

PDF - IMPACT OF MOTHER TONGUE ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE -  
researchcub.info

*Students' background in all the four language skills listening, speaking, reading and writing was extremely woeful.*

*Poor still was their timidity towards speaking of English Language, Some of the teachers did not hide their interest regarding their zeal in teaching the subject.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

The importance of English language acquisition as a stepping-stone for proficiency in other school subjects cannot be over emphasized. The knowledge is important both for educational, economical and national development of a country.

The importance of English language as a school subject derives mainly from its utilitarian value to the larger Nigerian society, English is the official language of administration and commerce, It is major language of science. Above all, Salami (2002) had emphasized the importance of the use of English language in improving communication among, the various ethnic groups in, Nigeria, He further highlighted the need for improving the quality of spoken and written English language among school children.

However, one of the current educational problems of public interest is that of poor level of achievement especially in public examinations (Kolawole 1998) Kolawole and Dele 2002). This problem of underachievement among school children has persisted in many subject areas such as Mathematics, English and Science (Ivowi, Okebukola, and Oladorun, 1992; Falayajo, 1997). This poor level of achievement in many subject areas may be due to poor foundation in English Language at the primary school level. There are also several research reports, which support the view, that language inefficiency invariably leads to poor academic performance (Ayodele, 1988; Falayajo, 1997). No wonder why today, according to Iroegbu (2006) much emphasis is placed on the passing of English language at credit or distinction Level in addition to other subjects to enable any candidate gain admission into any Nigerian Higher Institution of learning or be placed well in a good white collar job.

In recognition of the importance of English language for enhancing educational attainment as well as for improving communication ability of citizens, the government had made the subject a core subject (FGN, 2004). It is also compulsory for students to have credit in English language before entering the university. This also explains why many parents go off their way to see that their children pass at credit level or above in English language.

The importance of English language as a school subject derives mainly from, its utilitarian value to the larger Nigerian society. English is the official language of administration and commerce. It is major language of science. Above all, Salami (2002) had emphasized the importance of the use of English language in improving communication among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. He further highlighted the need for improving the quality of spoken and written English language among school children.

However one of the current educational problems of public interest is that of poor level of achievement especially in public examinations (Kolawole .1998, Kolawole and Dele 2002). This problem of underachievement among school children has persisted in many subject areas such as Mathematics, English and Science (Akpan, Ivowi, Okebukola, and Oladotun, 1992; Falayajo, 1997). This poor level of

achievement in many subject areas may be due to poor foundation in English language at the primary school level. There are also several research reports, which support the view that language inefficiency invariably leads to poor academic performance (Oluikpe, 1979; Ayodele, 1988; Falayajo, 1997; Onukaogu and Arua, 1997; Onukaogu, 2002).

Okoro (2000) has stated that the problem of poor level of achievement of primary school children was a serious one in Nigeria and this was in spite of the fact that Nigeria had set up goals for increasing minimum level of learning by 1995. The author had observed that ample evidences of poor performance were still observed as the pupils move up the system. Attempt was therefore made to find out the extent to which Okoro's (2000) observation applies to primary school English. Language beyond the year 2000.

Perhaps the way English language is taught in schools and colleges may be blamed for some of the observed lapses in English language achievement and skills of learners. Ubahakwe (1991), Ohia (1997) and Duff (1997) had criticized the traditional teaching strategy for use in

English language classrooms. Kolawole (1991, 1998) had blamed the Use of traditional teaching strategy for lack of good grasp of basic skills in writing. Williams (1990) had described this teaching strategy as a hit and miss affair. Oglan (1997) had criticized the domineering nature of traditional teaching strategy which renders learners passive in class. He therefore recommended an activity classroom where learners especially at the primary school level, can make learning a fun: Such learning activities may include learning with objects, things, photographs, films etc.

Kolawole (2002) also confirmed that the performance of the primary school pupils in English language was very poor. They stressed further that the standard was poor due to a number of other reasons such as:

1. The use of tribal language in the lower classes of the primary school;
2. Some pupils do not understand the grammar because their teachers themselves do not know it; and
3. In most cases English language teachers in the senior primary schools resort to these of mother tongue to teach and explain the English language even up to the secondary school level.

These researchers are of the opinion that there should be a review in the language policy on education. The review according to them should contain recommendations that will make pupils to have exposure to the subject quite early from the primary school" irrespective of the advantages of mother tongue, They further suggested that teaching and learning of English should be more practical in our schools, and also the number of years of study and teaching periods should "be increased. Finally, materials for learning the subject should be supplied.

This will be the time when the problem of failure in the subject will hopefully be overcome. So a firm foundation in English language is very important for better performance.

Ogunsanwo (2003) has a different view on the use of English language in the early years of the primary school. He opined that the use of mother tongue in the process of teaching and learning in the early years helps, not only to preserve and value one's culture but also to develop it lexically. According to the author, the use of English language in the early primary school makes the average primary school child unable to be sufficiently literary in either the mother tongue or English language.

He felt that to use English language at that level will lead to the children having a mental translation of all concepts presented in English language to their mother tongue in order to gain sufficient meaning of the concepts presented. The researcher believes that a citizen that is literate even only in the mother tongue will be sufficiently equipped to live a useful life in the fast changing world. So if permanent literacy is to be

promoted in the primary schools the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools ought to be encouraged.

Harker (2000) investigated gender differences in achievement of boys and girls in schools in New Zealand. The study which employed a large sample of 5300 pupils showed that the achievement of girls in English language was significantly higher than that of boys both in terms of mean curriculum coverage and examination learning outcomes. The results however showed that boys achieved significantly better results than girls in Mathematics. The result further revealed that there were no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls in Science (Okeke, 2004). Iyowi, Okebukola, Oludotun and Akpan (1992) showed that English language and literature achievements by Nigerian Junior Secondary School Students is very poor (Ivowi, et al, 1992; Okoro, 2000). Primary school children in the age range of (6-11yrs) need to improve level of their achievement or at least the number achieving minimum standard. This target has not been met (Okoro, 2000).

Although English language retains its dominant position in the education. Delivery system in Nigeria, the thrust of our educational language policy is the use of the. Mother tongue or the language of the immediate community in pre-primary and primary education. Interestingly, private educational entrepreneurs provide pre-primary education exclusively through the medium of English language. The mother tongue medium education at the primary school level is provided in less than twenty Nigerian languages throughout the country. English is the exclusive medium of instruction at the junior and senior levels of secondary school education.

It was in recognition of the importance and contributions of mother tongue to education that made the, Federal Ministry of Education in Collaboration with other educational statutory agencies include in the National Policy on Education published in 1977, revised in 1981, the use of mother tongue as a medium of educating pupils at the pre-primary and primary level throughout the country.

According to the National Policy on education published in 1977 revised in 1981, Section 2(u) which stated that "Government will ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community" also in section 3 of the same National Policy on Education stated that:

"Government will see to it that the medium of instruction in the primary school is initially the mother tongue of the immediate community and at a later stage English".

The importance of Nigerian language in the educational process is stated in section.

"In addition to appreciating the importance of language in educational process, and as a means of preserving peoples' culture, the government considers it in the best interest of national unity that each child should be encouraged to learn one of the three major languages other than his mother tongue".

The mother tongue therefore, is a part of the Nigerian culture; it conveys or transmits culture and itself in subjects to culturally conditioned attitudes and beliefs (Awoniyi, 1975). The positive results of the experiment in Mother Tongue Medium in Yoruba carried out at the then University of Ife empirically demonstrated the great advantages, of mother tongue in primary education for scholastic attainment (Bamgbose, 1984) and even in the successful mastery of English as a second language.

At this juncture, it is very imperative to look at whether mother tongue has bearing on the English language stage among the secondary school students. It is important to draw attention to the presence of the problems and on the basis of what will be found out recommend what could be done to reduce them if they

cannot be totally eradicated.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The study is designed to examine the influence of mother tongue on Students performance in English language in Junior School Certificate Examination. The study investigated if mother tongue is solely the cause of the student's woeful performance in English Language, in Junior School certificate Examination or if there are other complementing factors.

Several scholars have addressed the core problems of communicative competence in the use of English language as L2 and its use as the main language of instruction in Nigeria's education delivery process. It is unfortunate that most school leavers (apart from the products of elite private schools) do not possess the required competence in the four language skills for both cognitive and communicative functions.

Statistics released by the West African Examination Council, which conducts the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination, show that less than ten percent of secondary school leaver passes in English language at credit level. At the tertiary level of education students have so much difficult with their communicative skills in English that they cannot function effectively in the academic use of English (Okoro, 2000).

There is no doubt that there is a great diversity of varieties and functions of English in Nigeria. For example, it is extensively used in both the electronic and the print media, in the judiciary, the police, the armed forces, the legislative, etc. and as a lingua franca in political mobilization, ethical orientation and population education. This confirms the entrenchment of English as the dominant official language of Nigeria. The nagging problem however concerns the quality of English that is taught and used in the system. The concern being expressed in informed educational circles is .the extent to which the variety and quality of English being learned and used the school system can serve in achieving Nigeria's educational goals and the objectives.

It is therefore generally accepted that in teaching .and learning processes the mother tongue of the child is of utmost importance. For one thing, it categorizes a large part of the child's environment, that is, it has names for most of the objects, actions, ideas, attributes and so on that are so important to him, as well as to any society. In many developing countries today, this is either local language or the language of the previous colonizing power. The mother tongue is the child's environment and is the natural basis on which verbal skills can be built, children learn through communicating in a language, which they understood, hence the need for this study: Impact of mother tongue on students' performance In English Language.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

The following research questions will be used in:

- (i) Is there any way that teachers can motivate students to speak English in the school?
- (ii) Are there adequate teaching materials for teachers to teach the students?
- (iii) Is there sufficient period to teach the subject on the school time-table?
- (iv) Are there specialized teachers to teach the subject?
- (v) Are there anyway students are exposed to correct pronunciation of words?

## **1.4 Hypothesis**

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between mother tongue and students' performance in English Language.

**H02:** There is significant relationship between mother tongue and students' performance in "English

Language.

**HO3:** There is no significant difference in male student performance and female students' performance in English Language.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study.**

This study would provide a threshold for proper understanding of the impacts of mother tongue on students' performance in English Language. It will also serve as a rich source of data for consultation by teachers and students on how to improve the performance of students in English Language. The project will form an invaluable material for the academia and the public in general.

### **1.6 Delimitation of the Study**

The study essentially covers Nigerian secondary schools but with specific reference to secondary schools in Okota/Isolo Local Government Area. This choice is made to cover both private and public schools. The schools were selected randomly based on students' population and enrolment strength. Also the presence of a WAEC marking centre within the Okota Secondary Schools Complex makes for easy access to data, hence the choice of Okota.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

The chief limitation faced by the researcher was the inability to reach the target audience to conduct interview as well as to administer the questionnaires amongst teachers of the target secondary schools. To mitigate this and other shortcomings, the researcher had to rely much on mail questionnaire as well as the few people that could be interviewed and those who willingly completed the questionnaires to corroborate her personal experience in the industry.

## **IMPACT OF MOTHER TONGUE ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**The complete project material is available and ready for download. All what you need to do is to order for the complete material. The price for the material is NGN 3,000.00.**

**Make payment via bank transfer to Bank: Guaranteed Trust Bank, Account name: Emi-Aware technology, Account Number: 0424875728**

**Bank: Zenith Bank, Account name: Emi-Aware technology, Account Number: 1222004869**

**or visit the website and pay online. For more info: Visit <https://researchcub.info/payment-instruct.html>**

**After payment send your depositor's name, amount paid, project topic, email address or your phone number (in which instructions will be sent to you to download the material) to +234 70 6329 8784 via text message/ whatsapp or Email address: [info@allprojectmaterials.com](mailto:info@allprojectmaterials.com).**

**Once payment is confirmed, the material will be sent to you immediately.**

**It takes 5min to 30min to confirm and send the material to you.**

**For more project topics and materials visit: <https://researchcub.info/> or For enquiries:**

**info@allprojectmaterials.com or call/whatsapp: +234 70 6329 8784**

**Regards!!!**