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# The Effect of Bilingual Mode of Instruction on Pupils' Academic Achievement in Social Studies in Oyo State Primary Schools

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## **Abstract**

*Bilingual mode of instruction is considered very important at the primary level of education. This becomes very necessary due to the multiplicity of languages evident in some countries like Nigeria. Consequently, bilingual situation is observed in primary schools at certain levels of primary education. Pupils learn and are taught in English language which is quite different from their ethnic languages. The study therefore investigated the effect of bilingual mode of instruction on pupils' achievement in Social Studies. The study adopted quasi-experimental approach. Stratified and simple random sampling was used to draw a sample of 200 basic six (6) pupils from four schools (two rural and two urban schools) for the study. The instrument (Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT) was developed by the researchers and used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to Kuder Richardson 21 with reliability coefficient of 0.82. The result of the study show that the bilingual mode of instruction has significant effect on achievement of pupils in Social Studies  $F_{(1,191)} = 72.738, p < 0.05$  Partial Eta Square  $\eta^2 = .276$ . Therefore the effect size (27.6%) is moderate. Hence, mode of instruction accounted for 27.6% of the total variance in the pupils' achievement in Social Studies.*

**Key words:** Bilingual mode of instruction, Social Studies, Achievement, School Location.

## Introduction

Cullingford (1989) observed that the essential character of people, attitude and motivation are formed in the early years. Basic schools, therefore, form the foundation on which the behavior of pupils is seriously molded and which other levels of education are built. It is imperative that pupils understand the various concepts they are exposed to at that level of education. Concepts are driven by language of instruction. Therefore, language is an aspect of child's development that can be singled out as principal to a child's educational advancement. Akinoso in George (2011) observed that there are reports of a positive correlation between medium of instruction and cognitive and academic achievement. Hassana Alidou, Aliou Boly, Birgit Brock-Utne, Yaya Satina Diallo, Kathleen Heugh, H. Ekkhard Wolff (2006) observed in some class room observation studies carried out in some countries or schools where languages familiar to the pupils are used as language of instruction, the teachers and learners communicate better. Such communication they claimed leads to better teaching on the part of the teachers and better learning on the part of the learners.

However some Emanajo (1996) observed that lack of sufficiently trained bilingual teachers has not worked in favour of educational policy on medium of instruction in primary schools. This is as a result of the existence of multiplicity of languages in Nigeria; and the fact that few of the languages are standardized to be used in education. As such it may be an enormous task for the languages to be functional in education. However, according to National Policy on Education (NPE 2004) the medium of instruction at early stage of basic education should be mother tongue or language of immediate community and English language at later stage.

Therefore Banjo (2005), while supporting this position condemned the attitude of some school authorities who are discouraging the use of Yoruba language in schools. He particularly frown at the situation whereby pupils are penalized for speaking indigenous language(s). Consequently, he noted that there is general apathy by parents and school authorities towards the teaching and

use of Yoruba Language in Primary Schools. He further observed that it is even an irony that many parents prefer their wards to be taught in English Language and encourage their children to speak English at home. However while the Nigerian child is busy struggling, learning a foreign language during the greater part of primary education, the European child learning through English language that is not alien moves on to acquires new skills during the early years of education (Banjo 2005). Furthermore, Cummins (2010) noted that the home language should be encouraged because pupils benefit from using their strong linguistic skills in the language they feel confident. Cummins (2000) opined that while many children develop native speaker fluency within two years of immersion in the target language, it takes between five to seven years for a child to be working on a level with native speakers as far as academic language is concerned.

Bilingual education is a broad term that refers to the presence of two languages in instructional settings. The mode of bilingual structure that may be used depends upon many variables, such as the native language of the students, the language of instruction, and the linguistic goal of the program. Students may be native speakers of the majority language or a minority language. The students' native language may or may not be used to teach content material. Bilingual education programme can be considered either additive or subtractive in terms of their linguistic goals, depending on whether students are encouraged to add to their linguistic repertoire or to replace their native language with the majority language. George (2011) observed that in additive bilingualism, the mother tongue (MT) is never removed as a medium of instruction (MOI) and never used less than 50% of the time and subject. Subtractive bilingualism occurs when the second language is added at the expense of the first language and culture. Dutcher (1994) observed that in many parts of the world, bilingualism or multilingualism and innovative approaches to education which involve the use of two or more languages constitute the normal everyday experience. The researcher noted that users of languages either practice additive or subtractive bilingualism wherever

there is occurrence of multiple languages. He opined that the use of multiple languages in education may however be attributed to numerous factors, such as the linguistic heterogeneity of a country or region, specific social or religious attitudes, or the desire to promote national identity. Bilingual education gives the pupil sense of belonging since the culture of a language is reflected in the use of the language.

Bilingual mode of instruction is a system that affords pupils the opportunity of receiving formal instruction in two languages. The existence of a government policy, enabling social environment and availability of facilities are factors that are pertinent to the implementation of bilingual mode of instruction. Bilingual mode of instruction is the co-existence of two or more languages that are means of communication, instruction and learning in a community. Ademowo (2010) opined that the use of indigenous languages enhances cognition and removes pedagogical barriers in learning. Thus, in places where bilingual education is appreciated, it is usually planned and are underlined by theory and defined by procedures. Oladejo (1991) noted that aspects of sociology, psychology, linguistic and pedagogy must be in favour of the existence of bilingualism for it to succeed. Paulstine (1988) observed that the current educational system in Nigeria must be mother tongue based bilingual due to linguistic heterogeneity of the country. The researcher observed that the lack of the adequate emphasis on use of mother tongue in basic education in Nigeria has constituted the ineffectiveness of the current basic education. Ademowo (2010) opined that both officially approved foreign language and the indigenous languages be developed, and adopted accordingly, as classroom medium of instruction with consequential provision of scientific books in both languages. The findings of Hassana et al (2006) on the relationship between language of instruction and teaching and learning in Africa suggests that an effective teacher is one that has mastery of the local language, knowledge and respect for the child's culture, loving and caring .

Code switching is a characteristic of bilingual education. Brice & Brice (2000), in Xu (2010), viewed Code-switching as the use of complete sentences, phrases, and borrowed words from another language. Teacher code-switching can be noticed in class sessions where the language of instruction is different from the mother tongue or language of wider coverage. Code switching is a conscious or unconscious use of two or languages in a discussion or interaction. Xu (2010) observed a quite common occurrence in



Chinese EFL classrooms. A switch in code occurs to convey important meanings over and above the referential meaning. This is as a result of the fact that learners in such bilingual or multilingual environment may not have grasped the mastery of language of instruction, which may be foreign to the learners. The researcher noted that teachers 'code-switching between English and Chinese occurs inevitably more often in EFL teaching for non-English majors.

It is unmarked linguistic choice and a teaching strategy that can be exploited by teachers teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to achieve some specific teaching goals in bilingual teaching environment.

The Yorùbá language is spoken by twenty eight million natives in West Africa, both in and outside Nigeria. It is spoken in neighbouring countries such as the Republic of Benin and Togo. Yorùbá language is also used spoken in places such as Cuba, Brazil, and the Caribbean. The language has an orthography that has gone through series of developmental changes.

It has a standard form represented in the Latin alphabet like English and is being utilised as a medium of instruction for early education in the public primary schools. Apart from being a compulsory subject in the primary and secondary schools in Yorubaland, it is also taught as an optional subject in some non-Yoruba states in Nigeria and in major universities in Nigeria. It is a viable medium of instruction due to the developmental changes it has gone through.

Social studies is a subject taught at primary level. It entails societal concepts, family societal living and environmental issues among others. One of the acceptable definitions of social studies is that which states that it is an integration of experience and knowledge concerning human relations for the purpose of citizenship education. Social Studies has also been defined by researchers as a field of study that deals with the integration of knowledge, experience and effective use of resources for the purpose of citizenship education. It is an interdisciplinary subject which has potential capabilities to achieve the aims of education in learning. It is a subject which is expected to help in the promotion of consciousness and knowledge of and

pride in the child's local culture as well as an understanding of other cultures both within and outside his or her national boundary

Makinde (1999) noted that social studies should assist the child to develop a patriotic attitude towards the welfare, fundamental human rights and development of the community and that of the country for a sustainable national development. Social studies is structured in the primary curriculum to reflect the needs of the contemporary times. New phenomenon on social issues are been introduced into the curriculum as they emerge afford pupils the opportunity of receiving adequate social education. It is flexible and dynamic in nature by incorporating all relevant topics so as to be able to achieve the laudable objectives of education in general and those of the social studies in particular.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Primary education is the foundation for all other forms of education .Teaching and learning at this level must be handled with utmost care in order to imbibe meaningful education on the pupils. Thus, since there is positive correlation between medium of instruction and cognitive and academic achievement of pupils, it becomes apparent to find out the effect of the collaboratory use of English Language and the mother tongue or language of immediate community of the pupils on his or her academic achievement.

This study therefore investigated the effect of bilingual mode of instruction on pupils' achievement in Social Studies.

### **Hypotheses**

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant main effect of treatment on Social Studies Achievement

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant main effect of school Type on Social Studies Achievement

HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and school type on Social Studies Achievement

### **Scope**

The scope of the study is basic six pupils in Ibadan. The study is carried out to observe the effect of the use of Yoruba as a collaboratory language of

instruction for primary six pupils' performance in Social Studies. Primary Six pupils were used because English language alone is the medium of instruction at that level of education..

### **Significance**

The result of this study will provide empirical evidence on the extent to which collaborative use of Mother tongue and English can enhance teaching and learning outcome in Social Studies pupils in primary schools in Ibadan. So, it will be useful to stakeholders in basic education in Nigeria in addressing some of the problems confronting basic education in the country.

### **Research methodology**

All basic six (6) pupils in Oyo state constitute the population of the study. Multistage and random sampling technique was used to select four schools (2 experimental and 2 control). Two schools in the urban and two schools in the rural. A sample of two hundred pupils (males: 87, females, 113) were used for the study. There are more females because the

Population in tact was used since pupils cannot be sent out of class because the official lesson period was used for the study. Social Studies Achievement Test (SSAT) was designed based on the scheme of work of basic six Social Studies by the researchers for the purpose of the study. It was used to collect data for trial test. The data collected was subjected to Kuder Richardson 21, and its reliability coefficient for SSAT was 0.82. The data collection took five weeks. The official lesson period was used to administer treatment. Consequently, SSAT was used to collect data on each participant immediately after treatment.

### **Research design**

This study is a quasi-experimental research. It is a 2 x 2 x 2 factorial design. It is a post-test, treatment and control group design.

### **variables in the study**

1. Bilingual mode of instruction (Independent Variable)

2. Pupils achievement in Social Studies (Dependent variable)
3. School Location (Moderator variable)

**Table 1     2 X 2 X 2 Factorial Design for Social Studies**

Language of Instruction	Social Studies		
	School	Boys	Girls
Yoruba & English (Exp Treatment)	Rural		
	Urban		
English (control)	Rural		
	Urban		

**Data collection procedure**

1. Teacher introduces the topic

**Control Group:** Teacher uses only English language as mode of instruction

**Experimental Group:** Teacher uses both English and Yoruba as mode of instruction.

2. Teacher copies note on the chalk board
3. Teacher explains topic by applying treatment:

**Control Group:** Teacher uses only English language as mode of instruction.

**Experimental Group:** Teacher uses both English and Yoruba as mode of instruction.

4. Teacher and pupil interact to ask, answer questions and give answers and clarifications by applying the appropriate treatment.
5. Apply instrument to collect data.

**Treatment**

**Control group:** The topic was introduced to the pupils in English Language. The notes were written on the board in

English. The teacher then reads the note to the pupils, asks them to read and explains the topic in English Language. The teacher asks questions and also responds to questions from pupils in English Language. Pupils ask questions, respond and contribute to discussion in English Language. SSAT is used to collect data on each pupil.

**Experimental group:** The topic was introduced to the pupils in English Language. The notes were written on the board in English. The teacher then reads the note to the pupils asks them to read, and explains the topic in English Language and Yoruba. The teacher asks questions and also responds to questions from pupils in English Language and Yoruba. Pupils ask questions respond to questions and contribute to discussion in English Language and Yoruba as pupil feels disposed. SSAT is distributed to collect data on each pupil.

#### **Data analysis procedure**

Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to analyze the data collected to determine both the main effect and interaction effect of the dependent and independent variables for this study. Sidak was used to examine the magnitude of differences among the groups with significant difference. Cohen (1988) is used to interpret the effect size. The analysis of the data was carried out at 0.05 level of significance.

**Table 2: Ancova Table of Pupils' Achievement in Social Studies**

Dependent Variable: Postsos

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1369.303 <sup>a</sup>	8	171.163	13.329	.000	.358
Intercept	14299.272	1	14299.272	1.1143	.000	.854
Presos	15.324	1	15.324	1.193	.276	.006
Treatment	934.021	1	934.021	72.738	.000	.276
Sch_location	40.689	1	40.689	3.169	.077	.016
Sex	12.921	1	12.921	1.006	.317	.005
Treatment * Sch_location	43.391	1	43.391	3.379	.068	.017
Treatment * Sex	5.051	1	5.051	.393	.531	.002
Sch_location * Sex	33.165	1	33.165	2.583	.110	.013
Treatment * Sch_location * Sex	1.798	1	1.798	.140	.709	.001
Error	2452.617	191	12.841			
Total	105252.000	200				
Corrected Total	3821.920	199				

a. R Squared = .358 (Adjusted R Squared = .331)

Table 2 showed that, there was significant difference in the main effect of bilingual mode of instruction on achievement of pupils in Social Studies  $F_{(1,191)} = 72.738$ ,  $p < 0.05$  Partial Eta Square  $\eta^2 = .276$ . The effect size (27.6%) was moderate. Hence, mode of instruction accounted for 27.6% of the total variance in the pupils' achievement in Social Studies. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant main effect of treatment on achievement in Social Studies is rejected. As a result, Adjustment for multiple comparison: Sidak was carried out.

**Table 3 pairwise comparison of social studies achievement test**

Dependent Variable: Postsos

(I) Treatment	(J) Treatment	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. <sup>a</sup>	95% Confidence Interval for Difference <sup>a</sup>	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	exp	-4.554*	.534	.000	-5.607	-3.501
Exp	control	4.554*	.534	.000	3.501	5.607

Table 3 showed that, based on estimated marginal means, there was remarkable difference in the mean for Social Studies Achievement Test for Control group (-4.554) and the Experimental group higher mean (4.554). The pairwise comparison is significant  $p = 0.00$

It means the pupils in the experimental group had higher total score.

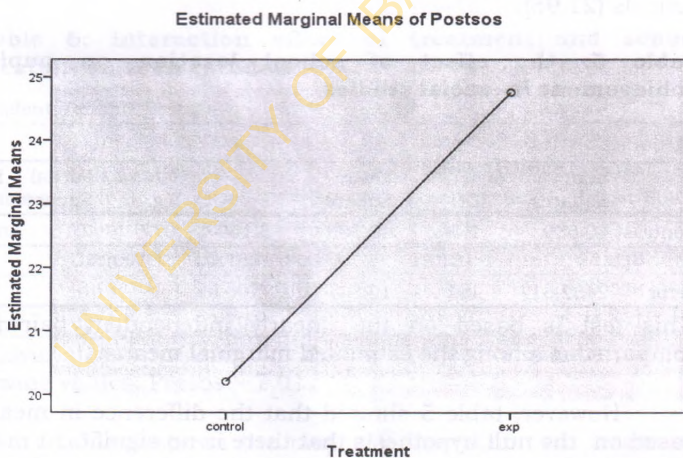


Fig. 1 The profile plot offers some support for the difference.

**Table 4: mean difference for effect of school location on pupils' achievement in social studies**

Dependent Variable: Postsos

Sch_location	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Rural	23.014 <sup>a</sup>	.394	22.238	23.791
Urban	21.946 <sup>a</sup>	.395	21.167	22.724

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Presos = 7.01.

This table shows the mean of the schools in the rural schools (23.01) which is higher than the mean of the urban schools (21.95).

**Table 5: the effect of school location on pupils' achievement in social studies**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta Squared
Contrast	40.689	1	40.689	3.169	.077	.016	
Error	2452.617	191	12.841				

This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means.

However, table 5 showed that the difference in means based on the null hypothesis that there is no significant main effect of school location on Social Studies Achievement is not rejected.



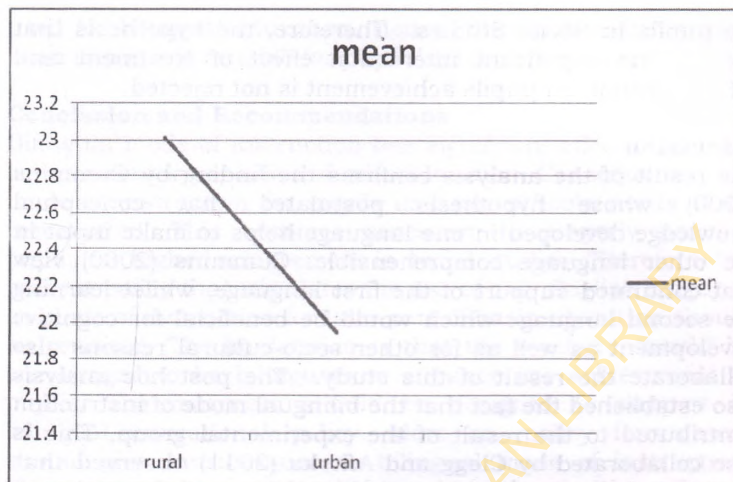


Figure 2

**Table 6: interaction effect of treatment and school location on social studies**

Dependent Variable: Postsos

Treatment	Sch_locatio n	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	Rural	20.221 <sup>a</sup>	.512	19.212	21.231
	Urban	20.185 <sup>a</sup>	.524	19.151	21.218
Exp	Rural	25.807 <sup>a</sup>	.619	24.586	27.028
	urban	23.707 <sup>a</sup>	.550	22.623	24.791

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Presos = 7.01.

Table 6 shows the mean for interaction of treatment and school location. Control (rural M= 20.22, urban M= 20.19), Experimental( rural M = 25.81, urban M= 23.71) . Based on the result in table 4.1e ;  $F_{(1,191)} = 3.379$ ,  $p = .068$ , partial eta squared = .017, it showed that the interaction of treatment and school location is not significant. The interaction accounted for only 1.7% of the variance in the achievement of

the pupils in Social Studies. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and school location on pupils achievement is not rejected.

### **Discussion**

The result of the analysis confirms the finding by Cummins (2000) whose hypothesis postulated that conceptual knowledge developed in one language helps to make input in the other language comprehensible. Cummins (2000) view that continued support of the first language, whilst learning the second language which would be beneficial for cognitive development as well as for other socio-cultural reasons also collaborate the result of this study. The post hoc analysis also established the fact that the bilingual mode of instruction contributed to the result of the experimental group. This is also collaborated by Clegg and Afitska (2011) observed that in Sub-Saharan Africa, education conducted in European language is associated with low school achievement which may be the explanation for the achievement of the control group of there study. Williams and Mchazime in Hassana Alidou, et, al 2006 result of a study on reading proficiency in Chichewa and English among primary school children in Malawi also buttressed the result of talso buttressed the result of this study. They found that reading, listening, comprehension, and speaking in Chichewa were much easier for children. The same children performed poorly when they were tested in English.

According to Commins (2000), it is pertinent for the learner to keep learning in the indigenous language. The result shows that conceptual knowledge developed in one language helps to make comprehensible input in the other language comprehensible. Hence, the collaboratory use of Yoruba and English Languages where the pupils and their teachers could interact in both languages in the process of learning in the class. The result of the test reveals that there is no significant difference in the achievement of pupils based on school location (rural or urban). This corroborates Ademowo (2010) that observed that the use of indigenous languages enhances cognition and removes pedagogical barriers in learning. Thus, indigenous languages should be

used for bilingual education. Hence, the mode of instruction is an important variable for pupils' achievement in education.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Bilingual mode of instruction has significant effect on pupils' achievement irrespective of school location. Consequently, the mode of instruction for pupils in basic schools needs to be reevaluated. This becomes necessary to properly position pupils for higher achievement in social studies. Therefore, the present policy that stipulates the use of only English language as mode of instruction for later part of basic education should be revisited. The implication is that the teachers should be encouraged to be bilinguals to enhance the achievement of pupils. The materials should be designed to support in bilingual educational policy. More so, policy formulators should give consideration to bilingual mode of instruction. There should be public enlightened on the positive effect of the use of indigenous language in education. The educational policy should positively encourage the use of both indigenous language and English Language. The bilingual mode of instruction would also stimulate improved sustainable interaction between teachers and pupils.

### **Educational Implications**

Findings in this study have implications for teachers, pupils and parents.

Bilingual mode of instruction training should form part of the curriculum for teacher training programmes to facilitate bilingual skill acquisition. Learning becomes easier and higher achievement for pupils. Learners should also be encouraged to use their indigenous languages since they can learn through it.

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