ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A PERSONALITY MARKER AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OWERRI ZONE, IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The state of English language as a personality marker was investigated among senior secondary school students in Owerri zone, Imo State Nigeria. Study data were collected by means of a structured and pre-tested questionnaire based on Likert 5-point ratings. Mann-Whitney method was used to analyse the data by estimating mean scores. Results showed that sampled students felt happier in using English in their communications than their mother language, Igbo (L1). Findings showed that English language use by the sampled students promoted their ego among their peers who find it difficult to communicate in English language. Finally, the study provided high evidence to demonstrate that Senior Secondary School Students learning English in Owerri zone use ability to communicate in English as personality marker. The study recommended that learners' immediate, short-term interests such as elevating their status through learning English language should be carefully monitored and channeled to their long-term goals so as to avoid possible negative effect on learners' personality changes*

KEYWORDS: second language, learning, personality, Igbo language, ethnicity

INTRODUCTION

Language learning, as Deham & Lobeck (2013:4) put it, "is a process of gaining conscious knowledge of language through instruction". As Selinker (1972:12) puts it, "Second language learning is a gradual process that involves a progression from the learner's total being towards the attainment of an entirely different culture, identity and language". Regardless of the purposes for learning a second language, learners form different personalities while learning the target language. This suggests the fact that identity or personality formation is a process and takes its toll on the learner as he/she forges ahead towards overcoming the difficulties of learning the target language. On this, Wenger (2000: 239) stipulates that;

> An identity is not an abstract idea or a label, such as title, an ethnic
> category, or a personality train. It is a lived experience of belonging
> (or not belonging). A strong identity involves deep connections with
> others through shared histories and experiences, reciprocity, affection
> and mutual commitments.

> The above assertion indicates that learning a second language exposes the learner to a construction of new identities with various dimensions and complexities. The mentality or formed opinion that, speaking the English Language fluently equates one as being educated and sophisticated is rife among a good number of Nigerians, more especially the Igbo people which form the study area of this work. It is also recognized that, in addition to being a language learner, a person may have other personalities which may be based on other indices, for instance, physical, social class, gender and approaches (Onuh, 2019:99).

Since the functions of language rests on purposeful communication, and since learning a new language involves the learning of how to use words, interpret rules and gain knowledge (about a language) in order to communicate effectively with users of that same language, it is clear that when a second language learner uses the target language to communicate, such a learner seeks acceptance and approval by the speakers of that language. This 'acceptance' means so much to the learner as it enhances his confidence, performance and massages his self-esteem. This understanding of language use sees language not only as a body of knowledge to be learnt but also as a social practice (Kramsch, 1994:19).

In accordance with this, Spackman (2009:2) suggests that "learning a second language requires the learner to absorb the culture of the second language as well". Thus, Culture, in this regard, is not just a body of knowledge but rather a framework in which people live their lives and communicate shared opinions with another.

Nigeria has a wide range of indigenous languages, and each of these indigenous languages represents one ethnic group or another. Nigeria therefore uses the English language at the second language capacity and as a national language. The prominence given to the English language based on its global stance, economic value and status symbol, places it at a prestigious and a most sort after language. In view of this, English Language is seen as a personality marker in Nigeria. This is more popular among the young people of the Igbo race that make up the South-East Nigeria. It is expected that the use of English should influence the personality of the speaker/learner. To this end, Lee (2008) succinctly declares that "Multiple identities seem to be fostered through ownership of multiple languages; allowing participants to switch and mask their personalities depending on the changing contexts".

The periods between 1450 and 1850 witnessed heavy traffic in slave trade in African continent by the major European countries. This unwholesome trading in humans brought the culture of the two countries even closer. Within this period also, some Nigerians have started learning English and some were trained as interpreters and to serve as core of clerks in European companies in Nigeria. Ajayi (165:89) report that by the 18th century, English was the only

European language spoken by Calabar traders. From the fore-going, it is apparent that the English language got hold in Nigeria through the activities of Nigerians who were taken away for slavery and who returned to Nigeria later on, as well as those who were at home but were trained to speak by the European for the purposes of serving as interpreters, clerks/massagers for the Europeans. These years of interaction between Nigeria and Europe brought the English language closer to the Nigerian people.

With the abolition of slave trade at the beginning of the 19th century, British colonial interests shifted to agricultural production for exportation to Europe. However, towards the 19th century, the European visitors appeared united in their efforts to encourage larger numbers of West Africans to learn the language. This encouragement was made through the establishment of primary schools in all the coastal towns-Bonny, Calabar, Lagos etc. with this comes the infiltration of a recognizable standard of English language in Nigeria; so much so that towards the end of the 19th and first half of the 20th century, secondary and grammar schools as well as Teachers Colleges were established. The teaching and learning of English language then became a vigorous enterprise. English became the language of instruction in all the established secondary schools and teachers colleges in Nigeria.

In addition, English language features as a separate subject in the curriculum. With time, these schools were able to produce more natives who became proficient in the language. These literate elites became prominent as a result of their newly acquired "English" status and their ability to speak the "queen's language". With this status, they secure good jobs in government establishments which led to improvement in their economic status. Consequently they became the envy of the less privileged ones who frantically sought to learn the English language (Ogu 1992:73).

Language policy as introduced by the colonial administration and adopted by Nigeria on inception, contributed immensely to the promotion of English language in Nigeria. The prestige and social acceptance given to the English language is so immensely felt because it is an official language. The insistence that one must possess a credit in English language before one gains admission into higher places of learning or gainfully employed is an indication of the indispensible hold which English has on Nigeria.

Umunnakwe in (1999:4) noted that: the role the English language plays in Nigeria make it almost impossible to be dropped as the official language. She noted that:

> It has not been easy to jettison the English language from the Nigeria environment due to the stupendous role of English in Nigeria. Not even the hue and cry caused by the over-increasing mood of nationalism has succeeded in relegating English to the background.

The esteemed value of the English language in Nigeria has made its learning and usage compulsory and almost indispensible for Nigerians. Consequently, being educated in Nigeria is equated with the ability to speak and use English language in both official and unofficial settings. Fluency and the effective use of English are therefore, desired criteria for economic, political and social upliftment, as well as acceptance in every Nigerian society; especially in Imo State (one of the Igbo speaking states of Nigeria) where greater percentage of families are civil servants and middle class strata. The native tongue (Igbo language) is therefore, in serious competition with the English language to the detriment of the former. Parents educated or not, would want their children to use the English language from infancy, thereby losing touch with their mother tongue (MT) because they have this mentality that English is an "open door" language. As Anukam (2015:9) puts it;

> Based on this artificial credit assigned to the English language, Igbo parents both at home and in Diaspora would like their children to speak English from the cradle. With this mentality, the new generation of 'Ndi Igbo' is losing contact with their mother tongue. It is assumed that knowledge of English would help them excel in school, since English is the medium of instruction.

The craze for the English language among the Igbo people as captured by Anukam (2015:9) above has its positive and negative connotations as well; especially on the culture and identity of the learner who becomes almost unsure of what his/her identity formation is. The clash between a learner's MT and the target language (TL) forms a mindset in behavior (Anukam, 2015:9). The uncertainty faced by the learner stems from being a part of something and felling apart from it too. These uncertainties form part of the purpose of this research.The present study therefore, is aimed at investigating the state of English Language as a personality marker among Senior Secondary School Students in Owerri Zone, Imo State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE/THEORITICAL UNDERPINNING

Curiosity on what comprises a language and on how humans acquire, learn and use language in the society varies. Therefore, people engage in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and similar fields in rigorous researches on language based on so many theories.

Language pervades every human society, it is through language that human beings engage in a productive and meaningful exchange of ideas, feelings or create human environment of interaction. Sociolinguists place language as a social tool in human interaction. Works carried out by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) attest to this view. These linguists have emphasized in their theories that language does not exist separately from social interaction. According to them

therefore, "the fundamental aspects of language consist of the reasons we speak (our intentions), the situations in which we speak (our intentions), the situations in which we speak (the contexts) and the different ways in which we speak depending on the circumstances (the alternatives)". According to Mc-Laughlin (2006:22), language to the sociolinguist is a social behaviour; a social tool in the hands of humans used to communicate ideas and thoughts.

The behaviourists uphold the views of sociolinguistics that language is a social tool; and noted that language is equally a learned behaviour. To this end, the behaviourists, like Skinner (1957) reported that "language is verbal behavior that is learnt through social consequence". What this implies is that humans talk in response to how others react to their verbal dispositions. When one talks, for instance, it influences the behavior of others in useful ways. Thus, language to the behaviourists is a set of complex learned behaviour.

Notable psycholinguists like Bloom and Lahey (1978), Chomsky (1957), Noriko & Burdelski, (2018) on their own, described language as a system of mental rules. According to this group, language represents the underlying mental rules (grammar) for arranging symbols (words) to represent ideas about the world. This forms their linguistics perceptive of language. According to Mc-Laughlin (2006:24), this perceptive is traditionally identified as grammar (its structure), semantics (its meaning), and pragmatics (its social use), respectively.

According to O' Grady (2011:1), language is not just a part of us, it defines us. It is part of the social structure of our communities" This emphasizes the indispensability of human language. In a social community, language serves as the unifying factor for people in a particular speech community. Without language, the world and its views will, of course, remain bleak. Language promotes our status and identity. Anchoring of the relevance of language also, Carroll (2004:3) posits that language is our most important tool in communicating our thoughts and feelings to each other." This assertion is true and based on the fact that although we may have several other forms of indicating our moods, language remains the most effective tool to create meaningfulness in communication.

Gardner & Lambert (1972: 28) note that, Personality factors also affect the learning of a second language. Perhaps, the personality of a learner especially as it concerns language learning. According to them, most times, these innate characteristic that form one's personality construct are biologically determined. They argue that, perhaps these accounts for the reasons why some learners are better than others in the classroom. Individual differences among learners, such as personality variation or identity structuring have in the past, formed the cause of different learning abilities. To this end, Gardner and Lambert (Ibid) focused principally on the individuals internal influences on second language learning. Influences such as these anxiety, self esteem, inhibition etc are seen by most linguists as abstract concepts that are difficult to define; with their validity of psychological tests that attempt to measure their challenged and criticized. Yet theories and categorization about how these factors could lead to success in the second language

learning (ESL) classrooms abound. This research deems it necessary however to review these factors for clearer view on second language learning and its influences.

a. Self Esteem: This is an important variable included in second language learning researches. High Esteem or Self confidence is believed to be an important construct for success in second language learning. This personality construct, often taken to be relatively stable in adults and resistant to change, grades a person as either high self esteem or low self esteem, regardless of the situation at hand. However, Malinwosky in 1923, provides a different view of "Self esteem" when he recognizes it as "the reflection and acceptance of oneself in interactions with others, which presumably vary depending on the different interlocutors and social grounds". Nevertheless, it is usually assumed that global self esteem is an intrinsic personality trait that improves proficiency; situational self esteem considers the relevance of the situation when an action is being observed.

Learners with low self–esteem are believed to display more inhibition; that is a feeling that makes one self –conscious and unable to act in a relaxed and natural way; leading to the building of defenses and alienation from the target culture, as they are less able to tolerate threats to their existence.

Although some assume that good learners are high risk takers, (Ely, 1986). Beebe (1983:20) finds that highly motivated learners are often moderate risk takers, preferring to make intelligent guesses. This she attributes to a fear of ramifications of mistakes made which could deter one from taking future risks with language. Brown (1994:8) however, suggests that teachers should encourage risk taking behaviour because it enhances the learner's performance the more. This, according to Brown is because it is widely assumed that learners with high global self esteem take more risks. The status of the target language therefore brings about how unwilling or willing the learner gets in taking risks with the language. Taking the English language use in Nigeria for example, a leaner's dilemma is heightened by the role English plays in the Nigeria society. However, because of the 'intelligence' and 'education' values placed on the English language in Nigeria, the craze to use it in standard forms increased. And depending on the situation, a learner would want to be perceived as one that can express himself fluently (with little or no mistakes) using the language.

Krashen (1981:12) identified these personality factors as affecting learners' affective fillers, staking that a confident, secure and outgoing person who lacks anxiety would have low affective filters; thereby allowing comprehensible input to reach the language acquisition device. For Krashen therefore, learners with high motivation, self confidence, a good self image and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language learning.

Anukam (2015) dwelt on the contradictory inclination of the Africans towards foreign languages. This mentality she posits has very devastating negative impacts on the learner's native culture

and language. She further argued that of all the ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Igbo are the worst hit in this regard. She notes that:

> The Igbo people seem to be the greatest victim among other ethnic groups in Nigeria. This is exemplified in their abject neglect of their mother-tongue along with their culture and technology embedded in the language. Language is culture bound though culture is not static.

The question of how much the Igbo people have lost most of their values and culture, language inclusive seems to be the central focus of Anukam's quote above. She further stressed her argument by emphasizing the role of parents in making sure that the child hears and speaks his native tongue from the cradle. She abhors a situation whereby parents would fail to create enabling environment for the child to hear, understand and use the native tongue, by not speaking the language around him/her. She further posits that "any unspoken language is dangerously facing extinction and those who shun their own mother tongue have questionable identity as a group".

Anukam's assertion as stated above could lead to many other possibilities bothering on learner's identity formation. Many educational and social theorists have argued that personality formation is a process and not an essentialized fixed product.

Furthermore, identity formation is a complicated process and is gradually developed in a social context. Myers & Speight (1991:2) conceptualize optimal identity development as "a process of coming to know self as an expression of spirit: the process of personality construction can be complex and multi-faceted (Sheeler & Bayley, 1997). In second language learning, the identity process can be complicated by the facts that learners are under the influence of two cultural systems whose values can be extremely different from one another. Norton (1997:4) added to this by stating the fact that the construction of personality cannot be separated from identity negotiation in which an individual seeks for the answer to the question "who am I" and for his/her relationship to the world.

Virkkula and Nikula (2010) conceptualized identity in two different ways: essentially and non-essentially. The essentialist view takes identity consideration as something linked to a person's self; something singular and stable; while the non-essentialist view takes identity as a changing perspective.

Wenger (2000:239) for instance, posits that "An identity is not an abstract idea or a label, such as a title an ethnic category or a personality train. He further posits (as cited in Block 2007:865) that learners' personalities are not only based on their interactions in the classroom, but rather on a

broader scale of the community; "it is an encompassing process of being active participants in practices of social communities and constructing identities in relationship to those communities". In his own view, Emenyonu (1994) posits that success in learning is attributable to the use of English and that even with all the emphasis placed on the English language, there is still the existence of a certain void in the full realization of the objectives of learning. I would attribute this void to the negligence of the learner's mother tongue while trying to learn the target language. I would also believe that to build an all round personality, one must function effectively in one's mother-tongue since cultural ties are conveyed using language.

Gunderson (2000:694) argues that being successful in school means that a student must surrender great parts of his language and culture, which is part of his identity (How well a student does in school and in society). The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis opines that language shapes human thoughts (Denhem & Lobeck 2013:355), it argues that "different thoughts are brought about by the use of different forms of language".

METHODOLOGY

Study Area
The study was carried out in Owerri zone, Imo State, Nigeria. Imo State is located in the South-East zone of Nigeria. The native language of the people of Imo state is Igbo. The State lies between latitudes $5^o40'$ N and $6^o08'$ N of the equator and longitude $6^o14'$ E and $7^o02'$ E of the Greenwich Meridian.
The state has three senatorial zones (Owerri, Okigwe and Orlu). However, these divisions are for political and administrative purposes only.

Study Design
The study was a descriptive, cross-sectional questionnaire-based survey study aimed at investigating the extent to which the learning of English as a Second Language is used as personality marker among Secondary School Students in Owerri Zone, Imo State, Nigeria.

Sampling technique
This research based its study on the hypothesis that Learning of English as a second language does not affect the personality of senior secondary school students in Owerri zone, Imo State.
This study made use of five hundred and forty (540) randomly selected respondents who are, senior secondary (SS) students in Owerri zone area of Imo State, and whose ages are between 13-16 years old. All the respondents have the Igbo language as their first language (L_1). The criteria for selecting respondents from senior secondary is the fact that the senior secondary level is made up of mostly teenagers, a critical age at which they begin to develop their psyche on issues of personality. According to Meece & Daniels (2008:68), the formation and development of self-identity and language at an adolescent age are confirmed.

Study data collection instrument
Data for the study were collected by means of a structured and pre-tested questionnaire developed by the researcher and pre-tested using students of two (2) Secondary Schools that are not among the study schools in Imo state, Nigeria. The questionnaire was written in English language and contained a brief introduction explaining the purpose of the study.

Data collection
Quantitative data were obtained from a questionnaire completed by some senior secondary school students in Owerri zone, using the Likert five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree (SD); 5 = strongly agree (SA)). Fifty (50) questionnaires were distributed to each of the following secondary schools ; Logara High School, Ngor- Okpala, St. Patrick Secondary School, Ogbe Ahiara, Ahiazu Mbaise, Emmanuel College, Owerri Municipal, Comprehensive Secondary School, Obinze, Community Secondary School, Mbieri Mbaitoli, Amakohia Secondary School, Ikeduru, Ohaji High School, Mgbirichi, Ohaji/Egbema, Obazu Girls' Secondary School, Owerri Girls' Secondary School, Holy Ghost College, Owerri, and Girls' Secondary School, Akwakuma. Out of the 550 questionnaires distributed, 540 were returned by the respondents.
The nature of the questions revolved around why the students were learning English, what it meant to them, what were the motivation mechanisms that they used to learn a second language, does learning of English there way of life, culture and identity.

Data Analysis
        The data were analyzed by using Mann-Whitney method of estimating mean scores.
Mean score $(\bar{x})$ = (n x 1) + (n x 2) + (n x 3) + (n x 4) + (n x 5)/N.
Where;   n = number of respondents that selected a given response.
               1,2,3,4,5 = Likert 5-point ratings.
               N = overall total respondents.
Percentages were generated by using the formula;
Percentage (%) = $\dfrac{\text{Number of respondents}}{\text{Total respondents}}$ x $\dfrac{100}{1}$
Onuh and Igwemma (2007)
The mean score of 2.5 was used as a decision point for the research questions to either reject (R) or accept (A) the opinions when below or above 2.5, respectively.

RESULTS /FINDINGS

Results of the analysis carried out on the data generated from the 540 returned questionnaires are presented in the Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Number of respondents in the 5-point Likert scale on Confidence as personality change among English learning students.

Question Items	Response					Total (N)	$\overline{x}$	%/ Decision
	SD 1	D 2	UN 3	A 4	SA 5			
1).I can express my opinion to public easily and confidently	10 (1.85)	2 (0.37)	25 (4.62)	243 (45.0)	260 (48.14)	540	4.37	Agreed (99.98)
2).I have the ability to do things and make decisions by myself, without needing other people to help me	7 (1.29)	13 (2.40)	29 (5.37)	233 (43.14)	258 (47.77)	540	4.33	Agreed (99.97)

Source: Study Data (2018). Values in brackets are percentages (%). 1=Strongly Disagree (SA), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Unsure (UN), 4=Agreed (A), 5=Strongly Agreed (SA)

Table 2:   Number of respondents in the 5-point Likert scale on Subtractive attribute as personality change among English learning students.

Question Items	Response					Total (N)	$\overline{x}$	%/ Decision
	SD 1	D 2	UN 3	A 4	SA 5			
1).After learning English, I feel my behaviors have become somewhat westernized. For example, I say 'Hello/Hi' instead of 'Kedu' on the phone or greeting friends and say 'Thank you' instead of 'Daalu' or 'Imeela'	8 (1.48)	1 (0.18)	51 (9.44)	245 (45.37)	235 (43.51)	540	4.29	Agreed (99.98)
2).After learning English, I feel repugnant about some Igbo conventions. For example, I think that Igbo people can hold a hand of a man/woman openly in anywhere	5 (0.92)	13 (2.40)	39 (7.22)	253 (46.85)	230 (42.59)	540	4.25	Agreed (99.98)
3).After learning English, I begin to reject some traditional Igbo ideas such as we should behave in the same way of our parents because of what they have ever experienced before. However, I think that I can do it on my own idea	10 (1.85)	2 (0.37)	30 (5.55)	243 (45.0)	255 (47.22)	540	4.35	Agreed (99.99)

Source: Study Data (2018). Values in brackets are percentages (%). 1=Strongly Disagree (SA), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Unsure (UN), 4=Agreed (A), 5=Strongly Agreed (SA)

DISCUSSION

Personality in this study is how the learner perceives him- or herself in terms of linguistic and cultural groups that he or she belongs to, as well as the learner's values, communication styles, abilities, and worthiness.

From the Table 1 above, 243 (45.0%), and 260 (48.14%) of the total respondents agreed and strongly-agreed, respectively, to the question item 1; '*I can express my opinion to public easily and confidently'*. However, 2 (0.37%), and 10 (1.85%) of the total respondents disagreed and strongly-disagreed, respectively with the assertion. But, 25 (4.62%) of the total respondents were unsure with the assertion. With a mean score of 4.37 recorded in the question item1, it is an indication that students feel that English learning has a great impact on their self-confidence. This is evidenced when some students and even other people feel shy in using Igbo language to express themselves in public, but feel proud and fulfilled when they use English to do same.

When asked on their ability to do things and make decisions on their own without needing other people to help them; as expressed by the question item 2, majority of the students expressed high confidence in self independence in doing things. This is indicated in the high number of the respondents, 233 (43.14%), and 258 (47.77%) of the total respondents that agreed and strongly-agreed, respectively, to the question item 2. On the other hand, 13 (2.40%), and 7 (1.29%) of the respondents disagreed and strongly-disagreed, respectively, to the question item 2, while 29 (5.37%) of the total respondents were unsure with the assertion. The high mean score of 4.33 recorded in the question item 2 showed that majority of the respondents (students) strongly agreed that they are confident in the use of English in expressing themselves.

Self-confidence greatly influences a student's second or foreign language achievement and might lower learners' language anxiety by affecting their attitudes and motivations towards learning the target language and culture. Clément (1980) model suggested that self-confidence as a secondary motivation leads learners to pursue or take part in interactions in the target language community. Also, the frequency and quality of interaction between the students and the target language community affect their self-confidence; therefore, this self-confidence and motivation predicts their language achievement. This belief is similar to the findings of Selltiz, Christ, Havel, & Cooks (1963) study that foreign students' ratings of the target language group (i.e., attitudes) affect their adjustment and language achievement in the target language community. Self confidence in second language learning encourages the learner to boost their personality by leaving their first language identity for that of the second language. Language learners' identities have been changing through the processes of language learning in multiple target language settings. The following previous studies seem to support the concept of changes of L_1 self and development of L_2 identity. However, the learner's native identity (L_1

self) may be broken or limited while functioning in the target language context. In Eva Hoffman's Lost in Translation, the goal of her writing journals in her L_2, English, is to develop a new thinking model for her daily life in that language (Watkins-Goffman, 2001, p. 32). During that time, she was developing a thinking mode in English, and she found a new self in the U.S., which was her new identity in English. In Richard Rodriguez's work, '*Hunger of Memory*', he lost his native language, and in the process he mastered the target language, English (L_2) and obtained a new identity in English (Watkins-Goffman, 2001, p. 32); however, after he succeeded in the L_2 society, he missed his old identity and language in Spanish (L_1).

Subtractive change is one of the effects of acquisition of a second language (target language) whereby the native language and native cultural identity are replaced by the target language and target cultural identity.

The opinions of the respondents as presented in the Table 2 indicate that the native Igbo language and its cultural identity are threatened in terms of sustainability. On the question item 1, '*after learning English, I feel my behaviours have become somewhat westernized. For example, I say 'Hello/Hi' instead of 'kedu' on the phone or greeting friends and say 'Thank you' instead of 'Daalu' or 'Imeela'.* The Table 2 showed that 245 (45.37%), and 235 (43.51%) of the total respondents, respectively, agreed and strongly-agreed to the question item 1, while 1 (0.18%), and 8 (1.48%) of the total respondents, respectively, disagreed and strongly-disagreed to the question item 1. But 51 (9.44%) of the respondents were unsure about the question item 1. The mean score recorded in the question item 1 is 4.29 (Table 2). The high mean score in the question item 1 is an indication that students are gradually replacing the Igbo language and its cultural identity with that of English.

Consequently, this will have negative effect on the learning of the first language (Igbo) and imbibing of its cultural identity by the students. This is as a result of the attitude students have about learning of English language as already stated, whereby any person who greets in Igbo language is regarded as not educated.

The subtractive index of self-identity change among Igbos who studies English as a second language is also elaborated in the opinions of the respondents in the following question item 2, '*After learning English, I feel repugnant about some Igbo conventions. For example, I think that Igbo people can hold a hand of a man/woman openly in anywhere'.*

The results presented in the Table 2 showed that 253 (46.85%), and 230 (42.59%) of the total respondents, respectively, agreed and strongly-agreed to the assertion, while 13 (2.40%), and 5 (0.92%) of the total respondents, respectively, disagreed and strongly-disagreed to the assertion. However, 39 (7.22%) of the total respondents were unsure with the assertion. The mean score of 4.25 recorded for the question item 2 is significant enough to indicate that

majority of the respondents (students) detest Igbo cultural identities and values. For instance it is not cultural in Igbo for unmarried man and woman to hold their hands while walking on the road, or to be found kissing themselves openly in the public.

The Igbo culture and identity do observe these conventions as a way of instilling discipline in their children, thus, preparing them for descent adulthood. But the opinions of the students as indicated in their strong agreement to the question item 2 are such that they find these conventions very inimical to their social lives. However, without the acquisition of English, people would not have known that unmarried man and woman holding hands on the road or kissing openly in public places are acceptable cultures in the English man's land. This is among the negative influences of English acquisition on the socio-cultural identity of the Igbos where the Second language culture and identity have gradually succeeded in replacing this aspect of Igbo culture which helps in inculcating moral ethics in the Igbo people.

Similar to the above observation is the opinions of the respondents on the question item 3, '*After learning English, I begin to reject some Igbo ideas such as we should behave in the same way of our parents because of what they have ever experienced before. However, I think that I can do it on my own idea*'.

It was observed from the results presented in the Table 2 that 243 (45.0%), and 255 (47.22%) of the total respondents agreed and strongly-agreed to the question item 3, while 2 (0.37%), and 10 (1.85%) of the total respondents disagreed and strongly-disagreed to the assertion. But 30 (5.55%) of the total respondents were unsure with the assertion. The question item 3 recorded a mean score of 4.35 (Table 2). This observation indicates that majority of the students accepts that it is wrong to consult with ones parents before embarking on any idea. Most Igbo educated people, especially those whose parents did not attend any school, find it difficult to accept their parents' opinions on some issues, simply because of their level of education and English acquisition; they usually look down on their parents' opinion, as coming from an uneducated person. The person's parents may be intelligent in what they are saying, but for the fact that they are not using English language to convey their views, their view will hardly be taken seriously.

On a general note, with subtractive bilingualism, the native Language and native cultural identity are replaced by the target language and target cultural identity. However, "when a second Language and culture have been acquired, with little or no pressure to replace or reduce the first language, an additive form of bilingualism may occur" (Baker, 1993, p. 95). Hence subtractive bilingualism and additive bilingualism involve changes not only in language proficiency, but also in cultural identity. In other words, the more interested one is in the target language and culture, the more likely he or she is to experience productive and additive changes in self-identity. These two positive changes would also in return stimulate learners' intrinsic interest in the target

language and culture.

IMPLICATION TO RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

This research advocates that the Igbo people of South-East Nigeria should not place high emphasis in use of English language. Findings in this study showed that young students of even secondary school stage struggle to use the language in other to feel high in personality among their peers. This attitude is severely affecting the promotion of Igbo language and Igbo cultural identities among the young Igbo youths. Despite the fact that English language is a world class language, with all its advantages in aiding international communications, the Igbo should recall that their own mother tongue should not be sacrificed at the altar of learning English language. It is disheartening that most of our young ones cannot communicate in or understand Igbo language even when they are resident here in Owerri, Imo State. What then could such group of children understand about Igbo cultural background; and what kind of personality formation could they operate in, having noted also that to build a strong personality and identity in one's culture, one has to operate in the language of that culture? In view of these observations, the following recommendations are proffered;

1. Learners' immediate, short-term interests such as elevating their status through learning English language should be carefully monitored and channeled to their long-term goals so as to avoid possible negative effect on learners' personality changes. This has been suggested by Onuh (2020:73) that ESL learners should be carefully monitored in order to avoid negative influence on learners identity formation.
2. Because *individual development* motivation influences self-confidence for ESL learners, teachers could build up students' self-confidence in learning by helping students set up their goals in English study and incorporate them into their long-term career development.

CONCLUSION

English language learning by secondary School Students in Owerri Zone, Imo State has affected their personality which runs contrary to their cultural identity as Igbo people. This is expressed by their change of behavior and resentment in Igbo values and cultures in the course of learning English, as revealed by the current study. However, this behavior is expected as learners of foreign language which, according to Chee (2003:47), learners' identities impact "the need, the desire and the opportunities to receive input and practice the target language (TL)". This suggestion is fully observed in this study as it has been exposed that Students learning English as Second Language in Imo State change their personalities as a mark of show of proficiency in the use of English language.

Future Research

The current study was limited to Secondary School Students in Owerri Zone of Imo State, Nigeria. It is necessary that this research should be extended to other States that make up the South-East (Igbo speaking area) of Nigeria. Findings from the studies will serve as data base for making educational curriculum policy.

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