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MOTOR SKILLS COMMUNICATION AND CHALLENGES OF FRENCH LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG FRESHERS IN MICHAEL OKPARA UNIVERSITYOF AGRICULTURE UMUDIKE.

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Abstract
Language development and verbal skills are all related to intellectual processes. Language is a means of communication. This process of communication is the foundation upon which all education experience rests. Educational input will depend upon the child's ability to receive interpret, store, recall and express the stimuli provided by his environment. This study investigated and examined some concepts of motor skills in learning the French Language. The population of the study was 2500 freshers from 9 colleges, 10 French lecturers and 10 environmentalists of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture (MOUAU) Abia-south east of Nigeria. Out of this number 200 students, 7 french lecturers and 3 environmentalists were used as the sample. Purdue perceptual motor survey technique (PPMST) was employed for the research which sought for perceptions of 7 French lecturers and 3 environmentalists on this study. The findings of the study revealed that the development of stable motor skills in learning French language demands effective interrelationship of some vital components (input, integration, output and feedback). Based on these findings, conclusions and recommendations were made.

Key words: skills, French language, communication, environment

Introduction

Communication is an indispensable element in human existence and nation building. Good communication establishes good linkages for national sustainability (Igbozuruike et al 2018). The word itself It is derived from the Latin word "COMMUNIS" meaning to share or establish 'commonness'. Communication can be described as the process of sharing ideas, meaning, thoughts, experience, information or opinion from one person to person to another or from source to destination. Adegoke et al (2013) state that 'in its nature, communication may be intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals. May take linguistic or non-linguistic forms, and occur through spoken words or other modes'. Obinna (2012) in his inaugural lecture on communication matters opines that messages and ideas are transmitted in the trading of thoughts and experience.

It turns out that all the time one spend listening to podcasts, dialogues or music actually builds up one's listening skills. Foreign language learners have been found to have better listening skills and sharper memories than their monolingual peers. Bruner (1960) states that the foundations of any subject may be taught to anyone at any age in some form. At the other extreme, Hymes (1985, p.28) along with a number of other educators believes that learning can effectively take place only as the organism matures in its own time. Tyler (1994, p.210) has discussed the nature of this professional disagreement and presented certain propositions about readiness which he believes to have either theoretical or empirical variability. Those who believe that development and behavior are fixed at birth have taken the position that the ability to learn a concept or to execute some task in an appropriate way will automatically occur at a specified time as the organism matures language, compared to the individuals with less complex oral motor skills. Watson (2006), Gesell (2001), and McGraw (2009), emphasized the central role of psycho motor activity, and suggested that the motor rather than the sensory side is of primary

importance in learning. Another advocate of this position was Dewy (2008), who emphasized the value of learning by doing. Piaget (2010), states that motor activity is transformed to perception and then to cognition as an individual proceeds through a series of complex stages in which experience is primary. Hebb (2011) and Fantz (2014) have taken exception to this view. Their view states that early perceptual experience is required for the development and perfection of sensory-motor coordination, including the motor behavior that occurs during the early months of life. Theoretical attempts that have been made to separate the perceptual-motor process and to speculate as to which of the components is more fundamental than the others, is in many respects comparable to this 'egg' question. Issues of this type are interesting to consider and discuss, but irrelevant if one is responsible for formulating diagnostic and remedial strategies of instruction. The receptive mechanisms are not passive; we know that an individual actively seeks stimulation. This seeking takes the form of active and passive locomotion throughout the environment. As movement occurs, the perceptual experiences change, and the individual finds himself in a phenomenological environment which differs with every minute movement of the various muscle systems.

A person can control sensory experiences through the manipulation of various groups of muscles. The extent of sensation present, whether too much or too little, will frequently dictate the type and extent of an individual's motor movement in accomplishing a goal. Most environmentalists believe that certain stimulation applied at any period of development will result in an elevation in the level of learning without dependence on any of the processes of growth. Environmentalist (Kimberly 2006) directs much attention to the content and structure of the educational environment. They maintain that the level of motor skill competence by a given student is a function not of any potential or native ability but of hid experiences with the environment. The researcher concluded that oral motor skills may be necessary component of gaining adequate language skills and can even facilitate the individual's ability to communicate at a more advanced level. Alcock (2006) assessed that oral-motor skills are a predictor of later speech and language development. Iverson (2010) observed that manual – motor skills were a predictor of later speech and language. Their findings reveal that repetitive movements of rattle shaking correspond similarly to the repetitive vocalization of babbling.

Statement of problem

There are certain obvious mental, physical and emotional factors that dictate how ready an individual is to learn. Learning to read depends, among other thing, on the degree to which a child can maintain certain postural adjustments, has ability to binocular fusion, is able to discriminate among various shapes, can interact with other people, is able to relate sounds to their appropriate symbols and views the product of reading as desirable. There are many precursors required to effective achievement in reading, just as there are numerous prerequisite skills required to perform satisfactorily in every other area of endeavor. Reading, arithmetic and social difficulties are symptomatic of more fundamental weaknesses. Some freshers grapple with some French words because of a basic defect in effectively distinguishing among sounds accents or punctuation mark. Writing problem occurs as a result of a fresher's inability to translate an object from a spatial to a temporal orientation. Some experience difficulty in receiving information from their environment and responding adequately to a situation as a result of cognitive development. Impairment in one or more of the perceptual-motor components, will lead to difficulty in executing certain language activities that require the receipt of sensation, the internal processing of information, and the movement of necessary for the achievement of a goal.

Purpose of the study

The general purpose of the study was to evaluate the motor skill communication and its challenges among freshers in french language learning. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Determine the major components of the perceptual motor system
2. Discover challenges affecting motor skills communication in learning French language learning
3. Discover the evaluative tools for assessing motor skills and its benefits in learning French language

Research questions

1. What are the major components of the perceptual motor system?
2. What are the challenges affecting motor skills communication in French language learning among freshers?
3. What are the evaluative tools for assessing motor skills and its benefits in learning foreign language?

Methodology

The research design adopted was Purdue Perceptual motor survey design, with the aim of acquiring reliable and valuable materials and information of the research. The population of the study consisted of 2500 students in 9 colleges, 10 french lecturers and 10 environmentalists of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike in South East of Nigeria. The population was chosen because the study centered on fresh students. The sample of the study was 200 students, 7 lecturers and 3 environmentalists. Stratified random sampling was used first since the students were already distributed in various departments of the 9 colleges of Micheal Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike and then purposive random sampling technique was used to select 200 freshers,7 lecturers in French language and 3 environmentalists. Purposive sampling technique was appropriate because the researchers were interested in using students and lecturers that met specific criteria.

The instrument for data collection was researcher made questionnaire termed Perceptual Motor System Fresher's Enhancing French language Questionnaire (PMSFEFL). The instrument was made up of two sections A and B. A consisted of personal data of the respondents while section B consisted of items based on the research questions. The instrument was face validated by three lecturers in College of Education of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. The internal consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha method which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.72. The data obtained was analyzed using mean scores with 2.50 as the benchmark for acceptance.

Result

The results of the study were presented in the tables below according to the research questions.

Research question 1

What are the major components of the perceptual motor system?

S/N	Question item	SA	A	SD	D	Total	Mean	Decision
		(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)			
1	Oral comprehension-Songs	75	60	35	40	210		
		(300)	(180)	(70)	(40)	(590)	2.80	accepted
2	Listening	60	75	38	37	210		
		(240)	(225)	(76)	(37)	578	2.75	accepted
3	Knowledge about the foreign culture	60	75	15	60	210		
		(240)	(225)	(30)	(60)	(555)	2.64	accepted
4	Communicative skills-Dramatization	75	60	17	58	210		
		(300)	(180)	(34)	(58)	(572)	2.72	accepted
5	Perceptive motor-factors TIC	59	70	15	66	210		
		(236)	(210)	(30)	(66)	(542)	2.58	accepted

Research question 2

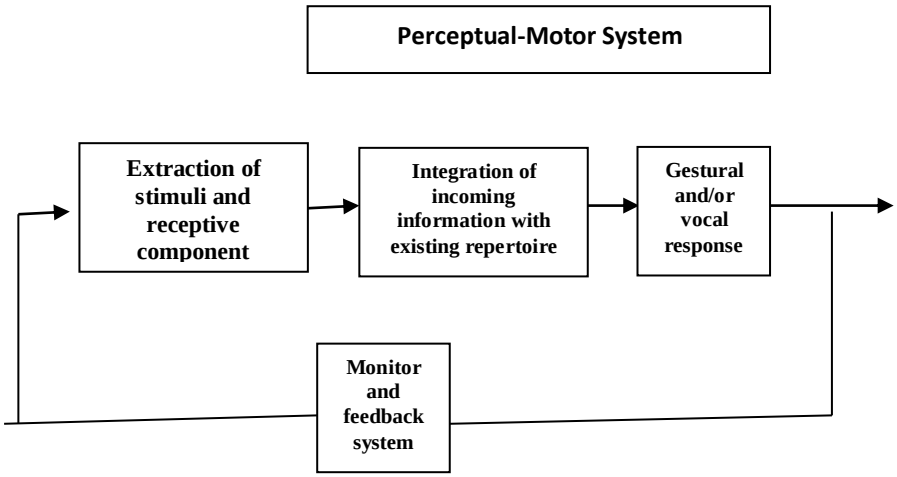
What are the challenges affecting motor skills communication in French language learning among fresh students?

S/N	Items	N	X	Decision
	What are the challenges affecting motor skills communication?			
1.	Coordination	210	3.7	Accepted
2.	Form perception		3.67	Accepted
3.	Rhythm		3.87	Accepted
4.	Body control		3.87	Accepted
5.	Auditory motor association		3.83	Accepted
6.	Visual motor association		3.97	Accepted

Table above shows that all the items (1-6) listed have mean scores above 2.5(mean 2.5) which is the acceptable mean range. This implies that these items are the challenges affecting receptive abilities in motor skill communication.

What are the major components of the perceptual motor system?

The perception-motor system may be diagrammed as follows:



Relation between perceptual-motor function and the activities for their evaluation in the Purdue Perceptual-Motor Survey

	Walking board	Jumping skipping and hopping	Identifying body parts	Imitation of movements	Obstacle course	Angels in the snow	Stepping stones	Chalkboard work	Ocular pursuits	Visual achievement form	Kraus-Weber tests
Motor coordination	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Balance	X	X			X		X				X
Postural adjustment &flexibility	X	X			X	X	X				X
Body control	X	X		X	X	X	X				X
Body image		X	X	X	X	X	X				
Laterally		X	X			X	X	X	X		
Directionality				X		X	X	X	X		
Rhythm		X						X			
Auditory motor association			X							X	
Eye-Foot							X				
Coordination								X	X	X	
Ocular control											X
Muscular fitness									X	X	
Form perception										X	
Figure-ground Relationships											

Research question 3

What are the evaluative tools for assessing motor skills and its benefits in learning French language?

S/N	What is the your opinion on the evaluative tools for assessing motor skills that is beneficial to learning French language	**N**	**X**	**DECISION**
1	**Item**	210	3.21	Accepted
2	Motor coordination		3.14	Accepted
3	Balance		2.56	Accepted
4	Postural adjustment &flexibility		2.77	Accepted
5	Body control		3.12	Accepted
6	Body image		2.70	Accepted
7	Laterally		2.60	Accepted
8	Directionality		2.88	Accepted
9	Rhythm		2.70	Accepted
10	Auditory motor association		2.55	Accepted
11	Eye-Foot		2.66	Accepted
12	Coordination		3.13	Accepted
13	Ocular control		3.15	Accepted
14	Muscular fitness		2.75	Accepted
15	Form perception			Accepted

The Table above shows that all the items listed above have means scores of acceptable mean of 2.5.it means that these respondents agree that these items are evaluative tools and are beneficiary for learning French language.

Discussion of findings

A child may manifest perceptual motor difficulties because of a problem in one or more of the components of this process. It is frequently impossible for even the most resilient researcher to determine the exact challenge in learning a new language.

From the data collected and analyzed as represented in table one, the respondents believe oral comprehension, such as songs; listening, knowledge about the foreign culture, communication skills like dramatization; and perceptive motor are components of perceptual motor skills.

For a meaningful language learning outcome, it is important for the learners to have efficient motor communication skills. Deficiency in any of these skills like body control, coordination, auditory motor association will impede the progress of students in language learning. However a good number of students as the result of the study reveals face challenges in motor skill communication.

Results from analysis in table 3 shows that these concrete activities listed below could be used in evaluating different learning contents

Songs: it is a useful resource that permits beginners to learn right pronunciations of words, to move and to express themselves in a natural way with total freedom.

Dramatization: this educative resource has a lot to do with concentration and memorization. This will help beginners to learn new language structures as they could prepare it and then, represent it. In this way, the learning of the instructions and the movements related would be more effective.

Technologies of Information and Communication (TIC**):** the use of the new technologies would improve every type of learning process. The digital board can be used an excellent tool to provide visual support; or to mix the electronic tools used to make it funnier (cassette, tablet, digital board, computer) and related to the games, the use of the digital board to explain the tasks or other aspects could make them more motivating and attractive to beginners in French language learning.

Functioning of the Perceptual motor system demands effective interrelationship of various components, none of which is discrete enough to allow for the precise identification and characterization of its total mission. Although grossly over-simplified, the process might be said to encompass the following four major components which operate in a continually dynamic and integrated way:

1.Input: involving the extraction and reception of stimuli from the environment.

2.Integration: the association of incoming information, with material which has already been incorporated in a person's repertoire

3.Output: which involves the gestural and vocal expression of ideas

4.Feedbacksytems: which constantly monitors the output of an individual and provides a means for adjusting any components of the system to effect a better match between problems and responses.

Conclusion

Motor skills are important for cognitive, social or perceptual development in learning foreign Language such as French language.

Functioning of the perceptual -motor system demand the effective interrelationship of input, integration, and output and feedback system the proper focus of the educator must be on manifest behaviors of the learner. It is this phenomenon that requires evaluation, analysis and certain remedial procedures which accordingly are appropriate for each individual. A successful bilingual teacher is a communicator who by nature or art will do most to stimulate beginners of that particular language of study as well understand their failures or successes.

Recommendation

This paper therefore recommends that education evaluators should identify the most significant factors of readiness devise techniques for evaluating foreign language learners.

Foreign language educators should strive to acquire positive personal attitudes and love for beginners in French language in order to provide solid support for successful use of technique.

It is also pertinent to know that beginners in French language must learn to listen to others, must develop confidence in themselves, and must be given opportunities to encounter new vocabularies and experiences in order to broaden the scope of language development.

Beginners in French language learning must also be helped to acquire the language structures necessary for dealing successfully with those experiences of bridging the language gap – that of moving from the native language or lingua franca to a foreign language.

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