
Refocusing the Influence of Igbo Linguistic Interference on Students Achievement in English Language in Imo State for Peace and National Security

By

JOHNSON O. OYEKANMI, PHD

*Department of Language Education,
Imo State University, Owerri*

Abstract

This study is on refocusing the influence of Igbo linguistic interference on English language achievement of secondary school students in Imo State, Nigeria for peace and national security. An ex-post-facto/causal comparative research design was adopted with four research questions and four hypotheses. Study population was 14,517 SS2 students of which 389 formed the sample size, using cluster and proportionate random sampling techniques to select two of the 29 secondary schools in Okigwe Education Zone 2 of Imo State for the study. Two instruments: Language Interference Identification Test (LIIT) and English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) were standardized using Kuder Richardson 20 statistic with $r = 0.79$ and 0.83 respectively to gather data analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and independent sample t-test statistic to test the hypotheses at an alpha level of 0.05. Findings revealed that phonological, grammatical, lexical, and orthographical interferences significantly influence English language achievement of students. Students should therefore use English language as a medium of interaction within and outside the classroom under error-made-free atmosphere to encourage proficiency in English language usage and refocusing education for peace and national unity. Language teachers should correct students' errors to enhance proper learning of English as second language.

Key words: Igbo linguistic, interferences-phonological, grammatical, lexical, and orthographical, English language achievement, peace and national security

Learners of English as second language are often faced with the challenges of the mother tongue interference. According to Ugwu (2013), language transference occurs when two languages are in contact. The mother tongue (L_1) interferes positively or negatively with the target language (L_2) thus, the first language (L_1) already acquired by students makes it difficult for them to attain perfection in the target language. The mother tongue is usually the language of communication, especially within the family circle and students who are grounded in the first language might speak the language beyond the family level. The learning of the target language therefore becomes a difficult task when the first language interferes or hinders the easy flow of learning of a second language (English). Sometimes, there could be a high level of interference which students themselves may not be able to control. This should be refocused on so as to help students avoid unintelligibility and ambiguities in their English Language use within and outside their learning environment for peace and national security. Ndimel (2008) is of the view that such high level of interferences gives rise to “Engligbo” which occurs when a student uses both English and Igbo languages simultaneously but claims to be speaking one. This is more serious than in the case of code-switching or code-mixing, as a result of which perfection in the second language may not be attainable for such students in this category because the rules of grammar guiding their first language differ from those of the target language. The emergence of “Engligbo” is a symptom of what Hassanpour (2000) termed “linguicide”, “the deliberate killing of a language”. This and other limitations create room for language transfer from L_1 to L_2 . Language transfer or linguistic interference therefore can occur both in written and spoken communication.

Linguistic interference can take place at all levels of the linguistic system - phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and the lexicon (Ugwu, 2013). Phonological Interference occurs when the stress, rhyme, intonation and speech sounds from the first language influences the second language. Rangmalalak (2009) explains that the Igbo-English bilinguals have some problems realizing some of the English vowels because they do not exist in their first language. The Igbo language, quite unlike English language, has twelve pure vowels and eight diphthongs. Language interference is bound to occur when a student introduces a vowel between consonant clusters (Skiba, 2010). To Anukam (2016:8), “phonological interference may be described as phonemic, phonetic, allophonic or distributional”. Among the Igbo learners of English Language, there is interference at the phonetic level of both languages since no two languages have the same phonetic features. As a result, we often find some students taking one lexicon for another as in:

The *team* of the novel is corruption (theme).

I do not want to *border* you (bother).

Tank you very much (thank)

Another difficulty is the English consonant sounds /m/, /n/, /r/, /l/ to a student whose first language (mother tongue) is Igbo. In English language, these sounds have

Refocusing the Influence of Igbo Linguistic Interference on Students Achievement in English Language in Imo State for Peace and National Security

allophones and become syllabic in words and positions after abstrinent bit. In Igbo language, these sounds do not occur. So, the Igbo learner of English language does not syllabify them, rather, he introduces a vowel before or after them to take care of the syllables. For example, the English word “Duster” is pronounced “Dusuta”. Note that the “r” controlled vowel sound in “duster” which is non-existent in Igbo language is changed to a more convenient Igbo letter, “a” (Agwu, 2014).

Skiba (2010) identified stress as another problem encountered by the Igbo learner of English language at the phonological level. This is because; stress in English language is achieved either by length, high pitch of voice, greater amplitude or a combination of these. The Igbo syllables are not stressed, therefore, the Igbo learner of English language tends to carry over the tone pattern peculiar to his L₁ (first language) to the English language.

Examples: Feet [fi:t], fiiti
Floor [flɔ:], fulo
Bark [ba:k] baki

The Igbo language does not also allow consonant cluster as seen in words like “strengths” which has a syllabic structure that establishes a wide difference between the syllabic structures of the two languages (Igbo language vowels and English language). What the Igbo learner of the English language does is to insert in between the consonant clusters to ease pronunciation problem of the words. Example: bread – beredi, drop – duropu, chalk – chooku, ball – boolu, and so on.

Lexical interference occurs when a bilingual speaker uses two or more parts or structures of different languages in a single word or lexicon. Language interference at lexical level provides for the borrowing of words from one language and converting them to sound more natural in another. As Agwu (2014) had suggested, the higher the structures of both L₁ and L₂, the higher the traces of errors that could be transferred from L₁ to L₂. Some of these lexical items may not have their English language equivalents or when they do, they do not have the same literal meaning. It also occurs as a result of the native speaker trying to translate their native idioms into English language, otherwise known as “transliteration”.

- a. Kola (Cola) has come. – L₂
Oji a biala. – L₁
Instead of saying, “I have”, or “I present kola”.
- b. I don’t hear English.
Instead of: I don’t understand English language.
- c. Come now, now.
Instead of: Come immediately.
- d. Don’t you hear the smell?
Instead of: Can’t /don’t you perceive the smell?
- e. Are you understanding me?
Instead of: Do you understand me?

f. I am coming.

Instead of: I will be coming back shortly or in a short while.

Furthermore, most Igbo learners of English language encounter some difficulties with the formation of numbers. The tendency is for them to generalize the rule and pluralize mass nouns. They cannot make distinction between countable and uncountable nouns or mass nouns, because the ways of distinguishing them vary between these languages. Consequently, these types of errors occur:

i) Mr. Okere bought some equipments.

Mr. Okere bought some equipment.

ii) The furnitures in your house should be replaced

The furniture in your house should be replaced

Also, Igbos who are learners of English language as L_2 easily misuse certain words and prepositions in the L_2 due to their different positions in the structures of the two languages, hence these errors are prevalent. For examples:

i. I saw one man going to your house.

Instead of: I saw a man going to your house.

ii. The table is made from wood.

Instead of: The table is made of wood.

In grammatical interference, the first language influences the second language in terms of word order, use of pronouns and determiners, tenses and mood. In the view of Mackey (1968), grammatical interference occurs when the first language influences the second language in terms of word order, use of pronoun, determiner, tense and mood. Grammatical interference also occurs when a bilingual speaker identifies morphemes, class of morpheme in language chain in syntaxes and uses it in the speech act. Considering the topic of investigation, when a second or foreign language is learned within or outside the native speaker's environment, mother-tongue of the learner influences the mastery of the target language. Therefore, students map the grammatical patterns of L_1 inappropriately onto the L_2 as a result of syntactic differences between L_1 and L_2 . This occurs when the structural pattern and the grammatical rules of the learner's first language intrudes in the speaker's use of the target language (L_2). Larson and Long (1991) have clearly shown that the way a learner uses his L_1 structures such as pronunciation, capital letters, preposition and the present and past continuous tense will definitely affect the L_2 . In some instances, an absence in L_1 structure such as the apostrophe and the active and passive voices causes a difficulty in the learner's knowledge (Agwu, 2014).

However, since no two languages share similar grammatical systems and structural patterns, errors are bound to occur when a second language learner transfers the pattern of his first language to English language. For example, Ukwu kam ji aga ahia (Igbo)

Refocusing the Influence of Igbo Linguistic Interference on Students Achievement in English Language in Imo State for Peace and National Security

I am going to the market with my legs (wrong English)

I am going to market on foot (correct English)

A na m anu gi (Igbo)

I am hearing you (wrong English)

I can hear you (correct English)

One thing we must bear in mind is that problems occur because the second language learner already has a language. Based on this, he translates his thoughts to the target language. This method of process information leads to errors and unintelligibility.

Anukam (2016) reveals that another important aspect of interference under this level includes the omission of function words, pluralization of mass nouns, the use of ordines instead of articles. For example:

i) I have problem – L₁

I have a problem – L₂

ii) I am going market – L₁

I am going to the market – L₂

iii) We ate in one restaurant on our way to Lagos – L₁

We ate in a restaurant on our way to Lagos – L₂

There is also no gender separation in our L₁ except in the L₂ for example.

He is calling you – L₂ (specified)

O na-akpo gi – is ‘O’ for he or she etc.

Orthography means the conventional spelling system of a language; the art of writing words with the proper letters according to standard usage. Therefore orthographical interference occurs when the spelling of one language alters another. According to Anukam (2016), the teaching of writing itself is another problem in the school system despite the role of writing as the medium of expression in all external examinations. Nwani (2006) was of the view that some students transliterate the mother-tongue literally into English language.

Examples: I am hearing the smell of onion.

I can perceive the smell of onion.

I am hearing the odour of your perfume.

I can perceive the fragrance of your perfume.

In the above sentences “hear” is applied to the sense organs-ear, nose and tongue in Igbo. When translated literally into English, the English reader will have a problem. The statements may make sense to the student (writer) but the English reader is not likely to take it kindly. The student has “failed” in the eyes of the “judge”. Even though English language gains wider and formal usage in schools; mother-tongue interferences inhibit its standard and acceptable use in formal settings. Scoring high in English language examinations therefore becomes difficult to learners of English language as second language.

Based on the foregoing, linguistic interference in second language performance of secondary school students cannot be over-emphasized. Linguistic interference is so common that the learning of a second language without first language interference is almost impossible. Linguistic interference is paramount because of the multi-lingual nature of our society. As a result of this, the second language learners in secondary schools, particularly those in Okigwe Education Zone I are faced with the challenges in their academic achievement in the target language. This becomes apparent when students apply the knowledge of their first language in the learning of English language. This is the focus of this study.

Statement of the Problem

Most Igbo secondary school learners of English as second language unconsciously develop the habit of slipping back into Igbo language when using English Language as a medium. Such linguistic interferences such as phonological, grammatical, lexical and orthographical interferences retard effective learning of English as second language. This study therefore examined the influence of Igbo linguistic interference in the second language (English) performance of students in secondary schools in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions:

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What are the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with phonological interference and those without phonological interference?
2. What are the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with grammatical interference and those without grammatical interference?
3. What are the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with lexical interference and those without lexical interference?
4. What are the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with orthographical interference and those without orthographical interference?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with phonological interference and those without phonological interference.

Refocusing the Influence of Igbo Linguistic Interference on Students Achievement in English Language in Imo State for Peace and National Security

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with grammatical interference and those without grammatical interference.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with lexical interference and those without lexical interference.

Ho₄: There is no significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with orthographical interference and those without orthographical interference.

Methodology:

The study adopted an ex-post-facto/causal comparative research design. This study was carried out in Okigwe Education Zone One of Imo State, Nigeria with a total number of 29 public secondary schools. The total population of the study was 14,517 SS2 students and a sample of 389 derived using cluster and proportionate random sampling techniques by Taro Yamen formulae was used for the study. Instruments used for data collection included Language Interference Identification Test (LIIT) to stratify the 389 SS2 students with language interference, i.e. (64 with phonological interference, 73 with grammatical interference, 71 with lexical interference and 94 with orthographical interference) while 87 students were without language interference. Other instrument used was English Language Achievement Test (ELAT). The Language Interference Identification Test (LIIT) had 5 items for each of the language interference modes. In all, there were 20 items. For each mode/section of the test, a score of 0-2 was considered as possessing language interference while a score of 3-5 was considered as not possessing language interference. The English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) was prepared alongside the SS2 syllabus for third term and some of the items were culled from WASSCE past questions, using a table of specification. The researcher-made-test (ELAT) was prepared to elicit information on the academic achievement of the SS2 students involved in the study. The ELAT was made up of 20 multiple choice questions with four options of A, B, C and D for the subjects. The content and face validity of the instruments were ensured using table of specification and proper scrutiny of the instruments by language educators and Test and Measurement evaluators. The instruments had the K-R20 reliability indices of 0.79 and 0.83 for LIIT and ELAT respectively.

Face-to-face method was employed for the administration of the instruments with two trained research assistants. This enabled the researcher to guide the respondents on the filling of the instrument. The instruments were retrieved on the spot, thus enhancing the highest possible rate of return of completed scale. The exercise lasted for three weeks. The data collected were analyzed using mean score and standard deviation to answer the research questions. A score above 10 was taken as a cut off point for considering the group mean as Not Influencing Performance (NIP) while

Johnson O. Oyekanmi, PhD

scores of 10 and less were taken as Influencing Performance (IP). Independent sample t-test statistic was used to test hypotheses at an alpha level of 0.05. The level of rejection or acceptance of the null hypotheses was based on t-calculated value. When the t-calculated was greater than the t-critical table value which is 1.96, the hypothesis was considered rejected. But when the t-calculated was less than the t-critical table value of 1.96, the hypothesis was accepted.

Results:

Research Question One

What are the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with phonological interference and those without phonological interference?

Table 1: Second Language Performance Mean Scores of the Students Identified With Phonological Interference and those without Phonological Interference

Students	Descriptive Statistics			Decision
	n	\bar{X}	SD	
Without Phonological Interference	87	14.29	3.50	Not Influencing Performance
Phonological Interference	64	9.84	2.81	Influencing Performance

Table 1: shows the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with phonological interference and those without phonological interference. The table shows that the students without language interference had a mean score of 14.29 with a standard deviation of 3.50, while the students with phonological interference had a mean score of 9.84 with a standard deviation of 2.81. Since the students without language interference had a higher mean score than the students with phonological interference and their mean score was also above the criterion mean of 10, the conclusion is that phonological interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State.

Research Question Two

What are the Second Language Performance Mean Scores of the Students Identified with Grammatical Interference and those without Grammatical Interference?

Table 2: Second language performance mean scores of the students identified with grammatical interference and those without grammatical interference

Students	Descriptive Statistics			Decision
	n	\bar{X}	SD	
Without Grammatical Interference	87	14.29	3.50	Not Influencing Performance

Refocusing the Influence of Igbo Linguistic Interference on Students Achievement in English Language in Imo State for Peace and National Security

Grammatical interference	73	9.22	2.77	Influencing Performance
---------------------------------	----	------	------	-------------------------

Table 2: shows the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with grammatical interference and those without grammatical interference. The table shows that the students without language interference had a mean score of 14.29 with a standard deviation of 3.50, while the students with grammatical interference had a mean score of 9.22 with a standard deviation of 2.77. Since the students without language interference had a higher mean score than the students with grammatical interference, the conclusion is that grammatical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State.

Research Question Three

What are the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with lexical interference and those without lexical interference?

Table 3: Second Language Performance Mean Scores of the Students Identified with Lexical Interference and those without Lexical Interference

Students		Descriptive Statistics			Decision
		n	\bar{X}	SD	
Without Interference	Lexical	87	14.29	3.50	Not Influencing Performance
Lexical interference		71	8.92	2.99	Influencing Performance

Table 3: shows the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with lexical interference and those without lexical interference. The table shows that the students without language interference had a mean score of 14.29 with a standard deviation of 3.50, while the students with lexical interference had a mean score of 8.92 with a standard deviation of 2.99. Since the students without language interference had a higher mean score than the students with lexical interference, the conclusion is that lexical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State.

Research Question Four

What are the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with orthographical interference and those without orthographical interference?

Table 4: Second Language Performance Mean Scores of the Students Identified with Orthographical Interference and those without Orthographical Interference

Students	Descriptive Statistics			Decision
----------	------------------------	--	--	----------

	n	\bar{X}	SD	
Without Orthographical Interference	87	14.29	3.50	Not Influencing Performance
Orthographical interference	94	9.09	2.77	Influencing Performance

Table 4: shows the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with orthographical interference and those without orthographical interference. The table shows that the students without language interference had a mean score of 14.29 with a standard deviation of 3.50, while the students with orthographical interference had a mean score of 9.09 with a standard deviation of 2.77. Since the students without language interference had a higher mean score than students with orthographical interference, the conclusion is that the orthographical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with phonological interference and those without phonological interference.

Table 5: T-Test Analysis of Significant Difference between the Second Language Performance Mean Scores of the Students Identified with Phonological Interference and those without Phonological Interference

Students	n	\bar{X}	S.D	df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	Decision
Without Phonological Interference	87	14.29	3.50	149	8.37	1.96	Reject Ho
Phonological Interference	64	9.84	2.81				

Table 5 shows the t-test analysis of significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with phonological interference and those without phonological interference. The mean score and standard deviation of the 87 students without language interference are 14.29 and 3.50 respectively while the mean score and standard deviation of the 64 students with phonological interference are 9.84 and 2.81 respectively. With a degree of freedom of 149 and the t-test statistics application, it revealed that t-calculated is 8.37 while t-tabulated is 1.96. Since the t-calculated is greater than the t-tabulated, it shows that the

Refocusing the Influence of Igbo Linguistic Interference on Students Achievement in English Language in Imo State for Peace and National Security

null hypothesis is rejected. The conclusion is that there is significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with phonological interference and those without phonological interference.

Hypothesis Two

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with grammatical interference and those without grammatical interference.

Table 6: T-Test Analysis of Significant Difference between the Second Language Performance Mean Scores of the Students Identified with Grammatical Interference and those without Grammatical Interference

Students	n	\bar{X}	S.D	df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	Decision
Without Grammatical Interference	87	14.29	3.50	158	10.03	1.96	Reject Ho
Grammatical interference	73	9.22	2.77				

Table 6 shows the t-test analysis of significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with grammatical interference and those without grammatical interference. The mean score and standard deviation of the 87 students without language interference are 14.29 and 3.50 respectively while the mean score and standard deviation of the 73 students with grammatical interference are 9.22 and 2.77 respectively. With a degree of freedom of 158 and the t-test statistics application, it revealed that t-calculated is 10.03 while t-tabulated is 1.96. Since the t-calculated is greater than the t-tabulated, it shows that the null hypothesis is rejected. The conclusion is that there is significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with grammatical interference and those without grammatical interference.

Hypothesis Three

Ho3: There is no significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with lexical interference and those without lexical interference.

Table 7: T-Test Analysis of Significant Difference between the Second Language Performance Mean Scores of The Students Identified with Lexical Interference And those without Lexical Interference

Students	n	\bar{X}	S.D	df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	Decision
Without Lexical Interference	87	14.29	3.50	156	10.24	1.96	Reject Ho

Lexical interference	71	8.92	2.99
-----------------------------	----	------	------

Table 7 shows the t-test analysis of significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with lexical interference and those without lexical interference. The mean score and standard deviation of the 87 students without language interference are 14.29 and 3.50 respectively while the mean score and standard deviation of the 71 students with lexical interference are 8.92 and 2.99 respectively. With a degree of freedom of 156 and the t-test statistics application, it revealed that t-calculated is 10.24 while t-tabulated is 1.96. Since the t-calculated is greater than the t-tabulated, it shows that the null hypothesis is rejected. The conclusion is that there is significant difference between the second language performances mean scores of the students identified with lexical interference and those without lexical interference.

Hypothesis Four

Ho4: There is no significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with orthographical interference and those without orthographical interference.

Table 8: T-Test Analysis of Significant Difference between the Second Language Performance Mean Scores of the Students Identified with Orthographical Interference and those without Orthographical Interference

Students	n	\bar{X}	S.D	df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Decision
Without Orthographical Interference	87	14.29	3.50	179	11.14	1.96	Reject Ho
Orthographical interference	94	9.09	2.77				

Table 8 shows the t-test analysis of significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with orthographical interference and those without orthographical interference. The mean score and standard deviation of the 87 students without language interference are 14.29 and 3.50 respectively while the mean score and standard deviation of the 94 students with orthographical interference are 9.09 and 2.77 respectively. With a degree of freedom of 179 and the t-test statistics application, it revealed that t-calculated is 11.14 while t-tabulated is 1.96. Since the t-calculated is greater than the t-tabulated, it shows that the null hypothesis is rejected. The conclusion is that there is significant difference between the second language performance mean scores of the students identified with orthographical interference and those without orthographical interference.

Discussion of Findings

Influence of Phonological Interference on Second Language Performance of Students

It was revealed in this study that phonological interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State significantly. This implies that phonological interference is a significant factor in the second language performance of students. In this study, it was revealed that language interference influences one group while it does not influence another group. The implication here is that the students without language interference performed better than the students with phonological interference. In line with this finding, Apeli and Ugwu (2013) findings discovered that the three factors that determine the level of interference are: the level of immersion of the individual in Izon; the level of the individual's education; the individual's oral English education exposure. Oluwole (2008) findings revealed 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. The similarities in the findings could be attributed to the fact that the English language is been influenced by native languages.

Influence of Grammatical Interference on Second Language Performance of Students

It was also found in this study that grammatical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State significantly. This implies that grammatical interference influences second language performance of students significantly. In consonance to this finding, Ugwu (2013) revealed that Igbo language interferes with English language mostly at the phonological level while English language interferes with Igbo language at the realm of vocabulary. The result is a new language "Engligbo" which is a hybrid of English and Igbo languages. This finding contradicts, Olanipekun, Atteh, Zaku and Sarki (2014) who discovered that mother tongue had no effect on academic performance in English language since there is no correlation between students' academic performance in mother tongue and English language. The contradictions in the findings could be attributed to the fact that the two studies made use of different respondents and different language groups of Igbo and Hausa respectively.

Influence of Lexical Interference on Second Language Performance of Students

It was also revealed that lexical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State but the influence is significant. This implies that lexical interference goes a long way to influences second language performance of students. In line with this finding, Abolaji (2012) revealed that, on one hand, more bilinguals are found in the pass region than monolinguals; on

the other hand, more monolinguals were found in the fail region than bilinguals. These results confirm the position that bilingualism plays supportive role in second language learning situations. However, Abolaji (2012) opined that first language acquisition is detrimental to second language learning. He was of the view that a student is automatically placed at a disadvantaged position when he already has a language of his own and he/she is asked to learn another language.

Influence of Orthographical Interference on Second Language Performance of Students

It was also found in this study that orthographical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State significantly. Hence this is an indication that orthography is a significant factor in second language performance of students. This can be said that second language affects students' orthography. In corroboration with this finding, Oginni and Owolabi (2013) findings revealed a significant difference in performance scores among the groups. Osafor (2005) findings also revealed that parents' occupations have significant impact on secondary school students' use of English. With these finding, it is clear that there is a significant difference between the academic performance of two groups of students with language interference and those without language interference in English language. The similarities among the findings could be explained by the power of second language on students' orthography irrespective of the location.

Summary of Findings

From the analyses above, the following findings were made:

- Phonological interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State but the influence is significant.
- Grammatical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State but the influence is significant.
- Lexical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State but the influence is significant.
- Orthographical interference influences second language performance of students in Okigwe Education Zone I of Imo State but the influence is significant.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Teachers of English Language are reminded that teaching of English Language should not be geared towards passing examinations in English; rather the emphasis should be on competence of students in listening, speaking, reading and writing as well. This will help them in no small measure, to gain

Refocusing the Influence of Igbo Linguistic Interference on Students Achievement in English Language in Imo State for Peace and National Security

proficiency not only in English but in all other subjects that are taught in English Language.

- Teachers should bear in mind that most students need to be adequately encouraged to speak English Language at school since they may not have the opportunity to speak it at home.
- English language should be used as a medium of communication within and outside the classroom. Both teachers and students should endeavour to improve on their proficiency level of English language.
- Various methods of teaching and appropriate instructional materials should be adopted to compliment teacher's knowledge. This could be done through provision of opportunity for staff development programmes. This goes a long way in influencing teaching and learning process in English language. Instructional materials selected should commensurate with the level of students.
- Teaching-learning procedures and classroom interactions should be learner-centred. This implies that students will be allowed to express views in class discussion and any error made should be corrected by the teacher without any intimidation as these will refocus and enhance students' better academic achievement in English language for peace and national security.

References

- Abolaji, S.M. (2012). Bilinguals and monolinguals performance in English language learning in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Research*, 1(1), 21-29
- Agwu, M. (2014). *Nature and its languages*. London: Longman Group Ltd.
- Anukam, O. (2016). *The paradox of foreign language mentality*. Owerri: Imo State University Press Owerri. Sept, 18th.
- Apeli, C.U. & Ugwu, E.N. (2013). Phonological interference in the spoken English performance of the Izon speaker in Nigeria: A product of systemic and inter language factors. *Journal Language*, 3(4), 17-21
- Hassanpour A (2000). *The Politics of A-Political Linguistic's: Linguists and Linguicide*. In Robert Phillipson (ed.) *Rights to Language Equition, Power and Education*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Ass. Pub.

Johnson O. Oyekanmi, PhD

Larson, U. & Long, V. (1991). *Enhancing creativity in English Language*. USA: John Jacob Publishers Ltd.

Ndimel R.I (2008). *Understanding sociolinguistics*. Aba: Clear Print Publishing.

Nwani C.O (2006). *Cause of linguistics interferences in Second Language Learning in Aba, Abia State*. Unpublished Research Project, Department of Linguistics and Igbo Studies, ABSU, Uturu.

Olanipekun, S.S., Atteh, D., Zaku, J.A., & Sarki, P.E. (2014). Mother tongue and students' academic performance in English Language among Secondary School Students. *International Journal of Language, Literature and Culture*, 1(1), 1-6.

Osuafor, C.C (2005). *Globalization And Language Endangerment in Nigeria*. Owerri: Versatile Publishers.

Rangmalalak B.T (2009). *Lexical Interference of Minangkabaunesse into Indonesian Found in*

Novel Tenggelmnya Kapal Van Der Wijck, Thesis Proposal.

Skiba, V. G. (2010). *Languages in the Contemporaray World*. London: Blackwell Publishers.

Ugwu E.I. (2013). Reciprocal interferences in Bilingual English-Igbo Speaking Society: The implications in Language pedagogy. (World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology). *International Journal of Social, Behavioural, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering*, 7(12), 23-42