Impact of Mother Tongue on Scholars Speaking English Language as A Second Language

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Abstract
This project examined the impact of Mother tongue on scholars speaking English Language as a second language. Four research questions and four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The sample size for the study were 200 English teachers selected from 10 secondary schools in Port Harcourt. The descriptive survey research method was adopted in carrying out the study while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical tool was employed in data analysis. The findings of this study were as follows: Mother tongue has a significant impact on the pronunciation of vowel sounds among secondary school scholars; Mother tongue has a significant impact on the pronunciation of consonant sounds among secondary school scholars; Mother tongue has a significant impact on the intonation of secondary school scholars; Mother tongue impact the syntax of secondary school scholars. The following recommendations were made: Enough time should be made available for the teaching of oral English. Adequate time allotment is one way the goal of effective communication in the language can be achieved; Emphasis should also be laid on stress and intonation right from the primary school; Teachers' motivation of the student's is necessary, especially in encouraging the scholars to use Received Pronunciation even when they are been made jest of by their fellow scholars. They should be made to understand that English is not just a subject to be passed during examinations but that the ability to express one clearly and to be understood by the native speakers of English is the ultimate goal; Teachers and educated parents should always pay attention correct children's errors in pronunciation, syntax and intonation immediately those errors are made; Teachers must continually update their knowledge within their discipline. They must keep information about new methods and materials that will make their teaching more effective.

Introduction

Learning a second language has been important to human beings from earliest historical times. The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics states that "the Sumerians of the third millennium BC used bilingual tablets in Sumerian and Akkadian to educate their children, and compiled the world's oldest known bilingual dictionaries. Bilingual tablets were used in ancient

Egypt, and, in the Ptolemaic period, the upper classes in Egypt received their education in Greek. In the Hellenistic period, the majority of people in Asia Minor who could read and write did so in Greek, their second language. Until the fourth century BC, bilingual education in Greek and Latin was an importantpart of the curriculum for Roman children **(**Brown, 2012**).**

In line with this, Otagburuagu (2009) stated that "second language learning could arise from a social or political factor. For instance, colonization, trade and commerce could create a conducive atmosphere for the development of a second language". He continued by saying that "the colonization of Nigeria, Ghana and so on by Britain must be seen as the primary factor that gives rise to the adoption of the English language as the second language in these countries. Multilingualism as well as the desire for social integration could give rise to second language learning too". In support of this view, Verghese (2007) also stated that "it is a historical accident that led to English taking deep roots in Canada, Australia and the United States". He further states that "history again has played a part in English being used widely in other countries in Africa and Asia. Those countries were the colonies of Great Britain, and since the day they came under Britain rule, English has been taught and used as a medium of communication there"

Apart from colonization, other possible reason(s) why English is mostly used as a second language is that it "is spoken around the globe and has wider dispersion than any other language. From its earlier home within what is now called the united kingdom (with 56 million speakers), English has spread to nearby Ireland (three and a half million), across the Atlantic for America (where some 232 million people speak in the united states, with perhaps as many as 24 million additional speakers in Canada, and across the world to Australia and New Zealand (with about 17 million English speakers between them)"Hence, English language is "is the sole official language in more than two dozen other countries: Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe in Africa; Jamaica, the Bahamas, Dominica and Barbados in the Caribbean; and Vanuatu's, Fiji and the Solomon Township in the pacific, to a sample".

Foreign language is a language which is not a native language in a country. A foreign language is usually studied either for communication or for reading material in a country (Brown, 2012). Studies on the interdependence between mother tongue and foreign language (Williamson, 2009; Swain, 1996) indicated a linguistic interdependence with regard to multiple subsystems (phonological, syntactic, semantic and textual). Due to globalization, every aspect of our world is undergoing a transformation. In the present scenario those who are well versed in English can reap its benefits, those who are not are marginalized. The changing and fast evolving times have witnessed the growing importance of English language in all spheres of life. Conscious and unconscious use of English words in our everyday conversation bears evidence to this fact.

Second language learners appear to accumulate structural entities of the target language but demonstrate difficulty in organizing this knowledge into appropriate coherent structures. There appears a significant gap between the accumulation and the organization of knowledge. If the structure of two languages are distinctly different, then one could expect a relatively high frequency of errors to occur in second language learning thus indicating an interference of L1 on L2 (Dechert, 2003; Ellis 2007). Ellis (2007) refers to Interference as" transfer" which he says is —impact that the learner 's L1 exerts over the acquisition of L2.

Language, as Fromkin, Victoria, Rodman, Robert and Nina (2007) posits, is a way of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of arbitrarily produced symbols for physiological as well as psychological survival. In a tropical African region where English acts as a second language, the aim of teaching English is not to develop British or American accent but to help the learners to overcome regional accents, wrong pronunciation and gradually train them in proper articulation. The aim of this research is to discuss the mother tongue impact in the process of English Language learning and how a teacher can help to overcome some of the problem encountered by the Nigerian learners of English as well as to improve his/her communicative competence.

In the second language teaching learning context such as in Nigeria, pronunciation of the target language is generally not given adequate importance; but it plays a pivotal role in the entire process of language learning. It develops the communicative skills and helps the learners to acquire a good command of the language he learns. It is normally argued that, to acquire command of a second language, a learner has to develop four basic skills listening, speaking, reading and writing. All these four skills interact with each other and they are essential for teaching and learning of second language. Wong (2007) is of the view that even when the non-native speaker‘s vocabulary and grammar are excellent, but their pronunciation falls below a certain threshold level, they are unable to communicate efficiently and effectively. A second language learner has a tendency to transfer his habits from his mother tongue to the second language system. This transfer of L1 linguistic features to L2 is called Interlingual Interference. This interference can be of two types. 1. Interference of the First language items with the second language items where both possess certain similarities. 2. Interference of L1 items in L2 items which do not possess similarities. At points of similarities between L1and L2, the second language learner employs his L1 learning strategies and techniques in his L2 learning. But at places of differences he faces difficulties. So a second language teacher should be very careful in employing his teaching strategies to help learners to overcome such difficulties.

Aladeyomi & Adetunde (2007) observed that sounds such as the voiced labiodentals /v/ and the voiceless fricative /f/ which are present in English but are absent in Yoruba for instance make it difficult for Yoruba to acquire the English sounds. Similarly, the lack of long vowels in Yoruba hinders the acquisition of long vowels in English by Yoruba English bilingual. It is difficult at times for these learners to distinguish between such words sit, /sIt/ and seat /si:t/. Also, there are some sounds in English language which the Yoruba Language does not have e.g. /z/ /tS/ sounds. The short voiceless bilabial plosive /p/, voiceless and voiced labiodentals fricative /f/ and /v/ and the long vowels /i: /, /u: / and /o: /, etc., in Yoruba, for instance, makes it difficult for Yoruba English bilingual to acquire such sounds. Hausa speakers of English tend to replace bilabial voiceless stop /p/ with labiodentals fricatives voiceless /f/ and vice versa, for example, ‘problem’, ‘pyramid’, ‘pot’, ‘paper’, ‘people’ and so on. They tend to pronounce /froblem/, /firamid/, /fot/, /fefa/, /fi:fl/.They also tend to insert vowel between a syllable-final consonant and initial consonant of ‘an’ immediately following syllabic. For instance, /rezigineiSn/ instead of /rezigneSn/ for the word ‘resignation’. Igbo speakers of English, even some well-educated ones, tend to transfer the vowel system of their language into English. They usually pronounce /folo/ for the word follow instead of /folw/ because of the sequence of /o/ and /o/ in two successive syllables is not permissible in Igbo. Some are fond of replacing the interdentals fricative voiceless /0/ as in ‘thin’, ‘think’ with alveolar voiceless /t/ ‘tin’, ‘tink’. Also, Igbo speakers do substitute the vowel sound /e/ for /I/. Words such as, ‘presented’, ‘headed’ are pronounced as /prizentid/, /hedid/ instead of /prizented/, /heded/ and so on.

To mention one of the minor ethnic groups in Nigeria, Tivs are known for their inability to use the alveolar liquid (voiced), lateral /l/ and retroflex /r/ consonants when speaking English appropriately because these do not occur in their language, and these sounds are always presented in the reverse order interchangeably. For instance, ‘ruler, road, rubber, reach, radio’, and so on are pronounced thus, /lula/, /lod/, /loba/, /litS/ and /ledio/ respectively.

There are twelve monophthongs and nine diphthongs. They are given below together with examples:

Monophthongs: /ə / above; / ^ / cut; / a: / dance; / I/ sit; / i:/ sheep; / e / ten; / u / pull; /u:/ pool; /ב / cot; / ב: / bought; / æ / apple; / ɜ:/ curl.

Diphthongs: /ei/ mail; /ai/ mile; /au/ now; /eə/ air; /iə/ fear; /uə/ poor; /ɔɪ/ coil; /əu/old
In matters of syntax, Nigerian speakers tend to erroneously translate expressions directly how it is spoken in their native language. For example: a Yoruba child could say "They are calling you", a direct translation of "Won pe yin" (You're being called), "Won" in Yoruba (in this context) is used as a sign of respect for an elder. Below are other examples common to the different Nigerian tribes.

- I heard the smell of jollof rice (I perceived the smell of jollof rice)
- Driver, please wait, I want to get down (Driver please wait, I want to get off)
- NEPA has taken light. (NEPA has interrupted power supply)
- Our leaders have *eaten* our money. (embezzled)
- Take a bus going to Rivers Township, drop at the bus stop (Board a bus going to Rivers Township, alight at the bus stop)

It is assumed that these socio-cultural encumbrances get in the way of scholars learning of English in the form of interferences in speaking and n writing. This is what this study aims to assess.

Research Design

A research design is a plan or blue print which specifies how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analyzed. It provides the procedures for the conduct of any given investigation. (Nworgu, 2011). It is "the blueprint or plan which determines the nature and scope of studycarried out or purpose" (Ali, 2008). For the purpose of this research, the researcher has decided to use the descriptive research design. According to Ali "descriptive design studies are mainly concerned with describing events as they are without any manipulation of what is being observed. Data would be collected through the use of survey questionnaire, collated, analyzed and interpreted for the purpose of giving full description of findings, drawing inferences and conclusions.

Population of the Study

In research the term "Population" is used to mean all members or elements, be they human beings, animals, trees, objects, events etc. of a well-defined group (Nworgu, 2011). The population of this study comprises of JSS2 scholars of Junior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt of Rivers State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Through simple random sampling, five schools in Port Harcourt werebe selected for this study. 20 English language teachers each were selected from the ten secondary schools to make a total of 200.

Research Instrument

Instrument for data collection would be through:

- Tapes (which consists of storytelling, pronunciations of words, reading of comprehension passages and answering questions from the comprehension passages) and
- Written composition.

Validity of Research Instrument

The researcher would submit the research instruments to the supervisor for face and content

validity.

Reliability of Research Instruments

The opinion of the experts in research and in the field of linguistics shall be sought in testing the reliability of the research instruments.

Method of Data Analysis

Data would be analyzed by the use of frequency counts and percentages while the hypotheses would be analyzed through the inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Demographic Data (Section A)

Table 4.1: Distribution of Participants by Gender

Gender	Number of Participants	Percentage
Male	92	46%
Female	108	54%
Total	**200**	**100%**

Table 4.1 shows that 92 (46%) of the respondents were male while 108 (54%) were female.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Participants by Age

Age	Number of Participants	Percentage
20 – 25 years	4	2%
26 – 30 years	68	34%
31 – 35 years	88	44%
36 years and above	40	20%
Total	**200**	**100%**

From table 4.2, it shows that 4 (2%) of the participants were 20 - 25, 68 (34%) were between the ages of 26 and 30,88 (44%) were between the ages of 31 and 35 years, while 40 (20%) were 36 years old and above.

Analysis of Research questions

Research Question 1

Table 4.3

Does mother tongue impact the pronunciation of vowel sounds among secondary school scholars?

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD
1.	The vowel system of Nigerian languages is different from that of English	116 (58%)	56 (28%)	12 (6%)	16 (8%)
2.	Some English diphthongs are absent in Nigerian languages	180 (90%)	20 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3.	The “shwa” vowel does not exist in some Nigerian languages	80 (40%)	76 (38%)	28 (14%)	16 (8%)
4.	Nigerian speakers of English smuggle vowels of their native languages into	102 (51%)	22 (11%)	58 (29%)	18 (9%)

	English				
5.	The discrepancy in the number of vowels between Nigerian native languages and English creates problems for scholars	108 (54%)	52 (26%)	40 (20%)	0 (0%)

Table 4.3 shows that 86% of the participants agreed to the questionnaire statement thatthe vowel system of Nigerian languages is different from that of English while 14% disagreed; On ifthe vowel system of Nigerian languages is different from that of English, 100% of the respondents agreed. To "The "shwa" vowel does not exist in some Nigerian languages", 78% agreed while 22% disagreed; In response to the item which says "Nigerian speakers of English smuggle vowels of their native languages into English," 62% of the respondents agreed while 38% disagreed; while in response to "The discrepancy in the number of vowels between Nigerian native languages and English creates problems for scholars," 80% agreed while 20% disagreed.

Research Question 2

Does mother tongue impact the pronunciation of consonant sounds among secondary school scholars?

Table 4.4

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD
6.	Nigerians have difficulty, mostly in recognizing and pronouncing the English consonants /ŋ/, /Θ/, /ð/ and some consonant clusters	132 (66%)	68 (34%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
7.	Because of the absence of these consonant features, many Nigerians approximate them to the closest available phoneme in the MT or drop them entirely	109 (54%)	44 (22%)	32 (16%)	16 (8%)
8.	Consonant sounds that are present in Nigerian languages and English language are realized differently	88 (44%)	72 (36%)	28 (14%)	12 (6%)
9.	The non-availability of the /h/ sound in Yoruba language see some Yorubas omit /h/ sounds in words they are to be realized	76 (38%)	52 (26%)	44 (22%)	28 (14%)
10	The Yorubas natively pronounce the letter "x" as /s/.	200 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

From table 4.4, it shows that 100% of the participants agreed that Nigerians have difficulty, mostly in recognizing and pronouncing the English consonants /ŋ/, /Θ/, /ð/ and some consonant clusters; On if the absence of some consonant features makes many Nigerians approximate them to the closest available phoneme in the MT or drop them entirely, 76% agreed while34% disagreed; To "Consonant sounds that are present in Nigerian languages and English language are realized differently", 80% agreed while 20% disagreed; In response to the item which saysThe non-availability of the /h/ sound in Yoruba language see some Yorubas omit /h/ sounds in words they are to be realized, 64% agreed while 36% disagreed. In response to "The Yorubas natively pronounce the letter "x" as /s/", 100% of the respondents agreed.

Research Question 3

Does mother tongue impact the intonation of secondary school scholars?

Table 4.5

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD
11.	Nigerians tend to transfer the tone of their local languages into English pronunciations.	88 (44%)	80 (40%)	20 (10%)	12 (6%)
12.	It's often difficult for scholars to get rid of mother-tongue intonation in spoken English	80 (40%)	68 (34%)	20 (10%)	32 (16%)
13.	Mother-tongue intonation occurs even among some highly educated elites.	120 (60%)	48 (24%)	28 (14%)	4 (2%)
14.	It takes a lot of elaborate training to get rid of mother-tongue intonation	132 (66%)	48 (24%)	8 (4%)	12 (6%)
15.	Wrong intonation in speaking can be forestalled by proper training from a young age	176 (88%)	24 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

From table 4.5, it showed that 84% of the respondents agreed to the questionnaire statement that Nigerians tend to transfer the tone of their local languages into English pronunciations, while 16% disagreed; In response to "It's often difficult for scholars to get rid of mother-tongue intonation in spoken English" 74% agreed while 26% disagreed. To "Mother-tongue intonation occurs even among some highly educated elites", 84% agreed while 16% disagreed; In response to the item which saysIt takes a lot of elaborate training to get rid of mother-tongue intonation, 90% agreed while 10% disagreed. To 'Wrong intonation in speaking can be forestalled by proper training from a young age', 100% agreed.

Research Question 4

Does mother tongue impact the syntax of secondary school scholars?

Table 4.6

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD
16.	Nigerian scholars tend to translate expressions from their native language directly into English	128 (64%)	44 (22%)	12 (6%)	16 (8%)
17.	scholars whose parents do not monitor and correct their spoken English at home tend to commit most blunders	188 (94%)	12 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
18.	Mother-tongue predisposes a lot of Nigerian scholars to syntax errors in both written and spoken English	116 (58%)	40 (20%)	24 (12%)	20 (10%)
19.	To attain an early success in syntax, scholars need to be guided from a young age	84 (42%)	56 (28%)	50 (25%)	10 (5%)
20.	scholars tend to transfer the structural features of their L1 into their English communications	92 (46%)	68 (34%)	16 (8%)	24 (12%)

From table 4.6, it shows that 86% of the respondents agreed to the questionnaire statement thatStudents tend to transfer the structural features of their L1 into their English communications, while 14% disagreed; In response to "scholars whose parents do not monitor and correct their spoken English at home tend to commit most blunders" 100% agreed. To "Mother-tongue predisposes a lot of Nigerian scholars to syntax errors in both written and spoken English", 78% agreed while 22% disagreed; In response to the item which says "To attain an early success in syntax, scholars need to be guided from a young age," 70% agreed while 30% agreed. To 'scholars tend to transfer the structural features of their L1 into their English communications', 80% agreed while 20% agreed.

Analysis of Data and Testing of Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis One

Mother tongue does not significantly impact the pronunciation of vowel sounds by secondary school scholars

Table 4.7: An 'r' Statistical Table Showing the impact ofMother Tongue on Vowel Sounds Pronunciation (VSP) by Secondary Schools.

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r-cal	r-crit
Mother Tongue	32.16	11.02				
			200	198	22.59	0.371
VSP	29.06	13.07				

P < 0.05, df = 198; r-crit = 0.371

Table 4.7 shows that the calculated r value of 20.11 is greater than the critical value of 0.371 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This indicates that there is a significant impact of the forms of Guidance and Counseling services on the academic performance of Senior Secondary School scholars.

Research Hypothesis Two

Mother tongue does not significantly impact the pronunciation of consonant sounds by secondary school scholars

Table 4.8: An 'r' Statistical Table Showing the impact of Mother Tongue on Consonant Sound Pronunciation (CSP) by Secondary School scholars

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r-cal	r-crit
Mother Tongue	47.33	20.32				
			200	198	66.27	0.371
CSP	59.94	17.20				

P < 0.05, df = 198; r-crit = 0.371

Table 4.8 shows that the calculated r value of is greater than the critical value of 0.371 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This means that there is a significant impact of school indiscipline on the academic performance of Senior Secondary School scholars.

Research Hypothesis Three

Mother tongue does not significantly impact the intonationof secondary school scholars

Table 4.9: An 'r' Statistical Table Showing the impact of Mother Tongue on the Intonation of Senior Secondary School scholars

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r-cal	r-crit
Mother Tongue	42.05	25.16				
			200	198	71.36	0.371
Intonation	36.74	27.24				

P < 0.05, df = 198; r-crit = 0.371

Table 4.9 shows that the calculated r value of 71.36 is greater than the critical value of 0.371 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This indicates that there is a significant impact of parenting styles on the academic performance of senior secondary school scholars.

Research Hypothesis Four

Mother tongue does not significantly impact the syntax of secondary school scholars

Table 4.10: An 'r' Statistical Table Showing the impact of Mother Tongue on the Syntax of Senior Secondary School scholars

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r-cal	r-crit
Mother Tongue	59.11	39.16				
			200	198	61.12	0.371
Syntax	40.72	27.24				

P < 0.05, df = 198; r-crit = 0.371

Table 4.10 shows that the calculated r value of 61.12 is greater than the critical value of 0.371 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This indicates that there is a significant impact of peer pressure on the academic performance of Senior Secondary School scholars.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one finding of this study states that mother tongue significantly Effectss the pronunciation of vowel sounds by secondary school scholars. Indeed, Okpara (2001) noted that some Nigerians tend to unnecessarily bisect vowel sound in some word which contravenes the phonological structure of the TL. He asserts that some Igbos tend to pronounce the word "school" |skju:l| as |sukulu|, "screen" |skri:n| as |sikirin| or "people" |pi:pl| as |pi:pul|. This may be as a result of the fact that some vowels in Igbo tend to be reduplicated and also because most Nigerian languages are syllabus-timed.

Also,Nkamigbo (2011) see the problem of Igbo speakers of English language as related to transfer of vowel system of their language into English. For instance, the English word "follow" /foləu/ is pronounced as /folo/ because the diphthong /əu/ is absent in Igbo language. Also, "problem" /probləm/ is articulated as /problem/ since the "shwa" vowel does not exist in the language.

Onwubiko (2011) claims that in most Nigerian languages, there is no distinction between long and short vowel sounds as well as existence of diphthongs. However, Hausa has five vowels which contains two diphthongs, /ai/ and /au/, and has long and short vowel counterparts. According to Okpara (2001), the vowels /ə/ and /Λ/are also not present in Nigerian languages. This implies that

wherever these phonemes occur in words, speakers have no any alternative than to either pronounce them based on the letters represented in the word or approximate the phonemes in their MT such that they are pronounced as "MT in English. Adebowale (2010) and Philips (2009) have similar conclusions concerning Yoruba dialects.

Hypothesis two finding of this study states that mother tongue has a significant impact on the pronunciation of consonant sounds by secondary school scholars. Oji (2007) asserts that Nigerians have difficulty, mostly in recognizing and pronouncing the English consonants /ŋ/, /Ɵ/, /ð/ and some consonant clusters. Because of the absence of these consonant features, many Nigerians approximate them to the closest available phoneme in the MT or drop them entirely. However, Okpara (2001) and Akindele & Adegbite (2005) point out that even those consonant sounds that are present in Nigerian languages and English language are realized differently.

For instance, Ayodele (2008) and Oji (1997) opine that /k/ and /p/ are brought together as /kp/; /g/ and /b/ as /gb/, /n/ and /w/, nw/. For instance, "panseke" a name of a place in Ogun State is spelt as above but pronounced as "kpansheke". The non-availability of the /h/ sound in Yoruba language see some Yorubas omit /h/ sounds in words they are to be realized – "home" /həum/ becomes /om/; "how" /hau/ becomes/au/ and so on.

The Yoruba consonants /gb/ and /kp/ do not occur in English or any European language. /kp/ is said with closed velum close to pronouncing /k/ and sudden release of lips for /p/. The same process applies in articulating /gb/. The letter "x" is produced as /s/. As such, the word "fix" is pronounced as "fis" (Ibiowotisi, 2010). Paul (2000) observes that Hausa has thirty-two consonants, different from English that has twenty-four. This makes glides/semivowels occur only on the onset of a syllable. There is no contrast between /f/ and /p/ rather, /p/ is realized as /f/. This is because /f/ is bilabial where the lips are brought near each other and air is blown between them which made /f/ produced much as /p/. This suggests that "few" /fju:/ becomes "pew" /pju:/. The consonant sound /v/ is realized as /b/- "very" /veri/ becomes /beri/ and "government" becomes "gobment" (Phillips, 2001). A research on Nigerian languages carried out by Paul (2006) showed that there are no consonant clusters in most Nigerian languages especially the Igbo language. Some sound segments are added or inserted in certain positions of words to break up clusters of consonants.

Hypothesis three finding of this study states that mother tongue significantly Effectss the intonationof secondary school scholars. Okpara (2003) has this to say on stress and intonation: "...since most of Nigeria's plethora of local languages and dialects are tonal, Nigerian learners, ipso fact, transfer this feature to English, which is, a stressed-timed language. Indeed, stress, rhythm and intonations are difficult..."As a Matter of fact, it is in the area of suprasegmental features that there is bound to be at a time a breakdown in communication between the native speaker and the Nigerian speaker of English (Okpara, 2003).In English, stress is deployed in individual words and stretches of utterances. It comes at regular interval known technically as isochronicity of stress. In Nigerian languages, what is obtainable is regular spacing of syllables named isochronicity of syllables (Banjo, 2012).

Hypothesis three finding of this study states mother tongue has a significant impact on the syntax of secondary school scholars. Jowitt (2011) observes that the usage of every Nigerian user is a mixture of standard forms and popular Nigerian English forms, which are in turn composed of errors and variants. Furthermore, Bamgbose (2001) observes that the basic types of error committed by people using English language in bilingual situations are grammatical and linguistic errors. He explained that both errors are caused by the interference of the mother tongue and pidgin English in the phonological as well as lexical aspects of the language. Thus, the mother tongue has been identified as one of the major problems facing the English teacher as well as the learners.

Both at home and outside the classroom, scholars hardly speak good English and this invariably affects their performance in English language examinations.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were reached in this study:

Mother tongue has a significant impact on the pronunciation of vowel sounds among secondary school scholars.

Mother tongue has a significant impact on the pronunciation of consonant sounds among secondary school scholars

Mother tongue has a significant impact on the intonation of secondary school scholars

Mother tongue impact the syntax of secondary school scholars

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made from the results obtained in this study:

- Since English is a second language in Nigeria, enough time should be made available for the teaching of oral English. Adequate time allotment is one way the goal of effective communication in the language can be achieved.
- Emphasis should also be laid on stress and intonation right from the primary school.
- Teachers' motivation of the student's is necessary, especially in encouraging the scholars to use Received Pronunciation even when they are been made jest of by their fellow scholars. They should be made to understand that English is not just a subject to be passed during examinations but that the ability to express one clearly and to be understood by the native speakers of English is the ultimate goal.
- Teachers and educated parents should always pay attention correct children's errors in pronunciation, syntax and intonation immediately those errors are made.
- Teachers must continually update their knowledge within their discipline. They must keep information about new methods and materials that will make their teaching more effective

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