

## **Effect of Instructional Language Indiscretion on Academic Activities of Pupils in Sabo Multilingual Communities, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated the judiciousness of instructional language featured in multilingual communities on the academic activities of pupils in the locality. It determined the level of indiscretion among the pupils with the English language as means of instruction and examined its direct effect on cognitive development and academic performance. The study further identified the attitude of the learners of respective socio-cultural backgrounds in the locality toward language indiscretion. These were with a view to discern language(s) peculiar to each school and sociocultural background in the study area and ameliorate indiscretion.

The mixed mode research design was adopted in the study. This combined the descriptive survey and the quasi-experimental study system. The population for the study consist all Sabo multilingual communities in Nigerian cities. The study sample consisted of 108 pupils from four intact classes, one from each of the schools, randomly selected and; twenty (20) teachers, five (5) randomly selected from each of the four schools. The four public primary schools were within one Sabo, Ile-Ife community in Ife Central Local Government, Nigeria purposively sampled to represent others. The research instruments include a self designed, structured questionnaire titled 'Language Indiscretion and Teaching in Multilingual Settings' (LITMUS) administered on the teachers and a performance test in civic studies (PCS) for the pupils in the two discernible languages - Hausa and Yoruba - of the locale, while the instructional language (English) moderates. Data collected were quantitatively analysed using descriptive statistics.

The study showed that language of the immediate environment and the pupils' mother tongue play a major role in the learning activities of the pupils. Pupils highly transfer features of the languages of the environment and mother tongues into the instructional language (English) hence, a high level of indiscretion. The study also revealed low pass rate in instructional (English) language based tests with Hausa speaking learners ( $x = 8.50$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ) and Yoruba speaking learners ( $x = 8.79$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ) performances resultant from instructional language's indiscretion; meanwhile, pupils performances improved in assessment administered in the language of the immediate environment than the mother tongue and imposed instructional



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languages. The teacher's reflected frustrations of efforts, discouragement and unfulfilled career goal due language indiscretion in the multilingual community.

The study concludes that the language of the environment deployed in a clear, unambiguous and discreet instruction is best in learning activities as it touches the heart of the learners and motivate objectively. Teaching should thus be based on language most convenient for pupils in multilingual environment rather than imposed. Since language of the immediate environment boosts academic performance so exceedingly, learning activities should be based on language of the environment.

**Keywords:** multilingual, indiscretion, speaking learners, instructional language.