus is playing by the rules and often involves a winner or a loser. There is much less room for a child using imaginative and creativity with this type of play, because it is structured and rule-governed. Although games with rules play are important for children to learn to deal with competition, rules and the real world creative and imaginative play is also very important for children's development and should not be ignored. However, Williams (2017) states that it is important to know that there are five essential things to help a child develop:

- Exploring ideas and keeping options open
- Reflecting critically on ideas, actions and outcomes
- Making questions and seeing relationships
- Envisaging what might be
- Questioning and challenging

Developing the above skills whether in arts, craft, music, dance, writing or oratory among others in English language makes it a medium.

Oratory (Public Speaking)

It is a process or act of performing a speech to live audience. This type of speech is deliberately structured with three general purposes: to inform, to persuade and to entertain (Egbe, 2016). Oratory commonly understood as normal, face to face speaking to a single person or to a group of listeners. Creativity in oratory is the art of using language in producing speech in an original and unique way for influencing the audience in the public gathering, while the one who has that ability is the orator in English language. Oratory exists above the ordinary speech as it is prepared with passion, infused



with creativity and masterfully crafted to offer a subline experience. According to Willy (2016) oratory has been called the highest art for encompassing all other disciplines. Oratory in English language therefore requires knowledge of English literature, the ability to construct English prose and an ear for rhythm harmony and musicality. Oratory in English language is not mere speaking English language, but English speech that appeals to our noblest sentiments, animates our souls, stirs passions, emotions and also inspires virtues action in accordance with English culture (Nneji, 2017). It is often at its finest way, when fostered during times of tragedy, pain, crisis, fear and turmoil. In these situations, it serves as a light, a guide to those who cannot themselves make sense of the chaos and look to a leader to point the way. A creative orator in English language upholds virtue and goodness and thereby speaks masterfully to every occasion.

Creative Writing

Creative writing gives outside the bounds of normal professional, journalistic, academic or technical forms of literature, typically identified by an emphasis on narrative craft, character development and the use of literary tropes or with various traditions of poetry and poetic (Thomson, 2017). Due to the looseness of the definition, it is possible for writing such as future stories to be considered creative writing, even though they fall under journalism, because the content of features is specifically focus on narrative and character development. Eweta (2017) add to fictional and non-fictional works; all fall from this category, including such forms as novels, biographies, short stories and poems. In the academic setting, creative writing is typically separated into fiction and poetry genres, with a focus in writing in an original style, as oppose to

imitating pre-existing genres such as crime or horror. Writing for the screen and stage probably referred to as screen writing and play-writing, which are often taught separately, but fit.

Creative writing in English language therefore the ability of a writer to use English language in presenting his thought in an imaginative strength to appeal to the reader. It is the ability of the writer to produce writing of original composition using English language. This involves critical thinking about English people, their culture and other aspect of their lives. Writing about it which is aimed at reshaping something known into something different and original. It can also be seen as a form of English artistic expression, which draws on the imagination to convey meaning through the use of imagery, narrative and drama with special reference to choice of appropriate English proverbs/idioms/adage, figurative use of language and style. This creativity in writing, according to Enejo (2017) is the ability of one to produce creative writing, which is a more contemporary and process-oriented name for what has been traditionally called English literature, including the variety of its genres. English creative writing include, English poetry, English play/drama, English movies and television scripts, English fiction (novels and short stories), English songs, speech, memories and any other, of which its purpose is for free individual expression of feelings thoughts or emotions that contribute to mental and physical health, in promoting audience entertainment, educating people, sharing human experience with an interested group or for keeping records of significant experience in the language.

Empirical Studies

The under listed studies are reviewed in order to address the issues and methods



bothering on the teaching of imaginative and oratory skills to our English students. Igboke (2017) posits that the teaching of nonverbal communication and public speech is grounded in English culture, which most second language teachers lack the knowledge and skill to motivate the students to engage in such writing, students should be made to watch English drama by English actors/actresses to enable them grasp the rudiments of English language, which foster creativity in English language.

Similarly Ukeje (2017) undertook a study in creative and man's development potentials. The study shows that the student are not equipped to manipulate their motor skills and mental ability. Ukeje recommended the engagement of students in field trips, where adequate materials are available to enhance their imaginative ability.

Ofodile (2017) studied the perceived role of Igbo language and culture in the development of Igbo language and culture in the development of Igbo child. The study revealed that use of Igbo language in Igbo community helps the child to imbibe their culture. The study recommended adequate support of parents and teachers in training their children by speaking to them in Igbo language both in school and at home.

Eweta (2017) examined the culture and the literature of the Igbos. The study shows that the knowledge of culture facilitate the Igbos to harness their skills and talents in building a suitable nation. The study reveal the importance of culture and its knowledge with their implied roles in creative writing within a given language. From these study, it is inferred that the development of creative writing and oratory in English Language is influenced by one's knowledge of English culture.

Based on the above background, the purpose of the study in broad terms is to explore the

role of English teachers in helping students develop imagination and creative abilities in writing and oratory in English language. The objective of the study is:

- (i) to identify ways by which English language teachers help student develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in English language.
- (ii) to find out the ways basic knowledge English language teachers inculcate to students in order to guide in creative writing and oratory in English language.

Research Questions

- (i) what are the roles of English language teachers in helping students develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in English language?
- (ii) what are the basic knowledge English language teachers inculcate to students in order to guide them in creative writing and oratory speech in English language?

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey design, where Nwosu (2006) posits that descriptive research design studies are mainly concerned on collecting data on the peculiar features of characteristics of given population in a systematic manner such that the findings are expected to be generalised to the entire population. The design was chosen because the study is centered on describing some variables in relation to a given population. The study focused on the public secondary schools in Imo State, where English language teachers in the public schools of Imo State were the subject of this research. Considering the high nature of the population, sixty(60) English language teachers from public schools in Imo State were drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A self-constructed 4-point scale Likert questionnaire served for instrument for data collection. The instrument consisted of two



parts. Part (A) elicited information on the bio-data of the respondents. Part (B) consist of two clusters. The first cluster contained items 1-11, which elicited responses on the teachers perceived roles in developing the students' abilities in creative writing and oratory in English language. The second cluster with item 12-30 was devoted to the perceived basic knowledge, which teachers inculcate in students to enable them develop creative ability and oratory in English. The items in the questionnaire were weighted as follow: Strongly Agree – 4 points, Agree – 3 points, Disagree – 2 points, and Strongly Disagree – 1 point. The criterion mean was 2.50. The instrument was first validated by two lecturers. English Department one lecturer and one lecturer from the

Department of Measurement and Evaluation in Education Department, all from Abia State University. The cronbach Alpha, Co-efficient method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument, which yielded a co-efficient of 0.92. A total of 58 copies of instrument was administered and retrieved. The data was analysed using mean scores.

Results:

The result of the data collected from the study are presented in tables according to the research questions that guided the study.

Research Question 1:

What are perceived roles of English teachers in helping students develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in English language?

Table 1: Mean Responses of Respondents on the Perceived Roles of English Teachers in Helping Students Develop Imaginative and Creative Abilities in Writing and Oratory in English Language

s/n	Teachers develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in English language through:	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean D	ST n	Decision
1.	English folktales/ storytelling	9	40	8	3	60	2.51	.75	Agree
2.	Acquiring artistic expression like English proverbs/idioms/adage	11	43	4	2	60	2.63	.63	Agree
3.	English play/Drama	15	36	9	-	60	2.55	.71	Agree
4.	English Music	8	41	6	5	60	2.60	.55	Agee
5.	English Dance	4	46	9	.1	60	2.4	.47	Agee
6.	English Conversation	11	33	11	5	60	2.81	.70	Agee
7.	Reading English Literature book	13	39	6	2	60	2.94	.54	Agee
8.	Enough Exploration/attending English cultural events	7	45	8	-	60	2.77	.80	Agee
9.	Through mentoring for teachers that are English writers	10	40	6	4	60	2.52	.66	Agee
10.	English arts	5	51	3	1	60	2.62	.51	Agee
11.	English craft	9	40	11	-	60	3.01	.72	Agee

Table 1 indicates that items 1-11 had mean scores of 2.51, 2.63, 2.55, 2.60, 2.74, 2.81, 2.94, 2.77, 2.52, 2.62 and 3.01 with standard deviation of .75, .63, .71, .55, .47, .70, .54, .80, .66, .51 and .72 respectively with a

grand mean of 2.64. The grand mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that the items listed are roles English teachers used in helping students,



develop imaginative and creative abilities in writing and oratory in English language.

Research Question II:

What are the perceived basic knowledge English teachers inculcate to students in order to guide them in creative writing and oratory in English Language?

s/n	Perceived Knowledge English teachers inculcate in students.	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	ST	Decision
12.	Their thought pattern must be rooted in English culture.	99	40	8	3	60	3.00	.76	Agree
13.	Their literary work must contain English artistic expression.	11	43	4	2	60	3.04	.48	Agree
14.	Such literary work has a specific function.	15	36	9	-	60	2.56	.72	Agree
15.	Each piece of English creative writing has target audience.	8	41	6	5	60	2.81	.65	Agree
16.	Such literary work must be original and self-expressive.	4	46	9	1	60	2.66	.81	Agree
17.	Oratory in English language requires sound reasoning in English Language, smooth and eloquent transmission.	11	33	11	5	60	3.01	.73	Agree
18.	The speech must have power to move audience to act.	13	39	6	2	60	2.91	.66	Agree
19.	The speaker must be able to motivate his audience to uphold English culture.	7	45	8	-	60	2.76	.59	Agree
20.	The speaker must be able to look at the audience attention.	7	45	8	-	60	2.76	.59	Agree
21.	Body language/use of gesture is applied in oratory.	10	40	6	4	60	2.91	.90	Agree
22.	Sense of humor is of important.	9	40	11	-	60	2.82	.81	Agree
23.	There is need for developing a relationship with the audience.	15	36	9	-	60	3.00	.77	Agree
24.	Fluency and accuracy in the use of English grammar is important in oratory.	8	41	6	5	60	3.10	.59	Agree
25.	Words are pronounced using correct English accents.	4	46	9	1	60	2.65	.60	Agree
26.	Communicative competence in English language is needed.	11	33	11	5	60	2.73	.32	Agree
27.	Achieving appropriateness in English is essential.	13	39	6	2	60	2.55	.62	Agree
28.	Attaining Comprehension in English language is a major tool.	7	45	8	-	60	2.56	.61	Agree
29.	Diverting when appropriateness is	10	40	6	4	60	2.81	.55	Agree



	a special skill.									
30.	Being in control of their voice is essential in oratory.	5	51	3	1	60	3.00	.73	Agee	

Grand Mean = 2.71

Table II

Indicates that items 12-30 hail mean scores of 3.00, 3.04, 2.56, 2.81, 2.66, 3.01, 2.91, 2.76, 2.91, 2.59, 2.82, 3.00, 3.10, 2.65, 2.73, 2.55, 2.56, 2.56, 2.81 and 3.00 with standard deviation of .76, .48, .72, .65, .81, .73, .66, .59, .90, .62, .81, .77, .59, .60, .32, .62, .61, .61, .55 and .73 respectively with a grand mean of 2.71. The grand mean is above the criterion mean of 2.50. this signifies that the items listed are the perceived basic knowledge English language teachers inculcate in students in order to guide them in creative writing and oratory skills in English language in secondary schools in Imo State, Nigeria.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that English teachers help students develop imagination and creative abilities in writing and oratory skills in English language, which are conveyed through English folktales/storytelling, artistic expression (proverbs, idioms, adage) exposing students to English play or drama, English music, English books and also through mentoring and engaging in English arts and craft. The findings are affirmed by Igbokwe (2017) and Ukeje (2017), who observed in different occasions that children development of creative skills in speaking and writing are always rooted from the persons culture and extent the child is exposed to it.

The study further revealed that perceived strategies which English teachers used in guiding students to achieve quality creative writing and oratory in English language are many and varied. This is done by letting them know the writers thought pattern must be rooted in English culture, the use of

artistic expression, ensuring that the work has a specific function and a target audience, ensuring that the work is original and self-expressive and that oratory in English language requires sound reasoning and eloquent transmission in English language. Speech must have power to move the audience and motivate people to uphold virtue of English culture. Eweta (2017) and Ofodile (2017) support these findings by asserting that obtaining quality creative writing and oratory in English language is about acquiring the essential rudiments in that language.

Conclusion

The following conclusion is drawn from this study. Creative writing and oratory in English Language are achieved by through exposing the students to English culture and inculcating in them the rudiments of English Language through implicit learning.

Recommendation

The following recommendation are derived from this study.

- The teachers of English Language should be trained and retrained to keep them abreast of the English culture heritage.
- English teachers and students will sparingly engage on excursions to observe different types of English culture in their places of interest since the writers thought line is rooted in English culture.
- Instructional materials used in school should be based on the culture of English Language.
- Parents should encourage their wards by speaking English language to



them at home and the teachers do same at school.

References

- Abel, M. T. (2017). *Creative in Context*. Cambridge University press.
- Babatunde, B. T. (2015). *A Short Guide to Writing About Literature*. Haper Publishers.
- Bandura, A. A. (1977). Social Learning Through Imitation; in M.R. Jones (ed.) *Nelmarks Symposium on Motivation*. University of Nebraska Press.
- Eddy, O. O. (2016). *Role of Igbo Literature and Language*. Cambridge University press.
- Egbe, D. N. (2026). Essential Elements in Developing Public Speaking Skills. <http://www.google.speaking.com>.
- Enejo, T. N. (2017). Drensing Potentials in Arts Development. *Creating Research Journal*. 18 22-35.
- Eweta, N. O. (2017). *The Igbos of Nigeria, Culture and Literature*. African First Publishers.
- Igbokwe, A. (2017). *Non-verbal Communication and Public Speech*. Forth Dimension Publishers.
- Mbach, C.C. (2017). *Cognitive Skills in Learning and Teaching Creative Writing in School*. Cambridge University press.
- Nneji, M.O. (2017). *Developing Writing Skills: New Approach to African Literature*. Longman Publishers.
- Nworgu, B.G. (2006). *Globalisation Research (Basic Issues and Methodology)*. University Trust Publishers.
- Ofodile, O. U. (2017). *Igbo Language and Culture*. African World Press: <http://www.google.com>.
- Onah, C.N. (2016). Thinking Skills and Creativity. *Journal of Psychological Education*, 3, 21-30.
- Thomson, S.N. (2017). *Guides to Creative Writing: A Practical Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Udo, C.C. (2017). The Creative Environment Skills. The Environment Inventory. *Creative Research Journal*, 2, 230-235.
- Ukeje, P.T. (2017). *Creativity: Mans Development Potentials*. Oxford University press.
- Ursula T. N. (2016). Creativity Divergent Thinking and Openness to Experience. *Journal of Personality*. 5, 34-150.