

## **Second Language Influence on First Language Performance: Appraising Yoruba-English Bilinguals**

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### **Abstract**

*It is a common practice imagining the English as second language speakers' native languages as posing negative influences on the effective teaching, learning and use of English. In nations like Nigeria, where indigenous languages receive the least attention compared with foreign ones like English, French and Arabic, native languages are perceived as threats to better performance in English. The thrust of this paper seems different from its similar lots. It sets out to redirect language studies attention towards the negative influence of L2 over the L1. English and Yoruba are the working languages and subjects of attention are education bilinguals of Yoruba origin whose exposure to English has weakened their performance in their Yoruba.*

### **Introduction**

Essentially, Nigeria is a multilingual nation. There exist more than four hundred mutually unintelligible languages spoken natively by members of more than two hundred and fifty ethnic groups. In Brann (1978) estimated Nigerian Languages as tentatively 395. He supported his findings with claim that ninety percent 90% of the languages in their list can be regarded as distinct languages. The adoption of English for the conduct of Nigerian affairs has inflicted a serious injury on the indigenous languages. English has conquered the Nigerian indigenous languages with respect to development, usage, status and purity.

Over the years, series of government educational policies have shown special attention on English over the indigenous languages. In 1912, an Anglican Missionary in Igboland gave what he considered a gentleman's advice against the use of mother tongue in the following words:

According to Obasanjo (1991), since there exists a language considered an asset for integration, the readily available medium of instruction at schools, that of international business link, the necessary efforts needed for the development of indigenous languages has received little attention from the government.

It is true that there have been inclusion of the teaching of the three major languages (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba in schools and the call for radical development of other Nigerian languages in the available National Policy on Education (NPE). But nothing has been done on serious monitoring of the implementation of these good intentions. The reasons for these lapses are not unconnected with the existence of substitute lingua franca 'English' in Nigeria.

English has succeeded in turning Nigerians indigenous languages native speakers against their mother tongues. Derogatory names, such as 'vernacular', are used for Nigerians languages and many primary school pupils as well as secondary school students have paid fines ranging from five naira to strokes of cane for speaking their native languages during school hours. Allotted periods for the teaching of indigenous languages are insignificant compared to what is set aside for English.

English has deprived the Nigerian languages the chance of functioning as media of instruction in Nigerian schools. Non-availability of codified orthography and texts in most Nigerian languages is due to the fact that the Nigerian government over the years have has never been stranded of language of formal education since English serves as a readymade tool all the time.

Nations of the World with radical language development philosophy have developed their languages to the standard of use for international trades. In Nigeria, English is tremendously helping in the sales of the nation's crude oil, cocoa, groundnut, coal and other mineral resources at international markets.

The social impact of English on Nigerian languages calls for a change of mind. Nigerians use their native languages in extremely intimate discussion especially among members of the same families. An average Nigerian prefers using English is the ticket for high social class and has reduced Nigerian Languages to the background.

In the nation's schools, especially at the tertiary level, students of Nigerian languages are regarded as dull students. A typical student of English combined with a Nigerian language in a College of Education is disheartened if grouped with the students of department of Indigenous languages Opoola (1995). The derogatory name ascribed to students of indigenous languages is 'dugbe' which in Yoruba stands for a thickly populated market in Ibadan. The sense in 'dugbe' is that departments of indigenous languages in the tertiary institution house the students whose choices were borne out of failure to secure admission requirements to departments such as English, Mathematics and so on (based on personal interaction with students in College of Education). The regard for English and disrespect for Nigerian languages has made many Nigerians lose interest in studying the latter at schools. English has rendered Nigerian languages weaken. The contact between English and Nigerian languages has resulted to the phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing by the English-Nigerian languages bilinguals. Many lexical and sentential items of Nigerian languages are blended into English. Nigerian languages are fast losing words, phrases and sentences for English as a result of the domineering status of English on Nigerian languages.

Ahukana (1991) gathered from English-Igbo bilinguals that there was preference for the use of English rather than Igbo by English-Igbo bilinguals of Imo, Anambra and former Bendel States. Nigerian Indigenous languages are pidginized having been dominated by English.

Early orthographical works on many Nigerian languages rested on English as frame of reference. Despite the fact that I.P.A (International Phonetic Alphabet) was consulted as instrument for writing most of the Nigerian written languages, linguists like John Goldsmith (1979), Olderdrop (1966), once worked on Yoruba, Igbo, Idoma and Hausa respectively not without using English as an important frame of reference. In order to produce reliable writing for these languages, many Nigerian linguists now criticize the past Europeans' orthographies for many Nigerian languages and advocate the development of new ones. There are numerous, current meta languages in Yoruba edited by Ayo Bamgbose (1990), Awobuluyi (1992) in Igbo edited by Nolue Emenanjo (1992) and

Hausa edited by D. Muhammed (1990) under the sponsorship of Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council.

Acquisition of Nigerian languages is also affected due to the influence of English. Nigerian children are caught up with the dilemma of what to acquire as first or second language. Many homes use both languages (English and mother tongue) while some rely solely on English. The contention that a speaker of English as a native language acquires English naturally as a young child by Tomlinson and Ellis (1990) could not qualify the children of the families described above as native speakers of English. Their parents are not of Australia, New Zealand, Canada or United States of America.

Another group of Nigerian children are those who acquire their native languages before embarking on education with English. Many future leaders have turned academic imbeciles because of the task of learning in English. The glaring nature of their problem motivated the emphasis on mother-tongue education which needs to be given the desired attention.

An English child does not require linguistic transition from English to another language at school like his Nigerian colleague. Let us examine Ugwuoti's (1996) presentation below:

*When Wole Soyinka won the noble prize for literature,  
Tai Solarin was not happy. His grouse was that the  
Professor got the award so late of age 51. He argued that  
Soyinka would have won the award at 30, if he were taught  
in Yoruba.*

Ugwoti (1996) also presented the ordeal of European participants in an international conference in Europe attended by Fafunwa who started out his paper presentation in Yoruba to the bewilderment of his foreign audience. He stopped at realizing that his listeners were sweating and then told them in English *'that was what a child suffered in learning in an alien language'*

Nigerian parents are ignorant of the disadvantages of education in English as sole medium, especially at the primary level. Many parents are not supportive of teaching their wards in indigenous languages as they believe such attempt will divert the attention from adequate

grounding in English which to them appear in the long run more crucial for the future of the children (Bepo and Ajayi, 1998). Adedokun (1997) traced hostilities toward Nigerian languages and thereby favoured the learning of English instead.

Among the national roles the Nigerian indigenous languages would have played is introducing their speakers to Nigerian cultures. On the contrary, nearly everybody now desires to think in English, dress like English native speakers rather than for instance, like Igbo, Hausa, Eifk, Ibibio or Yoruba.

According to Williamson (1991), everybody has a right to the language, tradition and insight of his ancestors and if it is cut, he is cut off from his culture. Nigerians have shown much love for the use of English and its native speakers' culture because of its status over the indigenous languages. Education with a child's indigenous language rather than English helps the child to develop his manipulation ability, curiosity initiative, industry and manual dexterity.

In the past, the slogan at school was "stop speaking vernacular" (Nigerian language). Emenanjo (1994) traced the orientation of hostilities towards the use of Nigerian languages to the happening on the early catholic schools in the following way:

"In catholic schools, it was the rule for penalties to be imposed on pupils found speaking Igbo in the premises of an Institution".

Emenanjo (1994) presents the opinion of the first colonial inspector of schools in West Africa. Rev. Sunter as quoted in Wise, GG. (1955) "A history of Education in Tropical West Africa p.22 thus:

*"Vernacular) language (are) only interesting to the comparative philologist and (are) never likely to become of any practical use to civilization. The native must and will know English in spite of all well-meaning but diseased notion, it is the language of commerce and the only education worth a moment's consideration.*

Above submission confirms the direction of effort and resources towards the teaching and learning of English with the hope that, West African nations' native languages worth to be studied probably because they are spoken by people considered undeveloped and never to be civilized even in the future.

## **Bilingualism**

### **Theoretical Accounts of Bilinguals**

Theoretical accounts of the bilinguals have confirmed its advantages. Bilingualism makes the bilinguals speech engage cognitive inhibition in order to prevent interference from non-target language item during discourse (Dunabeitia 2014). In other words, and according to Bialystok, (2015) inconsistent findings have led some to question the veracity of the advantages of bilingualism.

According to Bialystok (2004), bilingualism is one of many cognitively engaging activities which may provide a cognitive advantage with salient benefit. The advantages of bilingualism have once been drawn from bilingual language processing by Bialystok, Martine and Viswanathan (2005) as well as Kroll & Bialystok (2013).

Bilingualism is a linguistic concept with usual legislative backings. In Nigeria, the heterogeneous nature of a nation of more than 400 indigenous languages alongside English, French, Arabic and others.

Every nation has her language policy. In Mozambique, according to UNICEF (2016), official language issue was addressed in the Mozambique constitution. Mozambique is one of the few countries in Africa in which Portuguese is an official language and the exclusive medium of instruction from first grade onwards, as well as a subject in primary and secondary education. In the words of Chimbutana and Benson (2012:8), "at the time of independence from Portugal in 1976, only seven per cent of Mozambicans spoke Portuguese and 13 per cent were illiterate. Mozambicans are bilinguals since they simultaneously combine the use of Portuguese and their indigenous languages.

Bilingualism has been an interesting field of study in sociology and linguistic studies respectively. Fishman (Date?) defined bilingualism as equal, balanced and advanced mastery of two languages. However, his contributions on the same subject, particularly 'the natural bilingual' rendered the above impression restrictive in scope. Ability to use two languages by an individual or a speech community constitutes Adekunle's (1992) opinion of bilingualism. Bilingualism is precisely one of the principal effects of language contact. In this context, therefore, the contact between English and Yoruba resulted in the emergence of Yoruba-English

bilinguals. Colonialism, migration, wars of conquest and business transactions are some of the causes of Bilingualism.

As Clapperton stepped on the soil of Yoruba land in 1825, the contact between typical early Yoruba elites with English commenced. Men and women of Yoruba origin captured and exported to European countries especially by British government as slaves had earliest contact with English prior to Clapperton's arrival.

On the basis of the scope of this thesis, we regard such Yoruba-English bilinguals as distinct from those whose contact with English occurred in Yoruba land. Bilingualism in relation to Yoruba people conveniently satisfies the colonization factor; hence the Yoruba old empires were governed together with other territories in Nigeria as part of the British colony.

The main source of Yoruba English contact is traceable to the effect of Christianity on Yoruba people. Christian missionary activities under the leadership of pioneers like Venn, the Honourary Secretary of the parent committee of the CMS in London (1841 – 1872), Golimer, Andrew Wilhdm, Henry Townsend, William Savage and Ajayi Crowther (Awoniyi op cit) introduced the production of classroom based Yoruba-English bilinguals. In fact, two schools were established at Lagos in (1843) and Abeokuta in 1848, (Tomori, 1977). The early trained Yoruba-English bilinguals became helpers of the European missionaries and later graduated to school masters, Yoruba-English translators, catechists and workers of the proliferated Christian missions in Yorubaland.

The classroom approach at preparing Yoruba-English bilinguals employed the legacy of neo-firthian school of applied linguistics in relation to language teaching based on the four skills activities (reading, writing, listening and speaking). Bible verses were read in English and translated into Yoruba.

Translation of the old and new testament to Yoruba between 1844 and 1848 was done by Bishop Ajayi Crowther though not without seeking the guidance of Wilson's Bible Student Guide and Genesis manual. Westernman quoted by Awoniyi (1977:page numbers?) remarked "Yoruba writing today still bears Crowther's stamp". Crowther's translations were regarded as idiomatic, readable and of high literacy style.

Between the period of 1825 till date, Yoruba-English bilinguals of multifarious classes have been produced. There are Queen's English Yoruba bilinguals, Pidgin English Yoruba bilinguals, Nigerian English-Yoruba bilinguals and those of incipient category.

A comprehensive discussion on Yoruba-English bilinguals is arrived at based on the following basic bilingualism criteria: context, performance and functional criteria.

The Yoruba people are known for their linguistic map. Unlike Cross River, Rivers and other Nigerian States where there exist many languages and dialects, Yoruba is the language of the Yoruba people predominantly occupying South Western States in Nigeria. Yoruba is not without multiples of dialects, it is the language used simultaneously with English in offices, homes, social religious and political gatherings.

Many Yoruba people with western education derive joy in the use of English words and expressions. English words coined especially through transliteration are used to suit their communicative anxiety in English. Here are some Yoruba English expressions in the form of code-mixing.

1. Emi ko mo inannaotu oro yen o

Gloss A: I don't understand the in and out of that matter.

Gloss B: (I don't understand the context of that discussion). (A) is an example of Nigerian English while (B) provides a peripheral translation.

The sense in the above expression is that the producer of the Yoruba-English admixture sentence is confused about a particular subject and expressed his mind in a metaphoric way by employing the English items 'in' and 'out' with the emphatic clause 'O'. The two English prepositions 'in' and 'out' are coined as one 'inan-naotu'.

2. Ole gbomojo lefutaimu omo ole ni mojo jo

Glosses (A): The lazy person dances every time child lazy beautiful dancer  
with  
her  
kids

Glosses (B): Only a lazy person dances with her child every time and only such a child becomes a skillful dancer).



In Yoruba people's culture, babies are patted through dancing steps and native songs. An aspirant of English Yoruba bilingual status now uses the English words 'everytime' and transliterate it as 'lefutaimu'.

English Yoruba incipient bilinguals speak Yoruba as native language but only understand few English words. Their level of understanding the English words is low. They learn the few English words coined into Yoruba through their elite children, friends, neighbours and interaction with customers during business transactions. English words and expressions such as the ones below are transliterated in Yoruba.

**Table 1: English Loaned Words in Yoruba**

	English	Yorubaised forms
1	I don't care	idun ká
2	Inspector	inpeto
3	Serjent	sajenti
4	In and out	inannaoti
5	Peculiar mess	penkele mess
6	Insurance	insuransi
7	Left and right	lefu, rati
8	You bloody fool	obulodifool
9	Hypertension	pantesan
10	Certificate	satifikeeti sabukoeti

Yoruba-English bilinguals described as of compound bilingual status are mostly school based. Both English and Yoruba are learnt and acquired respectively at not too distant period of time. The early British trained teachers, church missionaries and products of the then University of London-Ibadan belong to the compound of Yoruba English bilinguals group.

Competence in English as exhibited by these bilinguals most times could be traced to classic studies with English. On several occasions, they employ Latin blended with English as symbol of full control of English, especially in public gatherings. Other factors that contributed to their high level of competence include having worked as church boys, cooks,

or servants of the Europeans. Most of them learned English through direct communicative activities with the native English speakers. Also, majority of such bilinguals enjoyed scholarships to Britain for further studies.

Apart from the early Yoruba scholars, many Yoruba people in the recent times with good educational achievement speak both languages with equal competence. The Yoruba language experts are also grouped among the compound Yoruba-English bilinguals. The training received in Yoruba helps build their proficiency in English. Obemeata (1984) once claimed that:

*Yoruba learners of English should be assisted to attain proficiency in Yoruba as an aid to learning English"*

Special attention is given to the performance of Yoruba-English compound bilinguals with the desire to discover the effect of competence in English on their use of Yoruba.

The predicament observed in the compound Yoruba-English bilinguals is in terms of un-naturalistic? English tongue. Though many of them speak with close affinity with English native speakers, others are quite artificial. The common slogan ascribed to such people is 'fone' which is a humorous coinage for 'phonetics' and 'oyinbo kenbiriji' for the English of graduates from Cambridge University.

Frequent use of English and the perception that English is superior to Yoruba has made many Yoruba-English compound bilinguals change towards the subordinate category of bilingualism.

It is obvious that except he was born in an English speaking country or by parents with serious bias for English, an average Yoruba child in Yoruba land acquires Yoruba first in his language life.

The contact with English is often experienced at schools, among other places. Some Yoruba people, due to inability to cope with the processes of formal education, are traders, carpenters, roadside mechanics and farmers with crude tools. The educational stages where they dropped out of schools determine their level of competence in English. It is interesting to submit that their contact with English, especially during primary six and junior or senior secondary school education, differentiates them from the incipient Yoruba-English bilinguals.

Most of the subordinate Yoruba-English bilinguals speak and write English though with consistent violation of English linguistic rules (morphological, syntactical, semantic and phonological).

It is worthwhile to mention that frequent use of English particularly with the elites greatly influences the Yoruba-English bilinguals with little formal educational achievement. Some of Yoruba-English bilinguals, through activities in business, politics and social exposures, have their performance improved in the English language.

The use of Yoruba generally by people differs based on an individual's selection of Yoruba diction. Many Yoruba people have the misconception that they have good mastery of Yoruba when they are actually short of appropriate Yoruba words for communicative purpose in the language.

A lot of educated Yoruba persons speak Yoruba with friends and family members at social gatherings but are unable to write simple Yoruba sentences. Many Yoruba children, because of their education with English as medium, cannot write letters in Yoruba not to talk of reading in the same language.

Exposing a great number of Yoruba-English bilinguals to reading and writing in Yoruba is equal to subjecting them to torture. It is assumed that more attention have has been given to the learning of English through better and more effective teaching methods than Yoruba. Reading of English novels, newspapers, magazines, television and radio programmes are encouraged in Yoruba schools at the expense of the Yoruba language. The foreigners' language (English) has been accepted by the Yorubas with serious neglect of the language of the birth affiliation and total minds. How many Yoruba elites could provide the Yoruba explanations or give correct pronunciation of the following Yoruba words and expressions regarded as *Ijinle Yoruba* (deep tradition or rooted Yoruba words)

1. Alufansa – uncouth speech
2. Komookun/komuokun – fact or thrust
3. O sa mi – it escaped my memory
4. O gboeregejige – it is well established
5. O le kenka – it's too much
6. O buaya – it's wonderful
7. O bejolori – he/she has performed creditably

8. Karangida – beyond comprehension
9. Koso – a special kind of drum
10. Oro naa po ju e lo – you've over-stepped your bounds
11. Egbe isu ko ni iyan –beyond comparison
12. Ilasa sa gege niwon – idiomatic phrase for description
13. Jengbetiele – description phrase
14. Oro naa ga – it's too much
15. Jiroro - discuss
16. Ogbufo – translator
17. Ori re ri kobilakobila – description of somebody's large size head
18. Afofun gbemu – fool
19. Odale – betrayer
20. Isale oro logbin – histories behind riches are rough
21. Sokutuwowo – impressively planned party
22. Lemolemo – constantly
23. O n dan-gbinrin – smooth surface
24. Dudu-bii eedu – as black as charcoal
25. Aguntan n wo boo – sheep looks dull
26. Gbegade gbina – trouble started
27. Oluko gbinaje – the teacher grew annoyed/ The teacher flared up
28. Gendekunrin – man of adulthood
29. Arewa obinrin - beautiful lady
30. Deede agbo – tempting trouble
31. Akuro – a garden by the waterside
32. Ebu ose - nature black soap industry
33. Igbale – centre for masquerade preparation
34. Oju oori – grave side
35. Gbogan-ipade – hall
36. Oode /odede – balcony
37. Ehinkule /eyinkunle eyinkule – backyard
38. Ojugbo – bush/forest
39. Aginju – thick forest
40. Ahere – small hut
41. Aba – a cluster of huts (more than one)
42. Baale – chief

43. Bale – head of a house/compound
44. Eyin – palmtree
45. Ileko – farm hut
46. Ile-iwosan – hospital
47. Ile-alawo – herbalist house
48. Ojubo obatala – obatala's shrine
49. Ojubo sango –sango's shrine
50. Ojubo esu laalu – isalu's (devil) shrine
51. O hu sihu loko – calling in the bush
52. O judi wukewuke – He/She danced beautifully
53. Adigun yan fanda – Adigun walked majestically
54. Gege – glottal protrusion
55. Ige – chest
56. Iwe – gizzard
57. Edo – kidney
58. Konkoso –sieving clothe for (Elubo)
59. Aaasa – Yoruba nature snuff (poudry) (powdery?)
60. Omu aso – instrument for weaving nature
61. Salubata – Pair of sandals
62. Abebe –hand fan
63. Atelewo – hand
64. Sokoto kembe – Yoruba baggy trousers
65. Ewu gbariwe – nature embroiding upper
66. Bebe – beads for women's waists
67. Oluko n reju – the teacher is sleeping
68. Ole na papa bora – the thief ran away
69. Aare feyin sile – the president abandoned
70. Ojogbon – professor
71. Omowe – Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D. holder)
72. Onisegun oyinbo – physician, medical doctor
73. Baluwe – bathroom
74. Salanga – toilet
75. Aatan – refuse dump site
76. Bante – Yoruba nature bulletproof (There are other types of "bante" than bullet proofs)

77. Oguro – palmwine
78. Agbo – herb
79. Kuuru – ram of short height
80. Orunla – dried okro seed
81. Luuru – green lead pounded find need for?
82. Isapa – a kind of Yoruba vegetable
83. Koseku koseye – double dealer
84. Konijaanu – to bridle up or for restrain
85. Kolobo – small earthen hearthen vessel

How many Yoruba-English bilinguals can provide grammatically correct Yoruba sentences? Is it possible for Yoruba-English bilinguals to isolate the phrase markers in Yoruba sentences? Are the idiomatic expressions in Yoruba understood by the educated Yoruba? Of what use are the thought-provoking Yoruba proverbs to Yoruba-English bilinguals?

On a more serious note, however, the language faith of many Yoruba-English bilinguals is hanging. They cannot read, speak or write in either dialect of standard Yoruba and at the same time do not speak good English.

Are the following Yoruba phrases understood by Yoruba-English bilinguals until translated to English?

- (a) Ilamagbon  
 Orangun mo o-gboye  
 Omo igun to ni-nla ninu eye  
 Ara a lakole  
 Amota, mo fohun lona Ede  
 Omi meta, toto to san  
 To lade ila ja.....
- (b) Ibale dowo o  
 Kuburutu, toju abe re o  
 Ibale dowo o  
 Kuburutu toju abe re o

N.B. (a) and (b) are adapted from Akinyemi (1996 p.3 & 4).

Chomsky (1966) considered the mastery of the linguistic rules of a language as competence and the actual usage of such rules as performance.

Bloomfield (1999), in corroborating Chomsky, defines the same concepts as language's system and behavior. Many natives and speakers of Yoruba are monolinguals. They speak only Yoruba and could use few English loaned words with it. The concept of monolingualism is fast giving way to bilingualism, trilingualism and multilingualism in Yorubaland because of people's flair for formal education.

However, in spite of the determining the existence of monolingualism among people, some Yoruba especially the old ones without formal education are still surviving with their ability to speak only Yoruba. The level of performance of the Yoruba monolinguals in Yoruba is rated high and especially in rural areas.

Yoruba-English bilinguals are of different types as discussed in the preceding section of this study. It was discovered that some Yoruba-English bilinguals are either of compound, coordinate, subordinate or incipient categories based on their proficiency in both English and Yoruba. Interestingly, there are bilinguals whose sub-categorization fails to conveniently fit into any of the above four bilingual types hence they are neither good in English nor Yoruba.

Yoruba's multiple dialects also help in the categorization of its users. Level of education notwithstanding, many Yoruba native speakers cannot use the standard form of the language. Rather, their dialects of Yoruba are employed frequently while communicating with Yoruba of both their dialectal enclaves and others of different dialects.

The concept of code-switching and code-mixing is not restricted to the English and Yoruba but also extends to dialects and standard forms of the Yoruba language.

An Ijesa Yoruba uses Ijesa dialect both among his fellow Ijesas and other Yoruba groups especially in informal discussions. However, he is forced to write with standard Yoruba particularly for examinations in Yoruba as Yoruba students or teachers. Yoruba academics like Ashaolu, Ade Oginni and 'Kinyo Bolorunduro have contributed notably in the training of Yoruba teachers at Osun State College of Education Ilesha and produced standard Yoruba books on Yoruba grammar and literature.

A grammar of Yoruba was published by Kinyo Bolorunduyo an Ijesa man and 'Komo-n-woo (teaching practice text for the Yoruba language teachers) by Ade Oginni (1991). The standard works of these erudite scholars were without the influence of their Ijesa dialect of Yoruba. However, they usually make use of their dialect while discussing with their fellow Ijesa native speakers.

Husbands and wives of Ondo dialect discuss with each other in their dialect. While engaging in oral communication with people outside their dialect even in the same sitting room and within few seconds, the wife or the husband switches to standard Yoruba (personal contact and language experience with Mr. & Mrs. Olanipekun residing at Obudu in Cross River State). Reason for code switching from Yoruba dialects to standard Yoruba is due to the fact that standard Yoruba is taught at all schools in Yoruba speaking States.

Emotional and social jargons also help in the sub-classification of Yoruba speakers in relation to performance. There are funny and socially manufactured Yoruba words by Yoruba artists through records, theatre performance and broadcasting media. Yoruba slang words are mostly manufactured for special purposes. See the following:

1. Egunje - bribe  
Derived source - Yoruba film (Na wa for Lagos)
2. Gbe-n-le, Eesin n je taya - increase the speed of the motor  
Derived source - Radio - Nigeria public programme for motorists
3. Jalekun e - special expression for violent act
4. E jesu, e mumi - this is a case of primary and extended referent in semantics.  
Ordinarily, the above phrase implies.  
Gloss I (Eat yam and drink water). The real meaning of the phrase now provides a secondary referent for "isu" as woman private part and "omi" as the enjoyment derived from sexual intercourse. This therefore means  
Gloss II have sex and enjoy yourself.  
Derived source: Through a musician—Kola Kolington's record
5. Omode yen ti sekona mo o lowo  
The boy has outsmarted him.  
Derived source - ordinary slang.



Another group of the Yoruba language users are those who understand the standard form of the language, could use it for speaking purpose but are unable to write or read with it. Yoruba people of this category usually feel that Yoruba is their language. They have developed so much interest in English and lost their acquired Yoruba vocabularies. They prefer writing and reading in English though speak Yoruba with their kinsmen when necessary.

### **Influence of English on Yoruba**

Educated bilinguals of Yoruba origin are influenced by their knowledge of English when speaking or write the Yoruba language.

There are lexical/phonological, syntactic and sociolinguistic features of English in the Yoruba speeches of educated Yoruba English bilinguals.

#### **1. Lexical/Phonological Influence**

The teaching and learning of English phonology usually commences in Yoruba bilingual's education at the pre-primary level and continues till the attainment of higher education. Having been well groomed in English, many Yoruba elites find it difficult to read or write in Yoruba. The perception of Yoruba sounds as that of English is a common phenomenon. In fact, as the Yoruba-English bilinguals' English diction increased, so their Yoruba vocabulary decreases. It is a herculean task for university graduates to recite the Yoruba letters of Alphabet from /a/-/y/

In reality, it is easier to write in English than Yoruba since the spaces for the Yoruba sound system in the elite bilinguals had given way to that of English (Opoola, 1999).

The phonological properties of Yoruba like tone marks and diacritics could no longer be remembered by many Yoruba elites (Opoola, 1999).

Transliteration method is adapted for Yoruba words with English as the source language. For instance, the following words are at the finger tips of Yoruba bilinguals.

Kilaasi -	classroom instead of "yara ikawo/ikekoo"
Miliki -	milk instead of omu malu
Biledi -	blade instead of abefele

Fasiti	-	university instead of ile eko imo ijinle
Dokita	-	doctor instead of onisegun
Tirela	-	trailer instead of oko Ajagbe
Direba	-	driver instead of Awako

## 2. Syntactic Influence

Educated Yoruba perceive the syntactic structure of Yoruba sentences in term of English.

The English structure is used for construction of sentences in Yoruba. Yoruba phrase makers: the noun, pronoun, pronominal, conjunction, verb, preposition, adjectives are employed in the construction of Yoruba sentences as in English since the elites sympathy is for English with which they are more comfortable.

Rather than using the Yoruba syntactic principle of marking tense in terms of future and non-future, it is marked sometimes as that of English past and present pattern. In the Yoruba speeches of Yoruba English bilinguals, the immediate (proximate) or distant (non-proximate) future not marked in Yoruba are marked using the English format.

Yoruba English bilinguals are found of treating the language tense, aspect and mood as inseparable because of their attitude of overlooking the function of high tone syllable in Yoruba. Many educated Yoruba due to their knowledge of English syntactic principles could not identify the Yoruba syntactic markers such as (to) 'completive' 'has' /n/ progressive or habitual, (tii) (non completive) and (a) (consecutive habitual) as on the following examples.

Bola ti lo – Bola has gone

Bola n lo – Bola is going

Bola ko tii lo – Bola is yet to go

Bola a maa lo – Bola usually goes.

Yoruba mood markers are greatly influenced by the English tense system experience of the bilinguals. The following mood markers no longer receive deserved attention in the sentences of Yoruba English bilinguals:

Yoo (will) maa (will), gbodo (must), le (can), nii (will not), maa (do not), ba (would have) and ibaa (even if).

### 3. Sociolinguistic Influence

Code switching, code mixing and imposition of thought are common sociological features of English influencing the use of Yoruba of Yoruba-English bilinguals.

Code switching – it is peculiar with Yoruba educated elites to switch from Yoruba to English and vice-versa. Discourses could not be solely in Yoruba without crossing over to English even when participants are all Yoruba. The result of such sociolinguistic attitude is compulsory translation to Yoruba.

#### Code mixing

Though milder than code-switching, due to the existence of two semantic codes in the brain of educated Yoruba English bilinguals. Yoruba sentences are mixed with English. A lot of utterances are stated in Yoruba and ended in English or with the sandwich of English words and phrases. It is extremely hard for pure Yoruba sentences without admixture of English in the Yoruba speeches of educated bilinguals of Yoruba origin. See the following examples of code-mixed Yoruba sentence commonly used by the bilinguals due to English influence.

1. Mi o like e - I don't like it
2. O chance mi ni – he outsmarted me
3. Se ko bad – I hope it is alright
4. Omo yen block mi – the boy obstructed me
5. Se won ti land si Onitsha? – Have they arrived at Onitsha?
6. Business ti close niyen - there is no more transaction
7. O ye ka le visit yin lola – we should be able to visit you tomorrow
8. Emi o care fun won – I am not bothered about them
9. E je ka gbe daddy lo si hospital – let's carry daddy to hospital
10. Mi o fe late de school – I wouldn't want to arrive school late
11. A o ni alternative – we have no choice
12. Egbon ti travel lo si oversea – the Brother has gone abroad
13. Won ni kara exercise book meta wa – they ordered that we should buy three exercise books
14. Mama subu lori step – mummy fell down from the steps (stair case)

15. Mo gbodo defend thesis ni odun yii – I have to defend my thesis this year
16. Thirty naira ni won powo bag na – my bag is costed at thirty naira
17. Mo ti ko note mi – I have written my note
18. A ni lecture ni ten lola – we have class at ten O'clock tomorrow
19. A ko gbodo fi exam si ojo Sunday – examination cannot be fixed for Sunday
20. Mo gba ti girl yen – I love that girl

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In western cities like London, two or more Yoruba natives cannot conveniently discuss in confidence in the presence of their British friends due to the influence of English on their mother-tongue, it is difficult for the Yoruba to produce unadulterated Yoruba sentences having been educated in English and fallen in love with it.

Letters are written with English as medium, while village discourses are overwhelmed with code-switching and code-mixing in English and Yoruba even among school drop-outs. This paper appraises the status of English in Nigeria with its negative influence on the users' development and usage of Nigerian languages. The Yoruba English bilinguals constituted the focus of this thesis and the following recommendations are considered pertinent if utilized:

1. Yoruba should be used as specified in the National Policy on Education 1998, 2004 and 2013.
2. Yoruba needs to become a compulsory subject particularly for its native speakers in Secondary Schools.
3. The teaching of Yoruba needs to be improved upon in order to help sustain its students' writing and reading skills after secondary school and throughout life.
4. The Yoruba educated elites need to read a lot of Yoruba literature for enrichment of their diction and actual usage from time to time. It is a shameful thing for elites to allow their knowledge of and interest in English to kill their acquired linguistic skills in the language of their origin.