EFFECT OF MOTHER TONGUE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN OBOKUN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study investigated the effects of mother tongue on academic performance of students in English language in Obokun local government area of Osun state, Nigeria. The study is experimental in nature. It adopts the one shot- pre-experimental research design. The population of the study consisted of all junior secondary schools. The sample of Two hundred students were stratified into two strata, each stratum were tagged Yoruba and English class members respectively. Where the English class represent the control group, while the Yoruba class represent the treatment group. The research instrument to be used for data collection is an Achievement Test of English Language. The test-retest method was employed to establish the internal consistency of the instrument. Descriptive and inferential statistics: mean, standard deviation, Regression analysis were used. Findings from the study indicated that there is no significant difference in the performance of students in English language Achievement test based on gender both in L1 and L2 classes. It was thus recommended that teachers should use code mix L1 and L2 when teaching difficult topics.
Keywords: Mother tongue, English language, Achievement test and Academic performance

Introduction

Language is a powerful means of communication which has enabled us to be more developed in comparison to other creatures so far found in the world. One of the most powerful forms of symbolization and central feature of all human culture is language (Beka, 2016). Language is a gathering of important sounds embraced by the general population of any locale to comprehend and convey their sentiments to other individuals. In Sub-Saharan Africa, according to Ouane (2003) cited in Beka (2016) concluded that there are between 1, 250 and 2,100 languages. However, school children/students in this region very rarely have chances to receive their education in the mother tongue. Throughout history, many English language-teaching methods have developed. Some methods were used to encourage using first languages and some were not. Eventually, the total use of English to teach English as a foreign language was propagated throughout the 1970s and 1980s, according to the communicative approaches, the use of L1 (mother tongue) was considered as undesirable (Mahmoud, 2006 cited in Turin, 2017).). This trend was enhanced by the cognitive psychology postulation that people acquire Foreign Language (FL) in a manner similar to the way they acquire their L1. It is the New Concurrent Method which requires teachers to balance the use of the L1 and the FL. Here, referring to L1 might be possible in four areas: introducing concepts, reviewing a previous lesson, capturing learners' attention and praising them (Turin, 2017).

The success of a mother tongue instruction highly depends on people's attitudes towards it. Attitudes can be created through functions that people perceive particular languages as performing (Okonkwo, 2016). Though mother tongue based education has such roles, discussions of the role of the MT (mother tongues) are often controversial and polarized, full of misunderstandings and an unhealthy amount of guilt. The banning and the use of the MT have come and gone throughout history (Bachore, 2014).Academic performance has always been associated to the evaluation tests results, which are those corresponding to student's IQ, and leaving aside other personal characteristics (Ali, Haider, Munir, Khan & Ahmed, 2013). The determinants of academic performance of the students include, class participation, class assignments, home-work assignments, tests, examinations, and participation in competitions or other events. 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 (Oluwole, 2008). Although teaching through the mother tongue (MT) has been identified as having a lot of cognitive and academic benefits (Oluwole, 2008). It is not clear if L1 has a significant relationship with academic performance of the students.

Statement of the Problem
There is no question about the numerous advantages of mother tongue in education. It holds the key to the survival of the world's cultural and linguistic diversity. Furthermore, it is the best medium to learn. However, in Nigeria, there remains a general preference for English language in education at the expense of the mother tongues, even against the language policy provisions in the National Policy on Education (NPE). Meanwhile, the present state of education in the country in terms of access and quality is the least desirable as students continue to record mass failure in their final examinations. The declining performance of students in examinations and the resistance to the use of mother tongue in education by parents, teachers and students provoke some concerns. The negative disposition to the use of mother tongue could be associated with language beliefs, colonization and multiplicity of indigenous languages. However, research conducted on mother tongue and academic performance focused on perception. Limited research exist on experimental design most especially in Nigeria. Therefore, this motivated the need to study the influence of mother tongue on academic performance of students in English language in Obokun local government area of Osun state, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study
The main purpode of this study is to investigate the effectof mother tongue on academic performance of students in English language in Obokun local government area of Osun state, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses
The study was guided by the following null hypotheses:
H_{01} – There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students in L1 and L2 trained students based on gender
H_{02}- There is no significant difference between L1 and L2 trained students' academic performance in English language
H_{03}–The combination of selected demographic variables does not significantly predict the academic performance of students in L1 and L2.

Methodology
The study is experimental in nature. It adopted the *one shot pre*-experimental research design. The population of the study consisted of all junior secondary schools II students in Obokun local government Area of Osun state. The population comprised of four (4) junior secondary schools which formed the sample frame for the study. Random sampling technique was used to select four secondary schools. In each school, fifty students were randomly selected to represent the sample for the study making a total of two hundred students that represent that sample for the study. Thereafter, the two hundred students were stratified into two strata, each stratum were tagged Yoruba and English class members respectively. Where the English classof one hundred students represented the control group, while the Yoruba class of one hundred students represented the treatment group. The research instrument used for data collection was an Evaluation instrument titled English Language Assessment Test (ELAT). The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A elicited question on socio-demographic information of the respondents while section B was a multiple choice question instrument on a 4-point scale. All questions were selected from JSS 2 English language curriculum as established by the ministry of education.The training lasted for one week, grammar was treated on Monday, English sounds on Tuesday, reading comprehension was done on Wednesday while a revision was conducted on Thursday.

Descriptive and inferential statistics via mean, standard deviation and Regression analysis was employed in analyzing the research questions and hypotheses

Results
The study is both descriptive and inferential research; hence, the results are presented in both descriptive and inferential format of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation Bivariate correlation coefficient statistical methods (Pearson Product Moment Correlation) was used to answer the research hypothesis at 0.001 significant level. All analyzed data are represented on tables.

Demographic Information
Table 1: Demographic Information of the Respondents of Teachers

Yoruba (L1 Class)	Frequency	Percent
Age(10-15)		
10	5	5.0
11	30	30.0
12	28	28.0
13	29	29.0
14	5	5.0
15	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0
Gender		
Male	60	60.0
Female	40	40.0
Total	100	100.0
English (L2 Class)		
Age (10-15)		
10	7	7.0
11	35	35.0
12	29	29.0
13	20	20.0
14	7	7.0
15	1	1.0
Total	99	99.0
Gender		
M	53	53.0
F	47	47.0
Total	100	100.0

Table 1 displayed the frequency counts and percentages of the demographic information of participants for both in Yoruba instructional delivery class (L1) and English instructional delivery class (L2). In L1 class, in terms of Age, the participants are in the range of 10 years to 15 years.Also, in L1 class, a large percentage of the participants are males (60%) while 40% are females. In L2 class,the participants are in the range of 10 years to 15 years. By gender, 3% are males in L2 class while 47% are females. The total number of participants for L1 and L2 classes is 200 participants.

Testing of Hypotheses
Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students in L1 trained students based on gender
To answer hypothesis 1, t-test analysis tool was employed to find the difference in the performance between male and female respondents in L1 and L2 classes. Table 4.4 presented the result below:
Table 2: Summary of t-test between L1 and L2 performance in English language Achievement test based on gender

Performance	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
English(L2)	Male	53	20.17	3.916	1.427	-.220	98	.827	Not significant
	Female	47	20.36	4.811					

| Yoruba(L1) | Male | 60 | 22.78 | 4.162 | .000 | -1.736 | 98 | .086 | Not significant |
| | Female | 40 | 24.30 | 4.450 | | | | | |

*Difference between means significant at 5% alpha level

Table 2 shows the result of the significant difference in the performance of participants in L1 and L2 classes based on gender. The result obtained is shown in Table 2. It revealed that the computed mean and standard deviation values of performance of male and female participants trained in L1 class were (20.17,3.916) and (20.36,4.811) respectively. While that of L2 are (22.78, 4.162) and (24.30,4.450) respectively for males and females. The table further revealed that there is no significant relationship between the performance of male and female participants trained in L1 and L2 in English language achievement test (t=0.220, p>0.05) and (t-1.736, p>0.05) respectively.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between L1 and L2 trained students' academic performance in English language.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was performed to provide answer to the result of the on the difference between L1 and L2 performance in English language Achievement test.

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient between L1 and L2 performance in English language Achievement test

Variabes	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	R	sig.(two tailed)	Decision
Yoruba(L1)	100	23.39	4.323	198	0.043	0.671	Not Significant
English(L2)	100	20.26	4.338				

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As shown in table 3, It revealed that the computed mean and standard deviation values of Yoruba were (23.39, 4.323) and (20.26, 4.338) respectively. The Table shows that R value of 0.043 lesser than that of p value of 0.671 which implies that there is a negative relationship in the performance of L1 and L2 participants in English language achievement test. These implies that no difference exist between the performance of students trained in English and those trained in Yoruba languages respectively ($r_{2,198}$ =0.043, p>0.05).

Hypothesis 3: The combination of selected demographic variables does not significantly predict the academic performance of students in L1 and L2.

Simple Linear regression was employed to provide answer to the result of the combinations of gender and age as predictor of L1 and L2 performance in English language Achievement test.

Table 4: Summary of Regression Analysis on the combination of gender and age predictive power in L1 class

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Decision
Regression	81.36	2	40.678	2.23	.113[b]	1	.210[a]	.044	.024	Not significant
Residual	1768.43	97	18.23							
Total	1849.79	99								

Dependent Variable: Score Yorubas
Predictors: (Constant), Gender , Age

The value of the R square coefficient of determination (R^2=.044) indicates that combination of the predictor variables jointly accounted for 4,4% of the total variance in performance of secondary school students in English Achievement Test while the remaining 95.6% unexplained variation is largely due to other variables not included in the study that can account for the performance of secondary school students in English Achievement Test ($F_{2, 97}$=2.231, p>0.05), The combination of age and gender do not significantly predict the performance of secondary school students in English

Discussion

The study investigated the influence of mother tongue on academic performance of students in English language in Obokun local government area of Osun state, Nigeria. Evidently, the study revealed that the average performance of students in L2 class outstands that of L1 class in English language Achievement test. This contradicted the findings of Atanda (2011) that the performance of students in English language

was poorer in Nigeria. Also, the study revealed that there is no significant difference in the performance of students in English language Achievement test based on gender both in L1 and L2 classes. This corroborated the findings of Attah and Ita (2017) that gender has no significantly influence on academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students in Calabar metropolis.

In the same vein, the findings revealed that there is no significant difference in the performance of students in English language Achievement test both in L1 and L2 classes. This was in tandem with Makoni (2016) results that there was no significant relationship between mother tongue and English second language learning strategies used by high school learners. However, the finding contradicted the result of Oluwole (2008) that mother tongue influences the students' poor performance in English language in Junior School Certificate examination and that there are other factors contributing to students' poor performance in English language.

Generally, the study revealed that the combination of Age and Gender do not significantly predict the performance of students in English language Achievement test both in L1 and L2 classes. This contradicted the findings of Naderi, Abdullah, Aizan, Sharir and Kumar (2009) that creativity, age and gender as low predictors of academic achievement. Also, Eze, Ezenwafor and Obi (2015) findings that a linear relationship does not exist between the two predictor variables and the university VTE students' academic achievement and that their combined contribution is insignificant.

Conclusion
The study investigated the influence of mother tongue on academic performance of students in English language in Obokun local government area of Osun state, Nigeria. It was discovered that average performance of students in L2 class outstand that of L1 class in English language Achievement test. There is no significant difference in the performance of students in English language Achievement test based on gender both in L1 and L2 classes. There is no significant difference in the performance of students in English language Achievement test both in L1 and L2 classes and the combination of Age and Gender do not significantly predict the performance of students in English language Achievement test both in L1 and L2 classes.

Recommendations
Based on the conclusion of the study, it was recommended that:
1. Teachers should endeavor to use code mix L1 and L2 when teaching difficult topics.
2. Also, the use of English as medium of expression should be further encouraged in secondary schools.
3. Teaches should organize the seats for the males and the females in the class in a way that suppresses distraction.

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