

XII RESEARCH

(a) Research Interests

- (i) Language Acquisition and Language use
- (ii) Language and Literature Pedagogy
- (iii) Language Contact Situation and Interference
- (iv) Language Policy and Planning
- (v) Literacy and Reading
- (vi) Bilingual Education
- (vii) ICT and Language Pedagogy

(b) Completed(Select)

(i) Language Conflicts Among Linguistics Minorities in Nigeria (IFRA sponsored). University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria 1998.

Co-researcher: Herbert Igboanusi.

This study investigated the level of awareness of the National Language Policy on Education among the linguistic minorities and correlated it with their attitudes towards the policy. It also examined the attitude of the linguistic minorities group towards the three major languages and their speakers vis a vis their own languages, as well as the direction of language preference among this group. The study revealed that language conflicts in Nigeria are deeply linked with language contact, language policies, language attitude, ethnicity and political domination. (Published in African Journal of Educational Research ,Vol.9, Nos.1& 2)

(ii) Curriculum Recycle Theory: A New Paradigm For Making The Reading-Writing Connection.

Experience has shown that in the African environment children of preschool age are creative in their use of language and inventive in the way they convert discarded tin cans, bicycle tyres etc. into functional toys. These imaginative skill and resourcefulness tend to decline or disappear later, along the line in the formal education system. The Curriculum Recycle Theory (CRT) therefore hypothesizes that there is something in the formal educative system that interferes with the creative talent of the child manifested earlier in life. It then argues that it is possible to rekindle the child's imaginative and creative talent. The transition from primary to secondary school imposes on the child tremendous reading and writing tasks to meet the challenges of the secondary school. The child's interest in these areas can be rekindled through transformations of folklores with which the child is familiar. The study therefore outlined a general framework for the transformation of folklores and fairy tales based on the principles of the CRT. It will then demonstrated how this framework can be used to optimize the learner's cognitive, affective and psychomotor talents in reading in order to develop the capacity to apply and utilize these insights to enhance writing. (Published in African Journal of Educational Research Vol.5,No.1)

(iii) Ethnic Identity and Attitudes Toward A Lingua-franca For Nigeria

The purpose of this study was to examine how ethnic identity will influence the attitudes of students in Lagos State toward having a lingua-franca for Nigeria. The results indicate that majority of the respondents preferred English language to other local languages as a lingua-franca for Nigeria. While most of them were positive in their opinion on the desirability of a lingua-franca, they also believe that a neutral language will be better. The results also indicate no significant difference in the attitude of respondents based on gender; speakers of major/other local languages and religious affiliations. These results underscore the need for the government at all levels to fund the

development of all the undeveloped languages in Nigeria.(Published in Educational Perspectives, Vol. 5)

(iv) Identifying and Investigating Key Problem Areas: Cognitive Style, Verbal Ability as Factors in ESL Adolescents' Expository Text Reading Comprehension.

Reading comprehension is a very complex process. Critical to this process is the instructional strategies to which readers are exposed. In order to grasp how readers grapple with written symbols, it is essential that the process of reading comprehension and the role of factors leading to the product of this process be understood properly. Studies abound on reading comprehension aiming to clarify its nature and attempting to illustrate how the task of comprehension is accomplished. Nevertheless, there seems to be little or no attempt made at identifying and investigating specific aspects and key factors affecting adolescent's reading comprehension. This study is a report of an attempt at identifying and investigating two such key factors: cognitive style and verbal ability and their interplay as instructional variables in ESL adolescents' expository text reading comprehension.(Published in Ghana Journal of Education and Teaching, Vol. 10)

(v) Code-Alternation of Yoruba-English Bilinguals and their Acceptability

The phenomena of Code Alternation (CA) as a powerful language strategy existing in all communities in the world is very common place among Nigerian bilinguals. However this common-placism does not translate into acceptability among the participants. As should be expected the different groups of the society is reflected in the patterns and use of CA suggesting that social forces affect the performance of CA, making distinctions from those basic factors controlling basic structure with which they interact. It is also common knowledge that when speakers are bilingual and CA is a component of the community, the type of code choices they make in CA conversations become a label for them arising from adverse effect of the phenomena regarded demerits. Accordingly this study set out to provide quantitative evidence on the acceptability of these choices using a specific group among Yoruba-English bilinguals. The findings reveal that there are variations in attitude the dominant one being positive. The implications of this for language instructions have been considered. (Submitted for publication in Journal of European Languages)

(vi) Influence of Prior Knowledge of Text on Reading Miscue Among Junior Secondary School Students

The study was conceived to find out the influence of prior knowledge of text on reading miscue among junior secondary school students, establish patterns of miscue exhibited by the population as well as the influence of prior knowledge of text on such miscue. It adopted a descriptive survey design. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected. The results show the pattern of miscue to include mispronunciation, substitution, insertion, omission, reversal, regression, unsuccessful attempt at correction and self-correction. Although, the result also shows that prior knowledge of text positively influences reduction of reading miscues among the students, there was no difference in miscue pattern according to age and gender of the students. The implications of these for teachers, students, parents, curriculum planners and the government have been discussed.(Published in Literacy and Reading in Nigeria,Vol.12,No.1)

(c) In Progress

(i) Ethnic Identity and Language Proficiency: A Socio-Linguistics Study of ESL Students Learning Yoruba as a second language. A Study supported with University of Ibadan Research Grant

The Language Policy in the National Policy on Education provides that Students at the Senior Secondary school level learn one of the three Major languages other than their own. This study therefore investigated Language proficiency of students of different ethnic groups in Nigeria.

This result is supposed to address the National Language Question and inform on the possibility or otherwise of an indigenous lingua franca for Nigeria. The project is funded under the senate research grant. (The study is at the stage of data analysis)

(ii) English as a Global Language and the Problems of Teaching English in non-native English Speaking Multilingual Countries: a Nigerian Perspective.

There is ample evidence that the real problem with the increasing use of English as a global language, particularly the spread of American influence in former British colonies, is the acceptable variety to be used in teaching and examination between British English and the American variety. This problem becomes even greater with the emergence and acceptance of indigenized varieties of English, resulting from language contact situation, in such countries. The question that arises is whether it is still possible to recommend a single model of the older varieties or a standard local variety for use in teaching and examination in these countries. This study therefore, explores this question within the context of English teaching and examination and intercultural communication in Nigeria. It investigated the knowledge, use and attitude of teachers and students towards a lexicon-based corpus of the three variants of the British, the American and Nigerian English. The study investigated usages in two communicative modes – speech and writing and four communicative contexts - informal and formal speech and informal and formal writing. The study also considered variations between teachers and students. (The study is at the stage of data collection}

(d) Dissertation and Thesis

Ohia, I.N.(1991).Nigerian infants' cognitive abilities: A perspective for identification and classification. An unpublished M.Ed. project, university of Ibadan, pp 127.

Ohia, I.N.(1997).The Lexicon of Standard Nigerian English as an Acceptability Paradigm among the educated Elite. An Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ibadan, pp 200.