

Bilingualism in the ESL Classroom: A blessing or a curse?

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Abstract

This study investigates effects of bilingualism on the teaching and learning of English as a second language (ESL) among junior and senior secondary schools' teachers and students across Ogun State, Nigeria. The study is premised on Krashen's (1997) view on bilingualism. Observation of teachers' and learners' use of English was done across ten (10) randomly selected schools for eight (8) weeks by the researcher. Learners and teachers exhibited interlanguage problems especially at the phonological and syntactic levels. While a few teachers were fluent almost impeccable, confirming Krashen's theory, majority were code-switching, code-mixing, mispronouncing words (mother tongue interference) and committing grammatical errors (translation equivalents) in their use of the medium of instruction. Learners repeated their teachers' errors but some actually displayed fairly good command of English. It is recommended that compound bilingualism (competence in the two languages) should be encouraged by reviewing the existing language(s) curricula.

Keywords: Bilingualism, ESL, phonological level, syntactic level, grammatical level and mother tongue.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Linguistic situation in Nigeria

Nigeria is a multilingual nation where English is regarded as the lingua franca and the national language. It is the language of government, politics, economy, administration and the medium of instruction in schools. Among the over four hundred indigenous languages are Hausa, Igbo, Efik, Tiv, Ibibio and Yoruba which occupy the status of regional languages. In such a multilingual setting, the unifying function of the English language becomes significant. Thus, a child in this kind of environment has a chance of becoming at least a bilingual if not a multilingual. But, the common practice among parents in Nigeria in recent times is to ensure that their children/wards are trained to speak English exclusively at home in order to be proficient in English and to perform excellently academically in school since English is the medium of instruction. Adebileje (2009) presents a vivid picture of the status of English in Nigerian homes by stating that English in Nigeria, on one hand, is the language of the elites, hence, their children are forbidden to converse in their MT at home though such parents and older relatives speak it when needed. On the other hand, a large group of homes encourage their children to speak both English and MT at home while some homes do not speak English at all, only at school.

In secondary schools, the use of English as the language of instruction is the common practice while speaking in mother tongues is prohibited especially in most private schools. Many parents are in support of this practice because they believe it would improve students' academic performance. The implication of using English exclusively is that some learners in a heterogeneous class of the kind of the linguistic situation described above would probably be at a disadvantage. Against this bi/multilingual background of the Nigerian child, would bilingualism be an advantage or a disadvantage in the teaching and learning of English?

The Nigerian government identifies language as an important factor in education and nation building. Thus, the National Policy on Education was formulated in 1977 and revised in 1988. It stipulates that the use of the child's mother tongue or the language of his/her immediate environment should serve as the language or medium of instruction at the nursery and lower primary education (the first three years of primary education). The principle behind this is that a child learns best in his /her mother tongue as corroborated by Krashen (1997) and the multilingual Nigerian society will preserve and develop her indigenous languages as children speak and learn the languages.

1.2 Theoretical framework

The study is premised on Krashen (1997) model that when schools provide children quality education in their indigenous language, they give them two things: knowledge and literacy. The knowledge that children get through their first language helps make the English they hear and read more comprehensible. He further explains that literacy developed in the first language transfers to the second language. The reason according to Smith (1994) is simple: because we learn to read by reading, that is, by making sense of what is on the page. Smith believes that it is easier to learn to read in a language we understand and as soon as we can read in one language, we can read in general.

2.0 Bilingual Education in Nigeria

Bilingualism is a phenomenon entrenched in the Nigerian society even though a lot of argument arises on which language to use as the language of instruction in schools. The basic principle of bilingual education is to use the student's native language to teach academic content while simultaneously providing additional English language instruction. Akindele&Adegbite(1999) are of the view that a bilingual operates through two world views because reality is interpreted in two different perspectives according to the two languages spoken by him/her. A bilingual in Nigeria according to Ogunkeye (2007) is “an individual who can use at least two languages comfortably, with varying degrees of competence”.Such an individual makes use of “English in formal situations and the mother tongue in less formal situations and for informal conversations”.Ogunkeye believes that bilingualism is a fact of life in Nigeria and language learning is taught and learnt along with the culture of the people. Consequently, learning the structure of a language (grammar) can be made much easier when the different levels are identified and followed accordingly. For instance, she believes that the level of pronunciation being mastered first systematically leads to the acquisition of grammar and vocabulary.

Bilingualism is not peculiar to Nigeria alone and in line with this fact, Lyons (1981) states that bilingualism is a feature of many countries of the world. In the US, bilingual education was adopted as nationwide policy in 1974, when the Equal Educational Opportunity Act was signed into law in an effort to ensure that children whose first language was not English had equal access to education, and to help them become fluent in the dominant language of business, government, and the public education system.

It is important at this point to consider the rationale behind the policy of using the mother tongue as the language of instruction at the initial stage of a child’s learning and then, the use of English for later academic pursuit. Recent studies have shown that higher degrees of bilingualism are associated with higher levels of cognitive attainment. Bhattacharjee (2012) in a recent study reveals that bilinguals are more skilful and smarter than monolinguals at solving certain kinds of mental puzzles since bilingualism can have “profound effect on the brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age”.

Earlier on, Bialystok and Martin-Rhee (2004) discover that children exposed to two languages were quicker at performing a colour/shape sorting task than children who were monolinguals. They are able to conclude that “the collective evidence from a number of such studies suggests that the bilingual experience improves the brain’s executive function- a command system that directs the attention processes that we use for planning, solving problems and performing various other mentally demanding tasks”. Outside the school, a child who can handle two languages possesses a heightened ability to monitor the environment (Bialystok and Martin-Rhee 2004).Laura Ann Petitto, a psychologist in the GallaudetUniversity confirms from her research that bilingualism is an extraordinary microscope into the human brain as she uses a form of brain imaging to observe young brains in the process of first experience with language. The study shows that bilinguals have “increased neural activity when they react to completely unfamiliar languages even at the end of their first year”.

2.1 Some Models of Bilingual Education

There are three major bilingual education models which are in practice in the United State of America and some other countries of the world where English is the L2. These are (a) the transitional or early exit model; (b) the developmental or late-exit model and (c) the two-way or dual immersion bilingual education model.

Nigeria seems to practice the transitional or early exit model which emphasises English language development and academic learning using native language instruction to enable learners be at par with their peers academically and acquiring English at the same time. This is the model being promoted by the NPE where children are taught with their mother tongues until they get to primary four before English is introduced.

A substitute for bilingual education is the "English immersion" method. This is a model that does not use the student's native language as a medium of teaching English. This is English as a second language (ESL) instruction which allows students to receive supplementary lessons in English. At a time, this model was practised in Nigeria when undergraduates of English were sent to England for a year to experience a kind of 'immersion' with native speakers. There are two types of ESL classes: grammar-based ESL, which focuses on language structure, and content-based ESL, which emphasizes communication. In recent times, studies have revealed that the teaching of language proficiency has now extended focus from grammatical skills to functional use of language in different contexts. Furthermore, there are several types of English-only model such as structured or sheltered immersion model where a simplified form of English is used, hence, the mother tongue is used minimally or not at all; and the submersion or "sink or swim" model where native and foreign students are placed in the same class and at the same level.

However, Snow (1987) recognises two different dimensions of language proficiency in bilinguals: contextualized and decontextualized language skills. Contextualized language skills requires the use of language in face to face communicative settings while decontextualized language skills does not involve language use in context. This implies that the two language skills are self-determining which further suggests that ability in relational language use does not guarantee the ability to use the language in academic situations. This view seems to confuse the task of understanding bilingual ability. This explains why some parents are of the view that the use of two languages will rather compound learners' academic problems. But, Zentella (1997) from his studies allays such fears when he explains that learners are "adept at shifting from one language to the other depending on the language situation". Their use of two languages allows them to code switch in order to "take advantage of the richness of the communicative situation... and to establish and regulate the social boundaries of the two worlds".

2.3 Bilingualism as a Process

Kornakov (1997) in an effort to describe bilingualism as a process of stages and phases analysed the following antithesis patterns:

2.3.1 Complete (absolute) vs. Incomplete bilingualism

In this pattern, 'complete' according to him indisputably describes bilingualism as a stage where the fluency and competence in both languages are of native standard while 'incomplete' represents some other stages of fluency. However, some aspects like phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, syntax etc., can be improved.

He posits that complete bilingualism could be attained in two different ways: artificial and natural ways. In other words, the second language (L2) is learnt in a kind of "artificial" environment such as school, language courses, self-study etc. Normally "artificial" bilingualism begins from the age of seven and the learner could acquire the second language by means of any kind of study. Kornakov (1997) submits that the challenge actually sprouts from here as the artificial way of acquiring L2 gives rise to the question of "so-called language abilities or capacities". The language teacher is regarded as the central figure who may lack the native fluency in the foreign (or L2) language, and the new tongue is learnt far from the required language environment. The L2 learner is exposed to short and structured lessons in classes quite different from the real practical activity typical of the natural way of acquisition. He concludes that the real cause of errors in the use of L2 "lies not in a lack of certain language abilities but in something else, when L2 itself is not a means or tool, but just the aim".

On the other hand, Kornakov (1997) opines that natural acquisition of L2 means that the second language is acquired without special or artificial studies, for example, in a bilingual family. With the natural way of attaining bilingualism, the individual needs to come into contact with other L2 users to communicate and be in contact. Hence, L2 in this case is seen as a kind of a tool and not a goal. L2 is acquired directly in a linguistic environment through contact with native speakers (performing a common activity or action, such as playing, cooking or washing) who serve as "models" to be copied by the learner.

With the natural way of L2 acquisition, the learner is acquainted with the second culture, customs, realia and traditions, while the artificial (school) way simply does not provide enough time and means to ensure that this occurs. The inter-language interference in that case is unilateral: from the mother tongue towards the L2 only. In the case of the natural process interference occurs in both directions.

He further distinguishes between natural and artificial acquisition lucidly thus:

Natural acquisition is characterised by a greater tolerance towards the errors made by the learner because the attention is focused on the message or content (what was said) and not on the form (how it was said). In school, the attention is focused on the errors (which create additional troubles, difficulties and psychological barriers for learners) and the sanction or punishment for these kinds of mistakes is represented in the form of lower or bad marks or credits (pp. 19-20).

2.4 Advantages of natural bilingualism:

- (i) both languages (L1 and L2) are more stable grammatically than in the case of artificial bilingualism, especially if the second language is not used for a significant time;

- (ii) one of the languages needs or requires more time to be “forgotten”;
- (iii) at the phonetic and phonological levels either language is, again, more stable and provides the native fluency in both, and
- (iv) native fluency acquired in a natural environment is better for the career of the professional translator (because of the “time-factor”: translators have enough and almost unlimited time to “convert” the written message in L1 into the equivalent message in the L2 or vice versa, which gives them plenty of room to perceive the whole message in the first language, analyse it, compare it with the draft translation and to produce the requested message in the second language in its final version) (Kornakov, 1997).

2.5 Disadvantages of natural bilingualism over artificial bilingualism:

- (i) it is very difficult and sometimes impossible to change the phonetic accent if the L2 was acquired from a specific dialect environment (for example, Yoruba accent in English when the bilingual English-Yoruba is conversing in English);
- (ii) it is difficult and sometimes impossible to eliminate the dialect vocabulary if the L2 was acquired from a specific dialect environment (for example, an Ekiti or Ondo speaker of English exhibits some peculiarities in the pronunciation of some English words);
- (iii) it is difficult and sometimes impossible to eliminate the dialect grammar patterns and models typical of one specific dialect or country (for example, the Yoruba language is basically a humanistic language and language of respect. The language, consistent with the ethics of an African Yoruba philosophy, humanizes persons and social beings in situations of discourse. The language pays close attention to official/situations of respect and informal/situations of familiarity of users. For example: You /*Iwọ* is 2nd person singular (emphatic subject pronoun). You/ *Ẹyin* is also 2nd person singular (emphatic subject pronoun). But *Ẹyin/yin* functions as plural form and respect/official form. For Example: *Ẹyin/You*; *Ẹyintijẹun* (You (plural-more than one person) have eaten). *Ẹyintijẹun* (You (respect/official situation) have eaten). *Jẹ* is to eat (when used you include type of food.) *Jẹun* is to eat food (when used you do not include the type of food) (Adeolu Ademoyo, Yoruba Pronouns).
- (iv) a bilingual person with native fluency in both languages acquired naturally and especially in early childhood needs, sometimes, more specific training as an interpreter (no clear advantage over the bilingual interpreter with the L2 studied in an artificial environment) (Kornakov, 1997).

2.6 Advantages of Bilingualism in Academics

There are quite a number of different benefits in the use of bilingual education. Apart from being basically effective, it builds learners' sense of pride in the use of their mother tongues and empowers them to manoeuvre the English language while retaining the bond with their cultural and linguistic

inheritance. In addition, bilingualism boosts learners' sense of identity which is also strongly linked to the language and culture of their family and heritage.

Dreifus (2011) discovers from her research that the way a monolingual processes language is quite different from the way a bilingual does. According to her, bilinguals "manifest a cognitive system with the ability to attend to important information and ignore the less important". This system where the brain sorts through all and brings out the most important is frequently used by bilinguals; this results into their being more efficient in other cognitive tasks. Another study reported by Dreifus (2011) shows that bilinguals that have normal aging process function better cognitively than their monolingual counterparts.

Earlier on, Bialystok and Martin-Rhee (2004) reveal that children exposed to two languages were quicker at performing a colour/shape sorting task than children who were monolinguals. They are able to conclude that "the collective evidence from a number of such studies suggests that the bilingual experience improves the brain's executive function- a command system that directs the attention processes that we use for planning, solving problems and performing various other mentally demanding tasks". Outside the school, a child who can handle two languages possesses a heightened ability to monitor the environment (Bialystok and Martin-Rhee 2004). Petitto (2005) of Gallaudet University in her findings confirms that bilingualism is an extraordinary microscope into the human brain as she uses a form of brain imaging to observe young brains in the process of first experience with language. The study shows that bilinguals have "increased neural activity when they react to completely unfamiliar languages even at the end of their first year".

2.8 Disadvantages of Bilingualism in Academics

Bilingualism means the existence of two languages in the repertoire of an individual or a speech community. It can also be described as dual language performance by an individual or individuals covering all stages starting from Bloomfieldian native-like control of two languages and the minimal knowledge of a second language. It should be noted that each of these languages has its own distinct phonological, lexical, grammatical and discourse rules. Since Nigeria is an example of a bilingual community, it therefore has individual bilinguals, people who speak only Igbo and English, Hausa and English, Yoruba and English, Efik and English etc.

Notwithstanding, linguists have emphasised that bilingualism was and still is the explanation for the failure of certain group of children. It has been argued that bilingualism is counterproductive to the child's welfare to develop and maintain proficiency in more than one language. Many people now recognize that these ideas are based on problematic assumptions about language proficiency. For example, how is bilingualism measured and how can its effects be identified on academic development. There are a number of hypotheses about influence on children's achievement in school. They are as follows: lack of exposure to the school language (target language), linguistic mismatch between home and school, cultural mismatch between home and school and factors associated with social-economic status, etc.

Hence, varieties of English occur as a result of such factors as cultural, political, economic etc. The implication is that the existence of such varieties of English poses difficulty to the second language learner, but when learned, it enhances his effective use of the language. Again, as a result of the

afore-mentioned factors, there have been cases of confused linguistic allegiance and the interference phenomena. In terms of the first, a second language learner is faced with the task of acquiring communicative competence in a language that belongs to a totally different family and culture. Here, if the learner comes from a "well educated" family, he misses out completely the emotional make-up in the mother tongue.

There are reported cases of the interference of the mother tongue on English which could be phonological, lexical and syntactical. The interference of mother tongue affects the learner's performance in the target language. The regional variations in English in Nigeria are embedded mainly in the spoken form of the language. The greatest influence on the pronunciation of English by Nigerians is from the sound systems of the regional languages. According to Bamgbose (1982), most of the phonetic characteristics in the English of Nigerians can be traced to the transfer of features from their local languages. This is one of the problems Nigerians have as mother tongues intrude into the target language. The multi-lingual nature of the Nigerian society leads to many regional variations in their use of English because the different local languages have their accents directly or indirectly transferred to English. So, we have majority speaking the Nigerian English (NE) as it can be tagged, with different accents. The term 'Nigerian English' has come to be recognized and accepted as referring to a legitimate sub-type of English, which is peculiar to Nigeria.

Nigerian English thus, has several 'lects' which according to Bamiro (1991) are referred to as the polylectal speech situation in Nigeria. Three main varieties of English have been identified in Nigeria: (a) the higher variety (acrolect), which is the internationally intelligible variety; (b) the intermediate variety (mesolect), which is the intranationally accepted variety; and (c) the lower variety (basilect), which is the 'context' variety associated with illiterate and semi-literate population.

As earlier mentioned by Bamgbose (1982) each local or regional variety of English in Nigeria has its own characteristics especially in phonology and lexis. Certain pronunciations are identified with members of an ethnic group and when all or most of the markers of the group's accents are present in a particular speaker, one can be fairly certain that the speaker in question is a member of that ethnic group by birth or by upbringing, or both. Members of several ethnic groups residing in adjacent parts to one another in the country share many characteristics in their spoken English. In this way, Yoruba speakers of English tend generally to be easily identified by their common ways of pronouncing certain English consonants and vowels and by the rhythm of their speech. So do speakers of Edo, Efik, Tiv, Igbo and Hausa; they have their own peculiar characteristics in spoken English.

3.0 Methodology

The observation method is used by the researcher in order to ascertain teacher's actual use of language during teaching as well as learners' competence in English. Randomly selected ten (10) junior and senior secondary schools across Ogun state were observed for eight (8) weeks. Ogun State's population is predominantly Yoruba.

3.1 Results/Findings

While a few teachers were fluent almost impeccable, majority were code-switching, code-mixing, mispronouncing words (mother tongue interference) and committing grammatical errors (translation equivalents) in their use of the medium of instruction. Learners, in their numbers were seen repeating their teachers' errors while some actually exhibited fairly good command of English. The following varieties at the levels of phonology and syntax were observed in the selected schools and presented as follows:

3.2 Variations in Spoken English Form (phonology)

Many teachers about 85% could not distinguish between /i:/ and /i/ as in 'seat' /si:t/ and 'sit' /sit/, 'bead' /bi:d/ and 'bid' /bid/. Most Yoruba speakers of English do not make this distinction because it does not exist in the Yoruba language. Also, majority of teachers nasalize English vowels, which are preceded by nasal consonants, for example, they pronounce /morin/ instead of /mɔ:niŋ/ for the word 'morning'. Some other phonological variations in English are due to Yoruba dialectal interference. For example:

/tesbuk/ instead of /tekstbuk/ for the word 'textbook',

/botul/ instead of /bɒtl/ for the word 'bottle',

/ʃaild/ instead of /tʃaɪld/ for the word 'child',

/ʃuo/ instead of /ʃʊ:/ for the word 'sure',

/feri/ instead of /veri/ for the word 'very',

/tɒt/ instead of /θɔ:t/ for the word 'thought'

/deia/ instead of /ðeə/ for the word 'there',

/mɒn/ instead of /mæn/ for the word 'man'

/mosin/ instead of /məʃi:n/ for the word 'machine'

/mesɔ/ instead of /meʒə/ for the word 'measure'

/heit/ instead of /eit/ for the word 'eight'

/noin/ instead of /nain/ for the word 'nine'

/kɒntrol/ instead of /petrəl/ for the word 'petrol'

/hanpun/ instead of /hæpən/ for the word 'happen'

/fuel/ instead of /fju:əl/ for the word 'fuel'

/listin/ instead of /lisən/ for the word 'listen' etc.

All these are due to the fact that the phonemes /æ/, /v/, /θ/ and /ð/ are not present in Yoruba phonology; so, they tend to replace these sounds with others that are near to them in Yoruba phonology. Also, they do not have a good grasp of English phonetics as some were not trained English teachers.

On this, Ubahakwe (1979) contends that in a language contact situation such as exists in Nigeria, it is to be expected that there will be an interaction between the local languages and English which leads to regional variations of the second language (English). The influence of the local languages on English is more relevant here - in that the patterns of the languages phonological, lexical and grammatical tend to be transferred into English.

3.3 Variations in Lexical and Grammatical Forms

Some variations in the use of English among teachers and learners alike were also noticed in the lexical and the grammatical aspects. For instance, direct transfer was observed such as *I hear the smell*. The word 'hear' is a literal translation of Yoruba word 'gbo' which means 'hear'. Sometimes, the translation is indirect, for example, *they went inside inside* (they went into the most interior part). Other grammatical errors observed which may have been caused by interference included syntactic innovations such as direct transfer, reduplication, substitution, omission of function words, and insertion of discourse particles:

'drop down the broom' a direct translation from Yoruba (juigbale sile); [drop the broom]

'reverse back' (padasehin); [reverse]

'did he wrote the test?' (double marking of the verb); [did he write the test?]

'come and be going' (wa ma lo); [Start going.]

'I pity for you' (aanu e se mi); [I pity you.]

'He is entering inside the class' (o nwoinukilasi); [He is entering the class.]

'On the fan now' (tan fan yen); [Put on the fan.]

'Come and be reading your book' (wa ma kaiwe e); [Start reading your book now.]

'Who gave you the chance?' (tani o fun e laye?); [Who excused you?]

'You make mistake' (o se asise); [You made a mistake.]

'I am hearing you' (mongbo e); [I can hear you.]

'Shebi Tomorrow is your birthday, abi?' (discourse particles from Yoruba). [But tomorrow is your birthday, isn't it?]

'Go and call them for me' (lo pe won wa fun mi). [Call him/her (an elderly person).]

At the levels of code-mixing and code-switching, it was observed that teachers do not have good command of English, the medium of instruction, in both junior and secondary schools and resort to using the mother tongue to express themselves. The following are observed structures produced by teachers and students in classes:

'wanbi, what did you tell your father lana?' (You come here, what did you tell your father yesterday?).

'class, listen to me now o, mi o ni repeat ara mi o' (Class, listen to me now because I won't repeat myself).

'make sure you do your assignments well well o, tebafefe'gbalola' (Be sure your assignments are done correctly if you don't want to be beaten/ punished tomorrow).

'se you understand? Abibawo le tunse fekinko yin nisinyi?' (Do you understand? Or how else do you want me to teach you now?).

'you say truth now nowbefore I take you to Principal' (You say the truth now before you are taken to the Principal).

'what we have today is Living things, who can remember last topic? Oyaoya e da mi lohunkiakia' (The topic for today is Living things, who remembers the last topic? Answer my question immediately).

'when she come back Miss Adetunji will tear her to pieces, o ti le paroju, I will laugh so tey'(When she comes back, Miss Adetunji will tear her apart, she lies a lot, I will laugh her to scorn).

'I want to go lesson when we finish last period'(I would go for my lesson after the last subject).

'I am ready for you today o, just ask me for any questions' (I am prepared for you today, just ask me any question).

'Can you borrow me your sportswear? Mo gbagbetemi sile'.(Can you lend me your sportswear? I forgot mine at home).

The regional languages have different influences on English language because of both positive and negative transfer of their accents and grammar into English, though the varieties still manifest the same 'langue' of the influence of their local languages on the structures of their sentences and in the type of images they used.

4.0 Pedagogic Implications of findings

Certainly, languages in contact are bound to accommodate the variations and modifications of locality. Kachru (1982) however opines that for any variety to be regarded as standard, that variety should be assessed from the point of view of what he refers to as appropriateness, acceptance and intelligibility. The existence of different varieties of English could therefore be attributed to the multiplicity of the culture of the different peoples of the world that speak English. As the spread of English progresses, English is bound to reflect a diversity of disparate cultures since no language is used to its fullest extent by its native speakers; there is always much room left for the non-native speakers to exploit it in the unique form of English usage, phonetically, lexically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. But the questions one will ask are: How much local or regional variation should be accepted? What is genuinely a regional variant and what is merely an error? How much regional variation can be allowed without reducing the ability of the Nigerian speaker or user of English to communicate effectively with users of English from other countries? What pronunciation model should teachers aim at? It should however be noted that L2 users in academics need to be taught the rudiments of English grammar, especially, English teachers, so that they don't spread errors among their students. Apparently, some teachers and students did not show a good grasp of basic English grammar, hence these highlighted errors.

Bilingual Education should be dominant by numerous theories concerning the development of language. Issues like how individuals develop and learn languages should be addressed. The different functions of the organs that are employed during language learning and acquisition should be examined. The different schools of thought viz: formal linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and applied linguistics are theories that need to be understood in bilingual education. The importance of the knowledge of these theories cannot be over emphasized. For instance, the knowledge of the meaning of linguists makes us to know that a linguist is not an individual who speaks many languages but one who studies the grammar, the social and psychological aspects of language use, and the relationships among languages. The goal of this field

of study is to explain the uniformity of language acquisition among humans despite differences in native language.

Again, in the application of bilingual education, the educators must not forget that there is every tendency for the second language learner to code mix or code switch during the teaching and learning process. Indigenous languages as well as the various Pidgins and Creoles should be consciously promoted as an essential part of national culture (Kachru, 1992). Teachers therefore, should not fail to realize that the consequences of bilingualism are observed through the features of code switching, borrowing, interference and biculturalism. It is quite interesting to know that when learners are given the opportunity to use both L1 and L2 in their academic studies, they do not experience difficulty in developing L2 proficiency. This is because the previously acquired knowledge and skills are now automatically transferred to the new language. However, L2 teachers must guide against code-switching and code-mixing when using English as the medium of instruction as this will improve and motivate correct learning/acquisition of English among teachers and students.

In conclusion, the teaching of English should therefore be carried out within a truly bilingual system. Since language is culture-bound, English must be able to coexist with the indigenous languages both in the curriculum and in the world outside education. Bamgbose (1971) explains that it is generally agreed that the aim is not to produce speakers of British Received Pronunciation (RP) (even if this were possible), but to evolve a local variety of English pronunciation such as will satisfy the minimum requirements of national and international intelligibility.

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