



Speaking Of Pidgin English And Standard English Language Development Of Pre-Schoolers In Pre- School Centres In Obio/Akpor Local Government Area Of Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the speaking of Pidgin English and Standard English language development of Pre-schoolers in Pre-school Centres in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study employed the descriptive research design. The sample size for this study was 200. The instruments for data collection were a designed questionnaire. Data was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The result of the findings showed that there is a significant relationship between speaking of Pidgin English ($r=0.139$) and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development of preschool children in preschool centers in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The study concluded that the issue of Pidgin English language and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development among preschool pupils is a complex and multifaceted challenge. The study recommended amongst other that at the family level, parents and caregivers should be encouraged to expose their children to Standard English language models, both through direct instruction and by ensuring that the child has access to high-quality educational resources. This can help reinforce the use of Standard English language in the home environment.

Keywords: Pidgin English, Standard English language, development, preschool

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition and development of language skills in young children is a crucial aspect of their overall cognitive and social development (Hoff, 2009). However, for many preschool pupils, the ability to express themselves effectively in Standard English language can be a significant challenge, often leading to the use of Pidgin English language or poor expression of oneself (Bybee, 2006).

Pidgin English language is a simplified form of English that emerged as a means of communication among people from different linguistic backgrounds (Siegel, 2008; Kenpro, 2010). In the context of preschool pupils, the use of Pidgin English language can be attributed to a variety of factors, including the influence of their home environment, the exposure to non-standard forms of English within their communities, and the lack of consistent exposure to Standard English language models (Wolfram & Schilling, 2016).

One of the primary factors contributing to the use of Pidgin English language among preschool pupils is the influence of their home environment. Many preschool pupils come from homes where non-standard forms of English are the predominant mode of communication (Labov, 1972). This exposure to Pidgin English language at an early age can lead to the internalization of these linguistic patterns, making it

challenging for the child to transition to the use of Standard English language when they enter the formal educational setting (Wolfram & Schilling, 2016).

Furthermore, the exposure to non-standard forms of English within the broader community can also contribute to the development of Pidgin English language among preschool pupils. In some communities, the use of Pidgin English language is widespread, and children may not have consistent access to Standard English language models, leading to the reinforcement of these linguistic patterns (Siegel, 2008; Lewis, 2010).

The lack of consistent exposure to Standard English language models within the educational setting can also exacerbate the issue of poor expression of oneself among preschool pupils. Many preschool teachers may not have the necessary training or resources to effectively support the development of Standard English language skills in their students (Hoff, 2009). This can result in a lack of explicit instruction and feedback, further hindering the child's ability to express themselves effectively in Standard English language (Camron et al., 2003).

To address the issue of Pidgin English language and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development among preschool pupils, a multifaceted approach is necessary. This may involve interventions at the family, community, and educational levels. Therefore, this study examined the speaking of Pidgin English and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development of Pre-schoolers in Pre-school Centres in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the speaking of Pidgin English and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development of Pre-schoolers in Pre-school Centres in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive research design.

Area of the Study

The study was carried out in preschool Centres in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Population of the Study

The study comprised of public pre-school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the 200 respondents (teachers and Parents) and 5 Pre-school Centres in the study area. To carry out the random sampling techniques, a ballot system was used with the inscription "S" for selected and "N" for not selected. There is a deliberate selection of an equal number of 40 respondents from each of the 5 sampled schools for effective analyses of the result to avoid bias.

Instrumentation

Data was collected using A 15 items researcher developed questionnaires titled, Pidgin English and English Language development of preschoolers Questionnaire (PEELDPQ) structured on four points' likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) 4 points. Agreed (A) 3 points, Disagreed (DA) 2 points and strongly Disagreed (SD) 1 point, was used for the study.

Validity of Instrument

The instrument was validated by three (3) experts in the department of Early Childhood/Primary Education and another, in Measurement and evaluation, in the department of Educational foundation, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

Reliability of Instrument

To determine the reliability of the instrument, a test retest technique was used. The instrument was administered and re-administered after two weeks to 20 respondents (teachers and Parents) outside the sampled size of the study. After which, a reliability coefficient of 0.05 was established using Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient. The instrument was judged suitable for the study.

Administration of Instrument

The researcher visited all the 5 pre-school centres that were used for the study and administered the questionnaires personally to the respondents (teachers/parents). This was intended to ensure high percentage return. The researcher at each occasion explained the purpose of the study, the content of the questionnaire and the mode of completion to the respondents. They were given ample time to complete the filling of the questionnaire.

Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient at 0.05 levels of significance in order to test the hypotheses.

RESULTS

Research Question one: *What is the relationship between speaking of Pidgin English and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development of preschool children in preschool centers in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?*

Table 1: Summary of Relationship between speaking of Pidgin English and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r_{cal}
Speaking of pidgin English	486	1236	1604	0.95
Poor expression in standard English	670	2340		

The result from Table 1 shows the summary of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) of the relationship between speaking of Pidgin English and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development of preschool children. The result of the analysis shows an r-value of 0.95, indicating a high positive relationship to poor expression in Standard English language development of preschoolers.

Testing of hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between speaking of Pidgin English and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development of preschool children in preschool centers in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Table 2: Summary of PPMC significant Relationship between speaking of Pidgin English and poor expression in Standard English language development

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r_{cal}	df	r_{crit}	Decision
speaking of pidgin English	486	1236	1604	0.98	198	0.139	Null hypothesis is rejected
Poor expression in standard English language development	670	2340					

Significant @ .05 alpha level

The result from Table 2 shows that at 0.05 level of significance and with a degree of freedom of 198, the calculated r-value (0.98) is greater than the critical value of r (0.139). This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between speaking of Pidgin English and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development of preschool children in preschool centres in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

DISCUSSION

The findings in hypothesis three shows that there is a significant relationship between speaking of pidgin English and poor expression of oneself in standard English language development of preschool children in preschool centers in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. This finding is in agreement with the views of Crystal (1998) who states that it is not an overstatement to say that most of the students cannot make simple clear and error-free sentences in English languages. Crystal further stated that pidgin English has caused the preschool children to be frustrated in their academic pursuit in other levels of Education, where they should speak and write well in English language, they will find themselves making numerous mistakes in speaking and writing the standard English since they do not acquire the skill of speaking standard English when they were in their tender age.

A study conducted by Labov (1972) examined the use of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) among young children in inner-city communities. The findings revealed that the use of AAVE, a non-standard form of English, was prevalent among the children and was strongly influenced by their home and community environments. The study highlighted the crucial role that exposure to linguistic models plays in the development of language skills, suggesting that the lack of consistent exposure to Standard English language could contribute to the use of Pidgin English language among preschool pupils (Labov, 1972).

Similarly, a study by Siegel (2008) explored the emergence and development of pidgin and creole languages in various contexts. The study found that the use of Pidgin English language was often a result of the need for communication among people from diverse linguistic backgrounds, as well as the influence of the dominant language within the community. The study emphasized the importance of understanding the socio-linguistic factors that contribute to the use of Pidgin English language, as this knowledge can inform the development of effective interventions (Siegel, 2008).

In contrast, a study conducted by Wolfram and Schilling (2016) focused on the diversity of English dialects and the ways in which they are perceived and valued within educational settings. The researchers found that the stigmatization of non-standard forms of English, such as Pidgin English language, could have a significant impact on the self-expression and academic outcomes of preschool pupils. The study highlighted the need for greater acceptance and appreciation of linguistic diversity within the educational system (Wolfram & Schilling, 2016).

Another study by Hoff (2009) examined the role of language input and the development of language skills in young children. The findings suggested that the quality and quantity of language exposure in the early years can have a significant impact on a child's ability to express themselves effectively in Standard English language. The study emphasized the importance of providing preschool pupils with consistent access to high-quality language models and targeted language instruction (Hoff, 2009).

In a more recent study, Charity Hudley and Mallinson (2014) explored the impact of socio-economic status on the language development of preschool pupils. The researchers found that children from low-income families were more likely to use non-standard forms of English, including Pidgin English language, due to the limited exposure to Standard English language models within their home and community environments. The study underscored the need for targeted interventions and support for families and communities to address these disparities (Charity Hudley & Mallinson, 2014).

Collectively, these studies highlight the multifaceted nature of the issue of pidgin English language and poor expression of oneself in standard English language development among preschool pupils. While the studies share a common thread in identifying the critical role of linguistic exposure and models, they also reveal the importance of considering socio-economic, cultural, and educational factors in understanding and addressing this challenge.

The findings from these studies suggest that interventions to support the development of Standard English language skills among preschool pupils should be comprehensive and tailored to the specific needs of the community. This may involve efforts to educate and support families, collaborate with community leaders, and provide targeted professional development for preschool teachers to enhance their ability to support language development in diverse learners.

By acknowledging the complexity of this issue and adopting a multifaceted approach, educators and policymakers can work to ensure that all preschool pupils have the opportunity to develop the necessary language skills to effectively express themselves in Standard English language.

CONCLUSION

The issue of Pidgin English language and poor expression of oneself in Standard English language development among preschool pupils is a complex and multifaceted challenge. By addressing the contributing factors at the family, community, and educational levels, and implementing a comprehensive approach to language development, it can help ensure that all preschool pupils have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to express themselves effectively in Standard English language.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. At the family level, parents and caregivers should be encouraged to expose their children to Standard English language models, both through direct instruction and by ensuring that the child has access to high-quality educational resources. This can help reinforce the use of Standard English language in the home environment.
2. At the community level, efforts should be made to promote the use of Standard English language within the broader context, through initiatives such as community-based language programs, public awareness campaigns, and the involvement of local leaders.
3. Within the educational setting, preschool teachers should receive comprehensive training in supporting the development of Standard English language skills in their students. This may include the implementation of evidence-based instructional strategies, the provision of targeted interventions for struggling learners, and the creation of a supportive and inclusive classroom environment that values the diversity of linguistic backgrounds.

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