

**Parental Beliefs Regarding Children's Native and  
English Language Acquisition: The Case of  
Northern Nigeria as a Multilingual Context**

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Approval of the Institute of Graduate Studies and Research

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## ABSTRACT

The research attempted to investigate the parental beliefs regarding their children's native and English language acquisition in the context of multilingual Northern Nigeria. The study was conducted in Northern Nigeria involving 104 participants from Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study used the mixed methods research where both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through the use of Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Out of the total sample, 18 participants were randomly selected for the interview. Findings of this present study reveal that parental beliefs on their education and attitudes enhance their children's English language acquisition. This research acquaints parents with information to adjust to their children's native and English language acquisition and, would provide government with relevant knowledge to be used in adopting and implementing useful educational policies on children's native and English language acquisition in the context of multilingual Northern Nigeria. Considering the coverage of this study conducted within just an institution, similar studies could be replicated in other parts of Northern Nigeria with more number of institutions at having greater number of participants.

**Keywords:** English and indigenous language acquisition, Attitudes, Multilingualism, Bilingualism.

## ÖZ

Araştırma, ebeveynlerinin çocuklarının anadil ve İngilizcelerini edinme konusundaki inançlarını çok dilli Kuzey Nijerya bağlamında incelemeye çalışmıştır. Çalışma Kuzey Nijerya'da, Nasiawa Eyaleti Politeknik, Lafia Nasarawa Eyaleti, Nijerya'dan 104 katılımcıyla yapıldı. Araştırmada, Dil Öğrenme Envanteri (BALLI-Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) anketi ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme ile ilgili inançlar kullanılarak hem nicel hem de nitel verilerin toplandığı karma yöntemler araştırması kullanılmıştır. Toplam örneklem arasından, 18 katılımcı rastgele seçilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, ebeveynlerin eğitimlerine ve tutumlarına inancının çocuklarının İngilizce dil edinimini artırdığını ortaya koymaktadır. Bu araştırma, ebeveynleri, çocuklarının anadili ve İngilizce dili edinimine uyarlama konusunda bilgi edinir ve hükümete, çok dilli Kuzey Nijerya bağlamında çocukların ana dili ve İngilizce dili edinimi ile ilgili faydalı eğitim politikalarını benimseme ve uygulamada kullanılacak bilgiyi sağlar. Sadece bir kurumda yürütülen bu çalışmanın kapsamı göz önüne alındığında, benzer çalışmalar Kuzey Nijerya'nın diğer bölgelerinde daha fazla sayıda katılımcıya sahip daha fazla sayıda kurumla çoğaltılabilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İngilizce ve yerli dil edinimi, Tutumlar, Çok dillilik, İki dillilik.

## **DEDICATION**

This is dedicated to the Almighty Allah, my wife Hadiza, and my three children Shazliyah, Isa and Zulaihat.

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, items presented include background of the study, context of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the research questions and operational definition of terms.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

English has become a language that is globally accepted to provide communication among peoples and nations. Many studies have clearly buttressed the influential roles of English as lingua franca (Crystal, 2003) and already in the world today English serves as lingua franca (Melitz, 2016) as a global language for social, political and economic advancement of a country (Griva, Chostelidou & Panteli, 2012). Parents acknowledge the relevance of English language in the contemporary globalized world and emphasized its necessity for all citizens to learn English (Blondin, Candelier, Edelenbos, Johnstone, Kubanek-German, & Taeschner, 1998). Hence, parents acknowledge and support the need for their children's acquisition of multilingual competence in foreign languages, since it provides children the opportunity to communicate and as a future asset, to easily find jobs, to travel abroad and broaden their experiences (Shipton, Mackenzie, & Shipton, 2006).

In respect of multilingual nation like Nigeria English language serves also as lingua franca where the absence of an indigenous language that integrates the inhabitants, English usage consolidates (Onukak, & Nwaedozie, 2004). English has been

conferred the status of country's second language and official language and of course language of wider communication. It is serving as intra-ethnic, inter-ethnic as well as international functions. It is "the language of nationalism (or inter-ethnic relations) in Nigeria. No other single indigenous language qualifies to perform this role" (Adegbite, 2003, p. 13).

Although the role of English in a country like Nigeria cannot be underestimated, the attitudes of some citizens on apparent neglect of the indigenous languages call for caution. In a study which described the impact of enlightenment on attitudes of Nigeria elite class towards roles assigned to English and Nigeria's indigenous languages. It went further into literature, enlightenment efforts and attitudes shifts of Nigerians regarding their indigenous languages and evaluating these issues in broader context of language planning and national development. It seemed from all indications most elites did not still have favourable attitudes towards their indigenous languages as they did toward English language. Some few Nigerians are made to realize the positive complementary roles of indigenous language and English language in national development. "What remains is for these few people to water this seed so that it can germinate and spread among all Nigerians in order to enhance collective participation towards national developmental efforts." (Adegbite 2003 p. 185).

In recent years, attention of parents, individuals, groups, governmental and non-governmental organisations, and researchers is focused on the concern of children devaluing or even losing their native languages in respect of their parents attitudes or educational attainment. In this study, Nguyen and Hamid (2017) examined the

implication of subtractive schooling and language use in education on ethnic minority students in Vietnam Central Highlands by looking at how they identify themselves with their language, cultures and social relations. The findings showed that subtractive power of the language used in school and the institutional environment greatly influenced ethnic identity through devaluation of their native language and cultural identity as a result of the invasion sociocultural entity by dominant language and culture in addition to discrimination and disunity which affected their social relation.

This attitude of parents in their quest for their children's bright future through enhancing the acquisition of English and forgoing native language make children fall into the problem of devaluing or even losing their native languages as termed "subtractive" (Lambert, 1990) rather than encourage them to value and maintain their native language in addition to the foreign language which on the other hand is termed "additive" (Lambert, 1990).

Furthermore, as cited by the Leadership Newspaper (2018, p.3).

Unfortunately, most of them [parents] are polluting their children with the habit. Most parents see it as a matter of class to communicate with their children in English. . . . It is equally important to stress that the mother tongue should be one of the first languages one ought to learn to speak

Fishman (1966) in his book *Language Loyalty in the United States*, gave a description of three-generation language shift where in the third generation, he said that they were fluent in English but have lost the knowledge of their native languages.

In his book *Teaching Language to Young Learners*, Cameron (2017) presented some theorists in developmental Psychology on the child as a language learner. In this respect, it is essential to give consideration to one of them, Vygotsky's theory – "The Child as Social". Its central focus is on social, people around the child's world, now the theory is also referred to as "socio-cultural theory". To Cameron, the people around the child play significant role in his/her language development. In the same vein, Bruner's (1983) "Scaffolding", presented language as the most important tool for cognitive growth, and how adults use language to mediate the world for children at assisting them solve problems. To Bruner, Language Acquisition Support System (LASS) which simply explains the preceding assertion is a language device that adults especially parents implement to support their children's language acquisition. Furthermore, since the theme of this study is second language acquisition, it is relevant to consider Krashen's (1981) five hypotheses of second language acquisition, particularly, the Input hypothesis. This hypothesis attempts to give an explanation of how second language is acquired. According to Krashen, progression in second language development is possible when learner receives "comprehensible input" which is a step beyond present stage of linguistic competence. As he illustrates, the learner at his/her present stage is "i" when exposed to "comprehensible input" which is a step higher than "i" to becoming "i + 1"; this leads to language acquisition because, the learner understands. To Krashen, acquisition takes place when there is understanding. This takes us back to Bruner's (1983) postulation on scaffolding and routines which is synonymous to his Language Acquisition Support System (LASS). Parents exhibit this through simplifying, directing, controlling, demonstrating and making it interesting for children to understand the language (Cameron 2017). Ultimately, the child becomes motivated

hence, results to language acquisition. It is pertinent to understand that motivation is one of the three variables of language acquisition in Krashen (1981) Affective Filter hypothesis which is indeed facilitative.

Suffice it to say that, behaviour and involvement of parents is related closely to their educational and or professional background. This to some extent becomes important factor to parental attitude of showing respect to the child's personality and talent (Griva & Chouvarda, 2012). In the same vein, literacy level and experiences including the learning resources parents provide are considered significant at influencing children's language and literacy development (Montag, Jones & Smith, 2015).

In another development, parental attitudes play significant role at children's motivation to learning English as a foreign language at a very early age in order to acquire the various communicative skills through homework and assignments (Madjar, Shkhar, & Moshe, 2016). In addition, the positive attitudes parents have toward English language development certainly increase not only their children's motivation but also, it results to their success on language learning (Tavil, 2009).

Subsequently, when parents speak and respond to their children in English language not by their native language in the home, that indicates a signal to the children that using English is alright. Code switching by parents to English is another indication which leads the children to use English. As a result, it becomes difficult for the children to maintain their native language because it is not often used right from the early age (Pan, 1995). Consequently, as Fantini (1987) reiterated, parental attitude and behaviour on insistence in the use of English become a significant factor that

influence the language choice of children. Parents can successfully raise children as bilinguals as long as they are “clear about their own values and preferences, developing models which best support their children through the developmental process” (p. 36). Alvear (2018) examine Spanish and English reading outcomes for evidence of an “additive advantage” associated with programs that pursue full proficiency in students’ home language and English.

Also, as it is evident, from a national daily in Nigeria, Leadership Newspaper (2018) “Most parents see it as a matter of class to communicate with their children in English” (p. 3).

## **1.2 Context of the Study**

Nigeria is a multilingual country having 526 different languages. Of these, 7 are extinct and 519 are living. Of the living languages, 10 are non-indigenous and 509 are indigenous. Subsequently, 19 indigenous languages are institutionalized, 348 are vigorously in use, 78 are developing, 30 are already in trouble, and 44 are dying (Ethnologue, 2018).

Nigeria adopted English language as the official language and in fact lingua franca across Nigeria’s multi-ethnolinguistic communities. The status of English is unparalleled among elites and in the country as a whole. English is the official language, language of politics, language of legislature, language of court, language of media, and language of instruction. It is evident that the language practices among majority of educated Nigerians tend to shift toward the English language just on the belief that native language maintenance might hinder better achievement in life (Mustapha, 2014). This practice has dire consequences for this nation as our native



languages face extinction, including our history, traditions and values in addition to other aspects of culture (This Day Live, 2018).

Furthermore, it is evident that some Nigerians could not fluently speak their native language without mixing English words. Unfortunately most parents speak only English to their children thereby shifting away from the native language. This worrisome situation has thrown indigenous languages in the danger of extinction (Leadership Newspaper, 2018, September 27).

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) policy stipulated every child to study two languages in the course of primary education to include mother tongue if available for study or other available native language of wider communication which include the three major languages Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba in the area he/she resides along with English language.

Furthermore, in a study that investigated the function of the mother-tongue and or the immediate language of the community in nation like Nigeria. Nigeria is country with many nationalities where indigenous languages which make up the federating nationalities are threatened by English the colonial language hoisted on the people of Nigeria since the advent of colonialism. Therefore, the study tried to examine parents' beliefs on the position of indigenous languages against the English language. Studies revealed that the world major economies use their indigenous languages as official languages. Until indigenous languages in Nigeria are accorded official status which they deserve and English is positioned as foreign language, educating the citizens of Nigeria will become difficult hence, building and developing Nigeria will merely be a mirage (Mbah, 2017).

In addition, language policy can influence and provide the needed co-existence of Nigeria towards achieving self-actualization, economic, social, cultural, educational advancement and national unity. Also, it discovered that the language policy of National Policy on Education provided sustainable attempts by using the three major languages-Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa as well as English language (Omotoyinbo, 2015). The family is seen to be the bedrock of all social transmission therefore, raise questions about family language choice and this kindles emotional reactions particularly in inter-ethnic marriages (Offiong and Mensah 2012).

Continuity in intergenerational transmission of languages is critical in the process of its maintenance (Fishman, 1991)

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Nigeria being a multilingual country where English serves as official language and of bureaucracy, of the law courts, of instruction in secondary and higher education, of formal literacy and international communication (National Policy in Education, 1981). The status accorded English in Nigeria officially and other uses in practice in a multilingual nature cannot be ignored. However, the attitude of apparent negligence of native languages at the expense of the quest for English language acquisition in Nigeria is the concern of this study. Leadership Newspaper (2018) complained that a worrisome phenomenon in Nigeria today is that, out of the about 527 native languages that were spoken, only about 84 are being used today. Those of them that are especially minority are more in the danger of extinction (Leadership Newspaper, 2018, September 27).

In yet another source of concern, This Day Live, (2018, November 16) lamented that is pertinent for all stakeholders to focus attention to the increasing extinction of many indigenous languages and the consequences on the future of the country. One can attest to the alarming indications of danger on the rate at which the rich African traditions as in music, dance and fashion are increasingly disappearing. Stakeholders who are critical at this juncture must admit that indigenous languages face extinction as the culture including traditions, history and values. As reiterated, “Language is a vital constituent of culture” (Trivedi, 1978:92). In addition, Robinett (1980) concurred that language and culture cannot be separated.

In addition, parents who focused more only on foreign or second language were admonished of colossal mistake as Wu (2005) urged parents to urgently investigate about the problem and overcome this menace of younger generation losing their native languages by maintaining and preserving them. Wu consolidated this position that, people are unaware that it is not only the language itself that is lost, but along with it is culture and heritage. In view of the magnitude of concern as explained from some sources in respect of parents focusing their attention on just English language base on it influential reasons, and, at the same time ignoring the native language. The study attempts to investigate the beliefs of parental attitude and educational level in the acquisition of English language vis-à-vis native language of their children.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The research is intended to highlight the parental beliefs on their attitudes and literacy level as they affect their children’s acquisition of English vis-a-vis their native language. The research purpose is to examine beliefs on parental attitude and

literacy level in relation to their children English and native language acquisition in a multilingual context as Nigeria.

The study would provide additional literature in view of few researches conducted on this subject matter in Northern Nigeria. Studies of this nature when conducted at various sections of Northern Nigeria could provide an avenue for review and analysis to arrive at generalization.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What are the parental beliefs on their attitudes and level of education regarding children English language acquisition in Northern Nigeria?
2. What are the parental beliefs on their attitudes and level of education regarding children native language acquisition in Northern Nigeria?
3. What are the parents' perspectives on their native languages in Northern Nigeria?

### **1.6 Operational Definition of Terms**

- **English language:** English is a colonial language introduced with advent of colonialism serving as second language, official language, language of instruction, international communication even as lingua franca within multilingual Nigeria (NPE, 1981).
- **Native Language:** Native language is an indigenous Language to a particular area (Walsh, 2005).
- **Indigenous languages** as defined by International Journal of the Sociology of Language are Small Languages and Small Language Communities.

- **Language Acquisition:** stated is the subconscious process of understanding language through meaningful interaction in the communicative act (Krashen, 1981).
- **Attitude:** As Gardner (1985) defines, attitude has cognitive, affective, and conative components (i.e., it involves beliefs, emotional reactions, and behavioral tendencies related to the object of the attitude) and consists, in broad terms, of an underlying psychological predisposition to act or evaluate behavior in a certain way” (as cited in McGroarty, 1996, p.5)
- **Motivation:** A motive the thing that encourages an individual to act in a particular way or develop an inclination for a certain behaviour (Pardee, 1990).
- **Education:** The knowledge and development resulting from an educational process (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2018).
- **Multilingualism:** “Pluralism in a context in which different languages positively impact on one another in an atmosphere of mutual co-existence; rather than as a distraction; a problem or an evil to be expunged from the nation” (Emenanjo, 1990, p. 250)
- **Bilingualism:** “The practice of alternately using two languages” (Weinreich, 1966 p.302)
- **Subtractive Bilingualism:** Is a stage when gradually results to the disuse of the ethnic home language and its related cultural associates and replaced with another, more “necessary” language (Lambert, 1981 p.12).
- **Additive Bilingualism:** Use and maintenance of the mother-tongue in addition to acquisition of second language (Lambert, 1981).

It should be noted that in the context of this research, indigenous or native language as well as mother tongue mean the same. Therefore, where ever in this study one finds any of these three, they all mean the same.

## **Chapter 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides general survey of the background information about divergent views of scholars on attitude, parents' attitudes, integrative and instrumental motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, native language loss, native language maintenance, impact of parents educational attainment on second language acquisition, second language acquisition, language policy and educational challenges in Nigeria, operational definition of terms, and theoretical framework.

#### **2.2 Attitudes**

The term attitude is a complex concept and numerous authors and researchers defined it differently. Allport (1954, p.45) defines the termed attitude as “a mental or neutral state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response towards all subjects and situations with which it is related.” Also, Ager (2001, p.183) describes that “attitudes are one significant component to understand motives, such as the objectives and goals of language groups in child education planning and types of language behavior of parents.” Merriam-Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus (2018) defines attitude as a feeling or emotion towards a fact or state.

Attitudes are similar to all cognitive and affective aspects of development in human beings, which are developed early during childhood as consequential to parents' and

peer's attitudes, of contact with different and unique individuals, and the affective experience as a result of interaction. All these shape one's perception of self, of others, of one's culture, and cultures of others (Brown, 2007).

In extensive studies Gardner and Lambert (1972) systematically attempted to examine the effect of attitude on language learning. Revelation of various studies on the relationships of different types of attitudes revealed to them that motivation as a construct made up of some attitudes. They discovered that the most relevant was specific toward group, attitude of learners toward people and culture whose language they were learning. In this study, learners had positive attitude toward the members of that cultural group (French-Canadian) of the desire to integrate with them by understanding and empathizing with them.

### **2.2.1 Integrative/Instrumental Motivation**

Gardner and Lambert (1972) identified two basic attitudes as integrative and instrumental orientations to motivation. The integrative motivation identified learners that desire to integrate with cultural members of the target language and become socially involved with them. The instrumental motivation is for the means of achieving instrumental goals such as translation, carrier, reading of technical writings and others.

Furthermore, Suryasa, Prayoga, and Werdistira (2017) in a research examined students' motivation in learning of English as a second language. The result of the investigation indicated that students were relatively highly motivated, and discovered more slightly instrumentally motivated to learn English language.



In addition, Gardner (2018) added, parents who have positive attitude towards the language community which the child is learning usually influences the child's attitudes at acquiring the language.

Subsequently, parents have many ways of exerting this attitudinal influence, for instance, through discussion, through encouraging them to participate in foreign language, exchange programmes and excursions, encourage the child to read and write using foreign language or even helping by involving in their homework or even pay visit to target language country (Young, 1994).

### **2.2.2 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation**

Another aspect of the whole motivation construct in general could be related to the extent to which the learner is intrinsically or extrinsically motivated at attaining success in a given task. Ryan, and Deci (2000, p.56) defined intrinsic motivation:

Intrinsic motivation is doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence. When intrinsically motivated a person is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external prods, pressures, or rewards.

Intrinsic motivation is a spontaneous behaviour which bestows adaptive benefits on the individual for the positive experiences related with exercising and extending person's capacities. It is something inherently enjoyable and interesting to the individual.

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is a construct that pertains whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome (Ryan, and Deci, 2000, p.60). Extrinsic motivation is facilitated in anticipation of benefits from outside and

beyond the individual self. They come in form of grades, money, prizes and even commendations or positive feedback.

In Lagos, Nigeria, Oluwayomi (2018) investigated employees of some selected insurance companies on the role of motivation on their performance. The result indicated that there was directly strong relationship between motivation of employees and their performance. Motivation was actually the major significant factor in the form of provision of fringe benefits, payment of bonuses, involvement in decision-making, promotion of deserved staff to higher positions of authority, and rotation of employees all affected the performance of the employees.

### **2.3 Native Language Loss**

Language loss is a situation where children who are future generation gradually shift from acquiring their native language to a second or foreign language. Portes and Hao (1998) stated that United States has a matter of fact become a burial ground of hundreds of mother tongues of immigrants that rarely lasted past the third generation. Generally, countries that were colonized became dominated by subtractive bilingualism which diminished the use of native languages in entirely all social domains (Zulu, 2018).

In a study Debnath (2017) Parental Attitude to Home Language: A Study on the Students of English Medium School of Bangladesh, revealed as outcome of the study that, parents had veritable negative attitude to their native language Bangla and other local languages as home languages in Bangladesh, and sent their children to study in reputable English medium schools of Dhaka. In this study there are instances parents themselves stood clearly against their children's acquisition of their own native

language. In this research, though not all parents could speak English, but most of them encouraged their children to use English as home language and use it in communicating with their peers outside the home. According to Debnath, some parents used their native language at home but not with the children and practically discouraged them by even scolding when children used the native language. As a result of their agitation for English, English medium schools sprang up at all corners of city and never experienced decline before or after independence. Consequently, most children could not communicate properly with elderly relatives and grandparents at home Debnath said. Subsequently, Debnath continued that parents felt embarrassed and became ashamed if their children spoke their native language instead of been proud of them. Gee (2011) submitted, that English is not just portrayed as a second language but “social goods in the society: who gets what in terms of money, status, power and acceptance” (p.7). In the Study, Debnath noted that the measurement tool he used to gather data lacked an element which would allow for adequate examination of parents attitudes towards English and native languages. He suggested deeper investigation into the lives of the participants.

In another study Fishman (1966) insinuated that Chinese children were experiencing language shift to English in the U.S. and, further said that in the three-generation language shift, they began to use more of English than their native language in the second generation which might lead to language loss. Some consequences that were attributed to language loss are that, parents and other elders of that community experience communication gap when interacting with the children. In addition, Fillmore (1991) illustrated some instances of misunderstanding and conflicts that were caused by communication barrier between parents and their children.

Consequently, loss of language can be attributed to some factors such as family life. The language used at home, literacy environment, attitudes of parents at using both native and second or foreign language, mother as the main caregiver, birth order, kid's age, number of siblings, and whether grandparents are part of the family staying together (Wu, 2005). He further stated that social life outside the family such as schools and mainstream society play significant role in determining the maintenance of child's native language. Peers also influence children's positive or native attitude towards native language. In addition, he attributed language loss to children's individual characteristics such as their personality, self-identity, motivation, age and level of exposure.

#### **2.4 Native Language Maintenance**

However, as some parents have negative attitude towards their native languages and demotivate their children from acquiring them, others are concerned about becoming multilingual by encouraging and maintaining their native languages as their children acquire or learn the second language. Numerous studies have shown that parents, individuals, organizations and government play vital roles in children's native language acquisition and maintenance irrespective of second language acquisition. Longitudinal research conducted from 1985 through 2017, Collier, & Thomas, 2017 targeted at analyzing the long-term academic achievement of minority language students of many diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in Grades K – 12 in schools at the U.S. including English learners. The findings demonstrated the significant role that native language (L1) plays in the schooling of English language learners. In each of these studies was the most influential predictor of minority language students' achievement in second language (L2) was nonstop development

in their native language L1 through the school curriculum in addition to schooling through the second language.

In yet another study, Enstice (2017) investigated means the first generation Latino parents designed an additive bilingual (Spanish and English) milieu in the home. The outcome showed native language maintenance strategies which at times facilitated children's increased use of Spanish.

Preschool children were examined on the effects of bilingualism on inhibitory control on "delay of gratification task" and "conflict task". The outcome of the research showed that, bilinguals parents who spoke different languages to their children outperformed bilingual children whose parents spoke the same language to them on both tasks (Verhagen, Mulder, & Leseman, 2017).

The benefits of bilingualism have even gone beyond just language acquisition or learning to even affecting positively our brain function. In a research Abutalebi and Green (2016) revealed that bilingualism slows down the onset of dementia an average of four to five years. It was discovered that, use of two languages by bilingual resulted to some adaptive changes to form neuroprotective effects.

On the other hand, some see foreign language as a threat to native language acquisition and maintenance. Modiano (2001) agrees that, learning foreign language could cause cultural violation of a nation. He further insisted that concrete evidences revealed that foreign language learning hampers native language and culture. Phillipson (1992) asserts that "Language is the bearer of a culture, so if English language is imposed, so is culture. Consequently, the ideology, values of the central

countries are shown superior and peripheral values are undervalued and marginalized and thus threatened” ( p. 27). It is pertinent, therefore, to have knowledge of one’s culture in order to appreciate others. In a study that concurred to this stand is Neito (2010) that students’ knowledge of their native culture triggers positive effect on their learning and teachers need to make them aware to see cultural differences as valuable resources which facilitate learning of other culture.

As some parents consolidate to maintain their native languages, some challenges faced in respect of efforts left them somewhat hopeless. In a study conducted, Kouritzin (2000) a Chinese parent confessed that he faced problems as he attempted to speak to his son in Chinese on a playground with other American children around. He lamented that they looked at him like a two- headed monster from another planet and even ask him the language he spoke. Haque (2009) stipulated that students of English Medium Schools EMSs of Bangladesh used British curriculum based on foreign context. Students learn western culture, history, geography and political background and become ignorant of Bangladesh’s heritage resources.

In an attempt to overcome these obstacles, governments, parents, individuals and groups have made efforts. Parents and all those affected should endeavour to encourage and develop their children to speaking both native and second fluently.

Kuo’s (1974) findings insisted that the child becomes more efficient in native language when parents use it more during conversation with their child and read stories to them. Young children learn their native language in family context (King & Fogle 2016) provided they have meaningful and adequate access to the language (Humphries et al., 2012). Parent’s insistence has a strong influence at affecting their

children's language choice at raising them as successful multilingual if parents are "clear about their own values and preferences, developing models which best support their children through the developmental process" (Fantini, 1987, p. 36)

Interestingly, some governments are involved in the struggles for the native language maintenance. Taiwan Ministry of Education (2004) came up with a policy that children under the age of six should not be given formal instruction in English because it would affect their native language and culture negatively (Chang, 2007). Some parents insisted that it was better for children at that age to acquire the language easily but government persisted on implementation (Shang, Ingebritson & Tseng, 2007).

In a study, 'I'm not dead yet': a comparative study of indigenous language revitalization in the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey, Wilson, Johnson and Sallabank (2015) examined the survival of many minority and indigenous languages threatened by globalization and dominant languages such as English.

Finally in the study conducted, Wu (2005) concluded that, the findings and what the literature review indicated were the significance of parental attitude and an indication of language shift to English for the younger generation. He advocated for more research on heritage language loss and maintenance from different immigrant communities in a new world facing a new language.

## **2.5 Impact of Parents Educational Attainments on Second Language Acquisition.**

Educational attainments of parents have significant influence on their children's language acquisition. Wu and Honig (2010) reported maternal education was an important predictor of home literacy resources indicating that mothers with higher education own significantly more number of books in the home than mothers less educated. Results of findings led them to hypothesize that maternal educational attainment might have relation to mothers' pedagogical practices and provision of language resources their children use in English as foreign language learning at home.

In a study conducted Lan, Torr and Degotardi (2011) confirmed that mothers teaching practices and provision of resources for EFL were related to their educational achievement. This suggests that the children of higher educated mothers have different English language learning environment compared to their counterparts' children of lower educated parents.

Affirmative of the above proposition by Wu and Honig (2010) was on Taiwanese mothers' reading beliefs, indicating a significant relationship between mothers' level of education and the number of books she owned at home. This could suggest that mothers who have higher education have more money to buy English language books to facilitate their children's EFL Learning. Sikio et al., (2018) examine the role of mothers parenting styles and maternal help with their children's homework in the children's mean age 11.43 years' literacy skills at fourth grade in Finland.



However, Liu (2013) pointed out the limitation of survey methodology, it provided a broad overview of home teaching practices and provided resources reported by Taiwanese mothers having children three to six years old. The study could not explore the reasons behind the responses of participants. Liu suggested further research into investigating subtle understanding of mothers' beliefs and their real practices in homes. Secondly, further study in form of interviews would provide better understanding about reasons behind mothers' practices and decision-making and the effects of maternal teaching practices not addressed in this study.

Indications in studies found proofs that variations in parents' teaching practices have correlation with parental education. Studies on interaction mothers and their preschool aged children have repeatedly indicated relationship between maternal education level and quality of home literacy environment (Skibbe, Justice, Zucker & McGinty, 2008).

## **2.6 Second Language Acquisition/ SLA Research**

Second language acquisition research before now focused mostly on adults, for some time now, attention is gradually turned to adolescent and child second language learners (Enever, Moon, & Raman, 2009). There has been renewed interest in research on second language acquisition in child learners (Paradis, 2007). During 1970s and 1980s, research focused on direct comparison between first/native language and second language children. Evaluations have revealed that the field of second language acquisition is still at infancy level, considering methodological and theoretical problems that accompany the developing discipline (Gregg, 2003).

However, studies explore child second language acquisition on its own basis and variety of factors to include both internal and external have claimed to influence the rate, route and the end state of second language children's linguistic achievement. The internal factors are made up of age of onset, knowledge of another language, cognitive development, and language learning aptitude. While external factors include, parental attitude, number of siblings, maternal education and second language proficiency attainment, socio-economic status, length of exposure, quantity and quality of input and output or language use (Paradis, 2007).

A description of an emerging family language policy showed an explicitly and overtly planning in relation to language use among family members within the home and this, clearly showed how languages are managed, learned, and negotiated within families. The study reviewed studies on the role language ideologies play in shaping language practices in family and, on different connections between family language policies; for instance, one child one language approach and the outcome of the child language. The family language policies are significant in respect of shaping children's language development at different levels as they connect to children's success in formal school, and determine minority language maintenance and future status (King & Fogle, 2016).

The critical period hypothesis (Krashen, 1973) postulated about lateralization and language learning within a critical period in live of child. Early infancy is a period when foundational skills that are fundamental in later language skills are developed Can, Richards, & Khul, (2012). The claim of an age-related decline in the achievement with which individuals master a second language is not debatable. The

decline average achievement of older language learners is supported by personal anecdote and recorded by empirical evidence (Flege, Yeni-Komshian & Liu, 1999). However, Singleton (1989) asserted that consistent support in literature is lacking to consolidate the assumption that younger language learners were more efficient and successful than the older language learners.

On the other hand, in a recent study to consolidate the critical period hypothesis reported, strong decline in learning capacity with age range for this critical period phenomenon appears to be very similar to what has been observed even in more studies in L2 for both spoken and signed languages (Dekeyser, 2018).

In respect of factor of input in child's second language development, it is discovered that monolingual language development is relative to the quality and quantity of language input children receive in their daily lives (Hurtado et al., 2008). As well as children exposed to two languages develop each of the languages as a function of relative exposure (Place & Hoff, 2012).

On the influence of socio-economic status SES and the proficiency attainment of parent, Hoff (2002) showed evidence of higher SES associated with higher quality of maternal speech recorded in the home, which vice-versa accounted for increases in children of 2 years old vocabulary. In addition, differences in verbal abilities of children as early as 18 months that have been documented, which indicated that children from less socio-economic status performed less than children from higher socio-economic status (Stein, Malmberg, Sylva, Barnes, & Leach, 2008).

Examining the importance of output in second language acquisition, Swain (1995) said, output challenges the learner to process language more deeply with more cognitive effort than the input does. Learner's meaningful production of language output would likely have a potentially significant effect on language development. In another study, Barrow (2018) discovered that those learners noticed some shortcomings in their linguistic knowledge during output and so, they worked to get remedies by using dictionary, grammar books, by seeking from their peers or teachers, or even by themselves noting to pay attention in subsequent relevant input. They concluded that these actions generated new linguistic knowledge or consolidated existing knowledge of the learners.

## **2.7 Bilingualism: Subtractive Bilingualism/ Additive Bilingualism**

According to Chomsky (1965) the child is endowed with an innate property of language acquisition which he/she uses in mastery of native language despite its complexity within a short time coined "little black box" and explained as Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Therefore, having this ability makes the child to acquire more than one language to become bilingual. Bilingualism has no precise or generally acceptable common definition. However, for the purpose of this study, Weinreich (1966) defines bilingualism as "the practice of alternately using two languages" (p. 302). In a study on bilingualism, They had further discussion on language control based on the adaptive control hypothesis. Abutalebi, & Green (2016) investigated the language control in bilinguals; that the ability to speak a language demands a language control system which permits the bilinguals to use correctly the intended language adjustment to avoid possible interference by non-target language.

Furthermore, bilingualism according to Lambert (1974), identified two forms of bilingualism as “subtractive” and “additive”. The subtractive bilingualism means that the bilingual gradually loses the primary or native language skills and the accompanied culture. While the additive bilingualism refers, to a bilingual that suffers no loss of the native or primary language and its associated culture a result of second language acquisition/learning.

## **2.8 Language Policy and Educational Challenges in Nigeria**

Nigeria is a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic society with over 500 indigenous languages spoken (Blench, 2002). In view of the nature the Nigeria society, language of instruction in schools has become a matter of serious concern to educators and educational planners. The complexity of African situation made Ouadraogo (2000) asserts that, education and language issues are very complex in Africa because of the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual situations. According to Musa (2012), Language education policy in Nigeria dates back to colonial period when the Phelps Commission of 1922 stressed the significance of indigenous languages in school system. In 1927, British Advisory Committee on Native Language Education in Tropical Africa recommended that native languages served as medium of instruction at the lower levels of primary education. Subsequently, it became policy in Nigeria to use indigenous languages as medium of instruction at the lower primary, and English at the upper primary. In addition, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo, major indigenous languages should be taught as subjects in schools Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004).

However, the exclusive implementation of indigenous languages as media of instruction in Nigeria primary schools were hindered with the introduction of formal

education and adoption of the English language as medium of instruction. In an expression of lamentation in respect of the situation, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) said that it is quite unfortunate to squander the linguistic resources of the nation by discouraging children and deprived them from learning from indigenous language. Although English is relevant to our modern living, the use of indigenous languages as media of instructions at primary would warrant sound linguistic foundation for children's learning since they are familiar with their vocabularies. Also children would imbibe culture and fundamental societal values, as long as language and culture are interwoven and, later build on that with foreign language (Musa, 2007). In spite of desire to use native languages in schools, only three major languages, Hausa, Yoruba Igbo have documented efforts of teacher education and 65 standardized orthographies out of the over 500 languages in Nigeria (Gbenedio, 1990). Lack of vocabularies in indigenous languages for concepts in mathematics, sciences and vocational education has become a challenge (Musa, 2010).

Obviously, it is an enormous challenge for the adoption of an indigenous language in a complex multi-ethnic and multi-lingual Nigeria with over 500 indigenous languages (Blench, 2002). Adopting a language will certainly create tension as Ugal (2011) interpreted, that there is no doubt that Nigeria has multiplicity of languages among different ethnic groups, each of this group guards its language jealously, yet there has not been a separate language policy, other than the bits and fragments in the National Policy on Education (1977) revised in (1981). There are currently two documents in existence in Nigeria that include policy statements on languages: (i) the National Constitution (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999) and (ii) the National Policy on Education (NPE) (, 2004).

This prescribed national policy on languages which exist in the NPE recognises the multilingual nature of Nigeria, thereby captures the multi-ethnic and multilingual goals as the following:

1. Mother tongue and or a language of the immediate community is to be used as language of initial literacy at pre-primary, primary and adult/non formal education.
2. The three indigenous languages Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo are to be used as languages of national culture and integration as second language.
3. English serves as official language and of bureaucracy, of the law courts, of instruction in secondary and higher education, of formal literacy and international communication.
4. French and Arabic as extra exoglossic languages for international communication and discourse.

Although not categorical within the National Policy on Education, Emenanjo (online) suggested in terms of policy not explicitly stated that the National Policy Education policy on languages:

- Advocates for multilingualism as national goal
- Recognises English to be the official language in administrative issues and all levels of formal education
- Considers the three major indigenous languages (Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa) as potential national languages that are to be developed and used as official language and second language all through the formal education system.
- Recognises all Nigerian indigenous languages as meaningful media of instruction, used in lifelong and other non-formal education.

Sections of National Policy on Education could be summarized as the following:

- Pre-primary ages between 3-5, stipulates that instruction should be in the mother-tongue or language of the immediate community.
- At the primary level, instruction should start with the mother tongue or language of the immediate community, and later on in English language.
- At secondary school or higher education level, one of these three major languages, and also the language of the community should be taught; another Nigerian language should be included and taught as a core subject;
- Departments of African languages of Nigerian universities should encourage indigenous languages so as to promote cultural diversity and multilingualism. (Orekan, 2010).

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the theoretical perspective of Fishman (1966) involving crucial socio-cultural process. When two groups or languages are in contact and in this case indigenous language and English language, the people and these languages they represent are involved differentially in crucial socio-cultural process that characterized their interaction. In this situation, the phenomenon of ethnicity is much more stable than language maintenance. Although it is marginal but yet functional ethnicity lingers on and is transmitted via English much after the indigenous language is left untouched or completely lost; the “circumstance where an ‘other tongue’ becomes the dominant language of the old and the mother tongue of the young.” ( p.19)

The language situation in Northern Nigeria and in particular regarding this study is synonymous to Fishman’s where especially elites who live in urban areas use



English language in virtually all communication with their children and other people within the environment. They may acknowledge their indigenous languages but, are either used sometimes or even not in use. The children are brought up using English as mother tongue or not competent in the indigenous languages.

## **Chapter 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents the research methodology, in addition to the description of the research questions, participants, instruments, data collection procedure, ethical steps followed, data analysis techniques and analysis of interview.

#### **3.2 Research Questions**

The research is designed examine the beliefs on parents' attitudes and educational attainment on their children's English acquisition vis-à-vis native language acquisition in Northern Nigeria. Also, elicit parents' perception on their native languages in Northern Nigeria. The research attempts to find out answers to the following questions:

1. What are the parental beliefs on their attitudes and level of education regarding children English language acquisition in Northern Nigeria?
2. What are the parental beliefs on their attitudes and level of education regarding children native language acquisition in Northern Nigeria?
3. What are the parents' perspectives on their native languages in Northern Nigeria?

#### **3.3 Participants**

The research was conducted at the Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia of Nasarawa State in Northern Nigeria. The official population of members of staff both academic

and non-academic was not given but, some sources said there were over four hundred staffs though, not all men and women were parents but most of them were. The sample was randomly selected from the population which was made up of 11 departments and the administrative offices. The Participants were males and females who were parents and randomly selected not as a couple but individually and, 200 questionnaires were dispatched equally to these departments and administrative offices. This happened after participants read the consent form and endorsed to participate. Out of the 200 questionnaires that were given out, only 104 were duly filled and returned. The expected return rate was nothing less than 160 but this was not achieved because attention was focused on end of semester examination and, the researcher had to return back to Cyprus. Therefore, the study involved 104 participants. Furthermore, out of the 104 participants, 18 of them 10 males and 8 females were randomly selected and after they consented, we scheduled interview with them individually. In order to maintain anonymity in this research, pseudonyms are used.

Demographic information:

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Participants

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Male	81	77.9
	Female	22	21.2
	Total	103	99.0
<b>Missing</b>	System	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>		104	100.0

The distribution of respondents by gender is presented in table 1. The result shows that majority of the respondents, constituting 77.9 percent, are males while few (21.2%) of them are females. This indicates that literacy rate for men is higher than

the women particularly Nigeria (United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2017).

Table 2: Age of Participant

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	25-30	5	4.8
	31-35	19	18.3
	36-40	22	21.2
	41-45	27	26.0
	46-50	15	14.4
	51-55	15	14.4
	60 and Above	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>		104	100.0

Considering the age distribution of the respondents, the result reported in table 2 shows that the respondents are fairly distributed among the age groups. Meanwhile, most of the respondents are in their middle ages (31-55 years). This implies that the study harnessed the opinion of the active population of the society.

Table 3: Occupational Status of Participants

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Public/Civil servant	98	94.2
	Private entrepreneur	4	3.8
	<b>Total</b>	102	98.1
<b>Missing</b>	System	2	1.9
<b>Total</b>		104	100.0

The occupational distribution of the respondents is shown in table 3. The result indicates that about 96.1% of the respondents are civil servants. Therefore, almost all the respondents are public servants who significantly appreciate the learning of language.

Table 4: Educational Status of Participants

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Diploma/ND/NCE	6	5.8
	HND/Degree	49	47.1
	Master/Postgraduate	47	45.2
	Doctorate	1	1.0
	Total	103	99.0
<b>Missing</b>	System	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>		104	100.0

The educational distribution of the respondents presented in table 4 depicts that 5.8%, 47.6%, 45.6% and 1% of the respondents acquired Diploma/ND/NCE, HND/Degree, Master/Postgraduate and Doctorate degree respectively. This indicates that majority of the respondents are well educated and their opinion about the subject matter considered in this study is valid for policy inferences.

Table 5: Age you Started Learning English

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	0-3 years	30	28.8
	4-10 years	62	59.6
	11-17 years	8	7.7
	18 years and above	2	1.9
	Total	102	98.1
<b>Missing</b>	System	2	1.9
<b>Total</b>		104	100.0

When asked, at what age did you start to learn English? The responses are contained in table 5. It shows that majority of the respondents started learning English language when they were 4-10 years old. This is an indication that most of them started learning English language in school because most people in Northern Nigeria start school at the age of 4.

Table 6: Other Languages Spoken

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	1	7	6.7
	2	45	43.3
	3	45	43.3
	4	6	5.8
	5	1	1.0
	Total	104	100.0

Table 6 contains the responses on the number of languages spoken by the respondents. The result demonstrate that majority of the respondents can speak 3 different languages. This implies that majority of the people in Northern Nigeria speak their mother tongue, language of the immediate community which is Hausa and, any additional indigenous languages.

Table 7: Fluency in English Language

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Not fluent	3	2.9
	Fluent	64	61.5
	Very	36	34.6
	Fluent		
	Total	103	99.0
<b>Missing</b>	System	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>		104	100.0

Table 7 shows that about 62.1% of the respondents can speak English language fluently while 35% of them are very fluent in speaking English Language. This is as a result of the fact that English language is the official language and the medium of instruction in Nigeria schools and, as lingua franca in that multilingual context. So, most educated people speak English language, at least, fluently if not very fluent.

Table 8: Those Who Traveled to English-speaking Country

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	No	75	72.1
	Yes	27	26.0
	Total	102	98.1
<b>Missing</b>	System	2	1.9
<b>Total</b>		104	100.0

Table 8 contains the report of the responses on the rate at which the respondents travelled or lived in English speaking countries. The result indicates that most of the respondents have never travelled or lived in English speaking country. About 73.5% of them have never travel while only 26.5% affirmed to have travelled and lived in English speaking country. This in an indication that been an academic environment, staffs are sponsored to go for studies overseas just as my case sponsored to study here in Cyprus.

Table 9: Often at Speaking English

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Often	63	60.6
	Very Often	41	39.4
	Total	104	100.0

The answer to the question about the frequency of communication in English language is reported in table 9. The result illustrates that 60.6% often speak English language while 39.4% of the respondents speaks English language very often. There was no response on the 'rarely' option of the question. It reveals that parents use English often as a medium of communication within their environment.

Table 10: Results of Reliability and Validity Tests

Foreign Language Aptitude		
	Item	Factor loadings
Q1	It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.	.885
<b>Q12</b>	Children speak English with more excellent accent.	<b>.473</b>
Q16	Children are born with special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.	.534
Q29	Children who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	.565
Cronbach's Alpha coefficient		<b>0.734</b>
Native Language Learning		
Q13	I take English to be more valuable to my native language.	.661
Q22	I speak my native language fluently.	.708
Q30	My level of education and attitude encourage the acquisition of my child's native language.	.701
Q32	I don't mind my child losing his/her native language.	.584
Cronbach's Alpha coefficient		<b>0.753</b>
Nature of Language Learning		
Q19	It is easier for a child who already speaks a foreign language to learn another language.	.566
Q24	It is necessary for the child to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.	.545
<b>Q25</b>	Children learning English see it different from learning native language.	<b>.309</b>
Cronbach's Alpha coefficient		<b>0.743</b>
Learning and Communication Strategies		
Q4	It is important to practice and a lot.	.752
Q6	Children guess when they don't know word in a foreign language.	.741
<b>Q7</b>	Learning English language is a matter of imitating.	<b>.326</b>
Q9	I always use English language to speak to my child at home.	.736
Q10	I try to make it easier for my child to understand and speak English Language.	.586



Q11	I use toys, CD ROMS, videos, computer games, etc. to facilitate my child's English Language learning.	.567
Q14	I don't often speak my native language to my child as I do speak English Language.	.714
Q17	Learning English Language is mostly a matter of parents exposing their children to the language.	.537
Q23	I don't speak my native language with my children.	.680
Q27	I speak to my child consciously to make him/her learn English language.	.661
Q28	I correct my child when he/she speaks English Language.	.535
Q33	I speak equally both English and my native language to my child.	.763
Cronbach's Alpha coefficient		<b>0.726</b>
Motivation and Expectations		
Q2	My attitude makes it easier for the child to learn English language than others.	.592
Q3	If my child gets to speak this language very well, he will have many opportunities and benefits in future.	.647
Q5	I would like the child to learn the language so that he/she can get to know its speakers better.	.648
Q8	I have a clear value and positive attitude about English language.	.504
Q15	I feel more fulfilled when my child speaks English Language.	.700
Q18	It is easier for children whose parents are educated and speak English to learn the language.	.608
Q20	Nigerians think it is important to speak English Language.	.749
Q21	Children try to learn from parents who speak English.	.806
Q26	I like it when children speak English and their native language equally good.	.762
Q31	Positive attitude and my level of education have good effect on my child's English language learning.	.759
Cronbach's Alpha coefficient		<b>0.737</b>

Table 10 reports the results of the validity and reliability tests of the research instrument. Factor analysis and Cronbach Alpha tests were used for the validity and

reliability tests respectively. The threshold for the validity of an item is 0.5 while the cut-off for reliability of a construct is 0.7. In other words, if the factor loading is greater than 0.5, the item is valid and if the Cronbach Alpha coefficient is greater than 0.7 the construct is reliable. The result of the validity test for construct on Foreign Language Aptitude shows that the factor loading of all the items except question 16 are greater than 0.5. This implies that all the items loaded significantly to the construct. In other words, all other items are valid for the construct.

Similarly, the factor loadings of all the items except question 6 and question 25 under all other constructs (Native Language Learning, Nature of Language Learning, Learning and Communication Strategies and Motivation and Expectations) are greater than 0.5. Hence, all the items except question 7, 12 and 25 are valid. The invalid items are not considered in the subsequent analysis.

### **3.4 Data Collection Instruments**

This research employed questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The questionnaire was adapted: Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), Horwitz, 1988). The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory was (developed by E. Horwitz, used in 1988 to study the beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students) which consisted of 34 items. (see Appendix D - Parents Questionnaire).

In addition, the semi-structured interview was also adapted from BALLI semi-structured interview which consisted of 10 questions. (see Appendix F-Parents Interview Questions ).

### 3.4.1 The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed by Horwitz (1988) contained 34 items which measured students' beliefs about language learning and was divided into five domains: (i) foreign language aptitude, (ii) the difficulty of language learning, (iii) the nature of language learning, (iv) learning and communication strategies and (v) motivation and expectations. Horwitz's BALLI (see Appendix G). Since then, it stimulated several other studies on belief about language learning (Kunt, 1997; Kunt, 2007; Kunt, & Özdemir, 2010; also see Akinmulegun 2015).

However, in adapting BALLI, the researcher has substituted the second construct, which is the difficulty of language learning with native language learning to suit the context of his study. This was because the study did not intend to find out about foreign language difficulty but to investigate parental beliefs about children acquiring English better than their native languages. In the first criterion, foreign language aptitude, four items are included (items 1, 12, 16, 29). The second criterion, native language learning, included four items (13, 22, 30 and 32) For the third, the nature of language learning, also three items are used ( items 19, 24, 25). The fourth criterion, learning and communication strategies, twelve items are selected (items 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 23, 27, 28 and 33). Lastly, for fifth criterion, motivation and expectations, eleven items are included (items 2, 3, 5, 8, 15, 18, 20, 21, 26 and 31). All items of the BALLI are rated from “strongly agree” (5), agree (4), “neither agree nor disagree” (3), “Disagree” (2), and “strongly disagree” (1).

The validity and reliability test presents thus, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of all the constructs are greater than the cut-off value of 0.7. Therefore, the instrument is reliable for all the constructed categories. In short, the research instrument is valid and reliable for the analysis and policy inferences.

#### **3.4.2 Semi-structured Interview Questions**

The interview questions were also adapted from BALLI. The questions were developed and used by Horwitz (1988). All together made up of ten semi-structured interview questions. This was used as interview questions for parents (see appendix F).

#### **3.4.3 Background Questionnaire**

Background questions were developed by the researcher in order to gather information relevant to the participants' gender, age, occupational status, educational status, nationality, age they started to learn English, number of languages they could speak, their level of fluency, traveled or lived in an English-speaking country, and frequency of speaking English language. (see Appendix E - Background Questionnaire).

### **3.5 Procedures for Data Collection**

The selection of this institution came about because the researcher at that point in time realized that almost all institutions were getting ready for end of semester examination as a result decided to choose the institution he was employed it could understand and cooperate to allow him conduct the research. After having granted permission in respect of the application to administer and conduct interview, the researcher himself went ahead and met staffs who were parents in the Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia, Nasarawa State of Nigeria, gave their maximum cooperation and assiduously responded in the study. It took the researcher two weeks to administer

and retrieve the 104 questionnaires out of the 200 dispatched. (see Appendix B – for permission to conduct research in the institution).

The heads of various departments in the institution, assisted through informing staff and urged them to participate in the research by providing all relevant information required and, on time. Questionnaires were then dispatched equally between the 11 departments and administrative offices but randomly within each and were completed after participants consented to participate. Other participants responded instantly and returned them; others requested to respond at more convenient time and gave time after which they were retrieved.

Out of the sample, 18 participants were randomly selected for the interview. Each of them was informed and they all gave their consent to participate in the semi-structured interview. Of the 18 participants 10 were men and 8 were women. The interviews were conducted within a period of just a week through audio recording. On the appendices, Appendix C is attached as Participant Consent Form and Invitation Letter.

### **3.6 Ethical Steps Followed**

In view of the fact that the researcher had fulfilled all necessary requirements to conduct the study, the researcher applied to the Ethics Committee to be granted permission to conduct the research and, after due consideration, approval was given. (see Appendix A – permission to conduct research on Children’s English language predominates their native language acquisition: The role of parental education and attitudes in Northern Nigeria.

Subsequently, the researcher approached the institution where the research was conducted for permission. After putting application for permission to conduct research, the institution granted permission to conduct the study involving her staffs both academic and non-academic who were parents. As said above, refer to the appendices for the permission.

On a final note, before parents became participants in this study, they all consented to participate through reading and understanding before the endorsement on consent form and invitation letter. Refers earlier, the consent and invitation of participants is in the appendices. All ethical conduct were abided strictly from the beginning to end of the conduct.

### **3.7 Analysis Techniques**

The quantitative data collected through questionnaire for this research were tabulated for analysis using Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The computation of descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviations, minimum, maximum and the percentages of variables were used to summarize the BALLI responses as statistical analyses in the study.

On the other hand, semi-structured interviews that have been conducted orally through audio recording were transcribed.

### **3.8 Analysis of Interview Data**

The data collected through the semi-structured interview were analysed as it relates to BALLI investigating the beliefs of parents' attitudes and educational attainment on their children's English language as well as their native language acquisition. In this research, The researcher carefully listened to all the interviews thereby transcribed

them and categorized data as content analysis was used by arranging similar information together in relation to BALLI construct; foreign language aptitude, native language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies and motivation and expectations.

## Chapter 4

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this section, results of findings got from the analysis of data obtained from this research are therefore, presented. Both the descriptive analysis carried out on BALLI and of the descriptive analysis of interviews which were conducted in this present research are revealed.

#### 4.2 Foreign Language Aptitude

The analysis starts with the questionnaire based on BALLI and then followed by the interview. The interview will be analysed using content analysis in relation to the constructs on BALLI. Eighteen parents randomly selected for this interview were given pseudonyms for the purpose of anonymity as: Bala, Musa, Audu, Sani, Ladi, Kande, Talatu, Jummai, Laraba, Isa, Danlami, John, Lami, Joy, Jamila, Bello, James and Mohammad.

Table 11 : Foreign Language Aptitude

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
1	It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.	1.0		2.0	24.5	72.5	4.67	0.631
16	Children are born with special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.	6.9	3.9	12.7	49.0	27.5	3.84	1.086
29	Children who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	1.9	13.5	18.3	34.6	31.7	3.78	1.102



Note: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree; M = mean; SD = standard deviation; F = frequency of responses (%)

The responses under each item will be grouped for instance, strongly agree and agree will be considered as agreed so also, strongly disagree and disagree will be taken as disagreed. The Foreign Language Aptitude is summarized in table 11. The result shows that most of the respondents (97%) agreed that it was easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language. About (76.5%) of them agreed that children were born with special ability which helped them learn a foreign language while 66.3% agreed that children who spoke more than one language well were very intelligent. This result is further reiterated by the mean of the responses which ranges from 3.75 to 4.67. This implies that, on the average, majority of the respondents agreed to the statement in each item.

Subsequently, some parents expressed their experiences, observations and beliefs as to the children's ability to learn English language in addition to two or more languages which are seen in the interview by Musa, Bello, Bala, and Audu respectively: Musa: "Children have the ability just as they have the ability to learn every other language including the English language."

The submission by Musa indicates that children's ability to learning a language or any other language for that matter English language included. It is an indication that children's learning ability of any language is inherent. As Bello subsequently buttresses, apart from language learning ability, children have that ability to learn very fast in addition to been very fluent: Children learn English very fast. I have

seen that from my experience because my children speak English language very well and fluently.

Bala in agreeing to Musa accepts that children have the ability of learning more than even three languages: More so, that a child has the capacity to learn more than two or three languages.

Furthermore, the next respondent after having concurred to children's learning ability, added that the outcome of this is dependent on language of communication within the child's milieu.

Audu:

Children's ability to learning English language and other languages also for that matter is anchored on what communication medium the parents, neighbours and those they interact with on daily basis use. So if parents, environment is full of English speakers then they will quickly pick English language. But if it is the any other language, is that language they'll pick.

Regarding outcome of responses by the respondents on foreign language aptitude in items 1, 16 and 29 with the mean of between 3.38 and 4.67, affirms that children have abilities and capacities to learn a foreign language. Some parents added that they learn fast and fluently including additional two, three more languages.

### 4.3 Native Language Learning

Table 12: Native Language Learning

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
22	I speak my native language fluently.	3.9	11.8	5.9	32.4	46.1	4.01	1.177
30	My level of education and attitude encourage the acquisition of my child's native language.	1	11.7	13.6	47.6	26.2	3.88	.971

13	I take English to be more valuable to my native language.	24.8	30.7	12.9	23.8	7.9	2.62	1.303
32	I don't mind my child losing his/her native language.	49.5	33	7.8	6.8	2.9	1.76	1.008

Note: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree;

M = mean; SD = standard deviation; F = frequency of responses (%)

The responses on all the items under the Native Language learning are summarized in table 12. The result shows that (55.5%) of respondents disagreed that they took English to be more valuable to their native language. About (78.5%) of them agreed to speak their native language fluently while (73.8%) agree their level of education and attitude encourage the acquisition of their children's native languages. Also (82.5%) of them disagreed they didn't mind their children losing their native languages. The result is further supported by the mean of the responses where two of the items 13 and 32 ranges from 1.76 – 2.62 to disagree on devaluation of native language and, the other two items 22 and 30 ranges between 3.88 – 4.01 agree to facilitate native language acquisition.

The following respondent considers the literacy level of parent on the native and the proficiency level at communicating with the child determines his/her competence in the native language. In addition, home is usually the primary environment where the child is expected to learn the native language, Jummai:

If you are able to communicate properly with the child in your native language; it also affects the level of child's understanding of the native language. By the first level of contact and it's from the home that you teach the native language and if the parents literacy level is not adequate, it affects the child's literacy level of the native language.

Subsequently, this next respondent indicates very high value for the native language as much as she values the English language and, clearly expressed her emotional attachment to the native language. There is agitation for parents to equally use both native and English language to the children; both languages have opportunities to achieve in the society, Talatu:

Giving less attention to native language, no, I don't see any reason to give less attention I as much as we value the English language because it is our official language in the country, it does not mean that native language should be dismissed from the child. I value the use of native for the children too because it is also good for them it can also give them a better chance in the society. Whatsoever the case, we have a root, we have lineage, we have a culture, we have a language. So, I value the native language too.

Jummai in the response below admits that her literacy made her to focus more the English language on her child English language acquisition: The level of my literacy in education is to a certain degree, at least I am not an illiterate so, because of that, I concentrate more on elevating my child to the learning of English language than to the native language. Do I say is affecting my child positively? No! negatively.

In addition, Sani has concurred to Jummai's belief that level of education affects child's native language learning negatively. He further explained that the situation could get more critical if the parent stays in the township and children cannot have people within their environment who will interact with them in the native language; so that both at home and in school English becomes the singular means of communication.

Question is being buttressed to the negative side especially when parents are highly literate and, are of working class and stay in township where they don't have other neighbours that speak the same language. So, English becomes the major means of communication both in school and in the house.

The result on the construct native language learning reveals that parents agreed to value their native languages and disagreed if their children could lose their native languages. Also, responses from parents indicated agreement to appreciating their native languages as their origin.

#### 4.4 Nature of Language Learning

Table 13: Nature of Language Learning

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
24	It is necessary for the child to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.	17.6	35.3	18.6	23.5	2.63	1.172	2.63
19	It is easier for a child who already speaks a foreign language to learn another language.	5.8	16.5	26.2	35.9	3.40	1.087	3.40

Note: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree;  
M = mean; SD = standard deviation; F = frequency of responses (%)

Responses on all items under Nature of Language Learning are summarized in table 13. Result reveals that (52.9%) of respondents disagreed that it is necessary for the child to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language. On the next item, it is easier for a child who already spoke a foreign language to learn a second language, (39.3%) of respondents agreed (22.3%) of them disagreed, and (26.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed. Considering the mean of 1.087 is an indication that respondents did not agree with statement on item 19. Result of responses on items under the construct nature of language learning is confirmed by the mean which ranges from .831 – 1.172. It means that respondents disagree to the statements on items 24 and 19.

In response to the construct above, some respondents gave completely different view. Kande in her response stipulated that children who were introduced to their native language by their parents find it much convenient to learn the English language.

Because they start with mother tongue, once they start with this mother tongue, they find it very easy to flow from that mother tongue to English language. Those that are unable to speak the mother tongue find it difficult even speaking the English language.

Ladi affirms the position advanced by Kande on the nature of native language. She cited instance where she observed and experienced something similar.

Yes, among the children I have, there's one of them that is good at that because he stayed with one of our grandparents and the grandparent, used to speak a lot for him and he has learnt. You discover that he is the best that speaks without really making errors. And that thing has made us to make others speak [native language] so that it will also help them because he can transfer from this language to the other language.

These were their views but I did not further probe. However, the responses on the questionnaire obviously indicate that respondents disagreed on both items 24 and 19.

However, the response on the construct nature of language learning shows that respondents disagreed on items 19 and 24 with the mean of between 1.087 – 1.172 indicating that; children needn't know the foreign culture in order to be competent in the target language and, no guarantee for a child who already speak foreign language to learn a second language.

## 4.5 Learning and Communication Strategies

Table 14: Learning and Communication Strategies

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
28	I correct my child when he/she speaks English Language.	0	1	2.9	53.9	42.2	4.39	.581
4	It is important to practice and a lot.	0	1.1	4.2	56.8	37.9	4.30	.617
10	I try to make it easier for my child to understand and speak English Language.	1	1	5.9	56.9	35.3	4.29	.593
27	I speak to my child consciously to make him/her learn English language.	1	2.9	1.9	66.3	27.9	4.12	.718
17	Learning English Language is mostly a matter of parents exposing their children to the language.	4.9	4.9	1.9	48.5	39.8	4.08	1.100
11	I use toys, CD ROMS, videos, computer games, etc. to facilitate my child's English Language learning.	1.9	13.6	4.9	56.3	23.3	3.80	1.015
33	I speak equally both English and my native language to my child.	3.8	11.5	10.6	44.2	29.8	3.80	1.095
6	Children guess when they don't know word in a foreign language.	2	9.8	16.7	52	19.6	3.77	.974
9	I always use English language to speak to my child at home.	5.8	23.3	10.7	35.9	24.3	3.46	1.275
14	I don't often speak my native language to my child as I do speak English Language.	8.7	19.4	13.6	38.8	19.4	3.35	1.247
23	I don't speak my native language with my children.	21	36	13	21	9	2.58	1.263

Note: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree;

M = mean; SD = standard deviation; F = frequency of responses (%)

Responses on all items under Language Learning and communication strategies are summarized in table 14. Result indicates that (94.7%) agreed it was important to practice and a lot. Item 6 children guessed when they didn't know word in a foreign

language showed respondents agreed with (71.6%). More respondents (53.5%) agreed that Learning English language was a matter of imitating. About (60.2%) of respondents agreed that they always used English language to speak to their child at home. (92.2%) of respondents agreed that they tried to make it easier for my child to understand and speak English Language. About (79.6%) of respondents agreed to use toys, CD ROMS, videos, computer games, etc. to facilitate their children's English Language learning. While (58.2%) of respondents agreed they didn't often speak their native languages to their children as they do speak English Language. furthermore, (88.3%) of the respondents agreed Learning English Language is mostly a matter of parents exposing their children to the language. And (57%) of them disagreed they didn't speak their native language with their children. Also, most respondents (94.2%) agreed to speak their children consciously to make them learn English language. Again most respondents (96.1%) agreed to correct their children when they speak English Language. (74%) of them agreed to speak equally both English and their native language to my child. The result is further confirmed by the mean of the responses which ranges from 3.25 – 4.39. This means that, on the average, majority of the respondents agree to each item of the statement. This indicates that majority of the respondents agree on all the items. Except item 23, I don't speak my native language with my children where respondents disagree by (57%). The item has a mean of 2.58. This is an indication that respondents spoke native languages with their children.

The participants acknowledged that the use of resources in English language learning enhanced their children's second language learning as some of them also reported.



Respondent agreed to using some form English learning materials to facilitate her child's second language learning. Because of the importance attached to these materials, she installed them in several points to make access easier. To also emphasize their significance, her baby was at home even watching one when she was leaving. She insists that the practice has greatly help the child in formal education.

Laraba:

Yes, we do. In fact, we have some of these downloads of ABCD from the internet, from YouTube everywhere in our phones, in the laptops and in the television. I left the house my baby was watching one. And it has really been helping their education in catching up in school.

Musa also confirmed to the fact that language-learning materials facilitates language learning thereby extending to even paying money for the children to be enrolled in programmes that will improve their language skills.

Yes, I helped them in fact, when then they were toddlers I bought ABCD CDs then computer games, how they know pronunciations and as they advance in age then there are books and hymns. In fact, there are symposiums they attend and in their school we pay money; we pay for them to be taken elsewhere to theatre where specialists will now coach them

In respect of this respondent, he reiterated the fact that the style of focusing our attention on the English language at the detriment of our native language is substantially contributing to children's English language acquisition as well as enhancing the extinction of native language.

John:

The reason is that we seem to give prominence to English language to the detriment of the native language. And by so doing we are directly or indirectly assisting our native language to go into extinction in favour of English language.

Bello consolidates this point as he uses English constantly with the child in addition to using other medium to interact using English. So the child has no benefit of using his native language all through. “My own child is better in English because of the constant communication as in the school, at home and he watches programmes in English.”

The findings on the above construct reveal that respondents agreed that using language learning and communication strategies obviously enhance children acquisition of the English language.

#### 4.6 Motivation and Expectations

Table 15: Motivation and Expectations

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
2	My attitude makes it easier for the child to learn English language than others.	2	3.9	4.9	57.8	31.4	4.16	.752
3	If my child gets to speak this language very well, he will have many opportunities and benefits in future.	1	1	7.8	39.2	51	4.35	.772
5	I would like the child to learn the language so that he/she can get to know its speakers better.	0	2.9	10.7	52.4	34	4.18	.747
8	I have a clear value and positive attitude about English language.	1	0	5.8	61.2	32	4.21	.654
15	I feel more fulfilled when my child speaks English Language.	1	7.8	17.6	52.9	20.6	3.87	.883
18	It is easier for children whose parents are educated and speak English to learn the language.	0	4.8	2.9	35.6	56.7	4.43	.796
20	Nigerians think it is important to speak English Language.	1	2.9	10.7	44.7	40.8	4.24	.812
21	Children try to learn from parents who speak English.	2	1	2	55.9	39.2	4.30	.760
26	I like it when children speak	1	0	0	30.8	68.3	4.68	.590

	English and their native language equally good.							
31	Positive attitude and my level of education have good effect on my child's English language learning.	1	1.9	2.9	47.6	46.6	4.39	.751

Note: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree;

M = mean; SD = standard deviation; F = frequency of responses (%)

The summary of responses on all items under motivation and expectations are presented in table 15. Result of responses shows that 89.2% agreed their attitudes made it easier for their children to learn English language than others. About 90.2% respondents agreed that if their children got to speak the language very well, they will have many opportunities and benefits in future. While 87.4% of them agreed that they would like the child to learn the language so that they could get to know its speakers better. Subsequently, 93.2% respondents agreed to have a clear value and positive attitude about English language. About 73.5% respondents agreed they feel more fulfilled when their children spoke English Language. Also, 92.3% of the respondents agreed it was easier for children whose parents are educated and speak English to learn the language. furthermore, 85.5% respondents agreed that Nigerians think it is important to speak English Language. And 95.1% of responses agreed children tried to learn from parents who speak English. Almost all respondents 99.1% agreed that they would like it when children speak English and their native language equally good. Lastly, 94.2% of responses agreed that positive attitude and their level of education have good effect on their children's English language learning. The result is subsequently reiterated by the mean of responses that ranges from 3.87 – 4.68. This implies that majority of respondents agree to each item stated.

In this fifth and last criterion, in fact, participants expressed various motivating factors and their expectations from their responses. Parent education and the ability to speak could actually spur children to develop the positive attitude towards the English language and become motivated to learn as the respondent said. Jamila: “If you have a parent that is educated and can speak, the child is likely to also pick up and speak even without a teacher.”

Laraba in her response stipulate the motive behind children’s English language learning. And in this regard, it involves instrumental motivation that spurred them to encourage their children learning English as a means to secure good job and other lucrative opportunities.

Yes, my child has a lot to achieve in his ability to speak the English language. Just like I’ll keep emphasizing, the English language is very important in this country today. A child that speaks English fluently gets a better job; you know he is offered better opportunities in the society.

In fact, in addition, these parents admit that their children could speak English language better compared to their native languages. Here are some of the expectations of parents who confirmed to have played great role at deliberately enhancing their children’s English language acquisition/learning. Bello: “My own child is better in English because of the constant communication as in the school, at home and he watches programmes in English.”

Kande:

They are better at English because they don’t write the native language. They just know how to speak it but they don’t know how to write it. So they are better in English language because they can write English language and speak it.

John:

Yes, for now, for now to be very candid is the English language because it's what the country needs for now. The native language is just spoken at home just for one or two other domestic function.

On the construct of motivation and expectations, respondents agreed that attitudes and level of literacy is a motivating factor at enhancing their children acquisition of the English language.

#### **4.7 Summary**

After having analysed the responses on each construct, the findings on first construct foreign language aptitude indicates that majority of the respondents agreed to the statements on items 1, 16 and 29. Furthermore, the result of interview analysis of Musa, Bello, Bala and Audu affirm this position where they reiterated children have abilities and capacities to learn a foreign language. Some parents added that they learn fast and fluently including additional two, three more languages. To support the claims made by parents, the literature obviously confirms it as Chomsky (1965) postulated, the child is endowed with an innate property of language acquisition which he/she uses in mastery of native language despite its complexity within a short time coined "little black box" and explained as Language Acquisition Device (LAD). McNeill, (1966) and Lenneberg, (1967) agree to it that language is "species-specific" and, consisting of innate linguistic properties. Also in the literature, Abutalebi, & Green (2016) stated the language control in bilinguals; that the ability to speak a language demands a language control system which permits the bilinguals to use correctly the intended language adjustment to avoid possible interference by non-target language.

Regarding the second construct native language learning, the findings show that native language is really valued by the respondents. This is indicated by their responses on items 13, 22, 30 and 32. Subsequently, the analysis of interview confirms this as Jummai, Talatu, and Sani buttressed the value of cultural lineage and the native language which has its origin from the home. The background questionnaire also stipulated (86.6%) of respondents could speak 2-3 other languages aside English. It is interesting to note here that the value attributed to native language is not just by individuals but government agency in order to safeguard it; Taiwan Ministry of Education (2004) came up with a policy that children under the age of six should not be given formal instruction in English because it would affect their native language and culture negatively (Chang, 2007).

Furthermore, the analysis on the construct nature of language learning reveals that majority of the respondents disagree with both items 19 and 24 on whether it is easier to learn another language if a child could speak a foreign language and, on the necessity to know a foreign culture in order to speak a foreign language respectively. To sum up, parents have not agreed to the nature of language learning where knowing something about the foreign language could make one competent in the target language. However, the beliefs of parents on this contradicts several studies which reiterate the knowledge of culture of a target language to attain competence. Robinett (1980) maintain that language and culture cannot be separated. Phillipson (1992) concurred that “Language is the bearer of a culture, so if English language is imposed, so is culture” ( p. 27). Therefore, to be competent in a language one ought to have knowledge of its culture.

In addition, having analysed the responses on the construct of language learning and communication strategies, the findings reveal that majority of the respondents agreed with all items. Respondents agreed that the use of language learning and communication strategies facilitate second language learning. Furthermore, responses on the background questionnaire reveal that all respondents are all educated within the level of diploma to doctorate. In addition, been employees are civil servants. (96.1%) of them are fluent in English and because of that all of them speak English often. The significance of these is that their educational attainment allow them to communicate regularly with their children which facilitates English acquisition. This is further consolidated by the interview analysis of responses of Laraba, Musa, John and Bello where they agreed that the communication strategies at using English language as a medium, using language learning facilities or materials all contribute to facilitate the children's English language learning. It is evident from literature that communication strategies enhance second language acquisition; thus, parent's insistence has a strong influence at affecting their children's language choice at raising them as successful multilingual if parents are "clear about their own values and preferences, developing models which best support their children through the developmental process" (Fantini, 1987, p. 36). In addition, use of learning resources help in second language acquisition as a study conducted Lan, Torr and Degotardi (2011) confirmed that mothers teaching practices and provision of resources for EFL were related to their educational achievement. This suggests that the children of higher educated mothers have different English language learning environment compared to their counterparts' children of lower educated parents.

Finally, after analysing responses on the last construct motivation and expectations, respondents agreed that positive attitude and the level of education have good effect on their children's English language learning. This is further consolidated by the analysis of the interview responses on Jamila, Laraba, Bello, Kande and John. In their various responses, they agreed that people who are educated speak English and communicate constantly in English; as a result, influence their children to English language acquisition. An indication that (26%) of respondents travelled to English speaking country is a motivating factor for their children. In a study to confirm the assertion of parents on this Tavit, (2009) affirms that the positive attitudes parents have toward English language development certainly increase not only their children's motivation but also, it results to their success on language learning. In another study, parental attitudes play significant role at children's motivation to learning English as a foreign language at a very early age in order to acquire the various communicative skills through homework and assignments (Madjar, Shkhar, & Moshe, 2016).



## **Chapter 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the major findings will be used to answer the research questions of the study, followed by pedagogical implication, limitation of the study and, recommendation for future research.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

Considering the major findings of this research at proffering possible answers to the three research questions beginning with the first: What are the parental beliefs on their level of education and attitudes regarding their children English language acquisition in Northern Nigeria? This question has been answered as respondents agreed in addition responses on the background questionnaire which indicate all respondents are have attained between diploma and doctorate degree and, indication of (96.1%) fluency to (100%) indication to speaking often show that positive attitude and the level of education have good effect on their children's English language learning. Furthermore, they agreed that using language learning facilities or materials and communication strategies all contribute to facilitate the children's English language learning in Northern Nigeria.

On the other hand, Research Question 2: What are the parental beliefs on their attitudes and level of education regarding their children native language acquisition in Northern Nigeria? Although the question might seem to be answered not directly

but, it is obvious that parents agreement to acknowledging the value attributed to native language and, their beliefs regarding children language abilities is evident. Also, responses on the background questionnaire on two to three other languages they speak affirm it. This could be understood to mean parents beliefs on their attitudes and level of education at enhancing their children native languages in Northern Nigeria.

Subsequently, on the Research Question 3: What are the parents' perspectives on their native languages in Northern Nigeria? This question was conspicuously answered as respondents agreed that they value and appreciate their native languages. This is obvious considering their abilities to speak two to three other native languages aside English language as seen on background questionnaire. Therefore, parents in Northern Nigeria appreciate and acknowledge the value of their native languages in Northern Nigeria.

### **5.3 Pedagogical Implications**

The findings of this research have some relevant pedagogical implications considering children's English language acquisition. The findings reveal that parents' beliefs on the use language learning resources and communication strategies enhance children English language acquisition, therefore, relevant and interesting English language learning resources at the level of learners ought to be included in classroom in order to motivate and foster language learning. Suffice it to say that, teachers of English ought to use language learning resources during their teaching. Wu and Honig (2010) reported maternal education was an important predictor of home literacy resources. Results of findings in the study led them to hypothesize that maternal educational attainment might have relation to mothers' pedagogical

practices and provision of language resources their children use in English as foreign language learning at home.

Secondly, it was obvious from the findings that parents disagreed that children needed the knowledge of foreign culture for them to be competent in the target language. However, there are studies indicating the relevance of the target culture in order to becoming competent, “Language is a vital constituent of culture” (Trivedi, 1978:92). Suffice it to say that, in a multilingual country like Nigeria where the evidence in this present study indicates that parents are ignorant of the bond holding culture and language, teachers of English must engage in deliberate teaching of foreign culture of the target language and; this needs to be pursued vigorously having considered culture as important variable in language learning.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that parents value their native languages. As a result of this, parents need to pass to the young generation this prestigious asset of human existence. Now that it is empirically proven that language itself is an integral part of culture, children should learn to appreciate their native culture in order to appreciate that of others. As Neito (2010) pointed out that students knowledge of their native culture would have a positive impact on their learning as such teachers should consider cultural differences as valuable resources which facilitate learning and serve as facilitators when it comes to teaching culture. Since it has become obvious that to learn a foreign language, it is necessary to understand its culture, teachers of English should consider teaching their students their native culture in order to pave way to learning foreign culture which culminates to competence in the target language.

## **5.4 Limitation**

The research was conducted in Nigeria as the time was limited to involving more institutions to have greater number of participants at covering broader population. As a result, only one institution with the number of 104 respondents was involved. Therefore, the number of institution and the sample population used is limited.

## **5.5 Recommendations for Future Research**

In view of the limitation considering the coverage of this study conducted within just an institution with limited number of participants, similar studies could be replicated in other parts of Northern Nigeria with more number of institutions at having greater number of participants.

In conclusion, it is my hope and desire for parents especially to realize that they need to know and understand foreign culture of the target language in order to have competence in it. In addition, parents should encourage their children to becoming multilingual so as to conform properly in their environment.

Lastly, I urge government to consider research of this nature so as to promulgate policies that could encourage citizens to maintain their native languages as well as learn second language having considered the functions of both.

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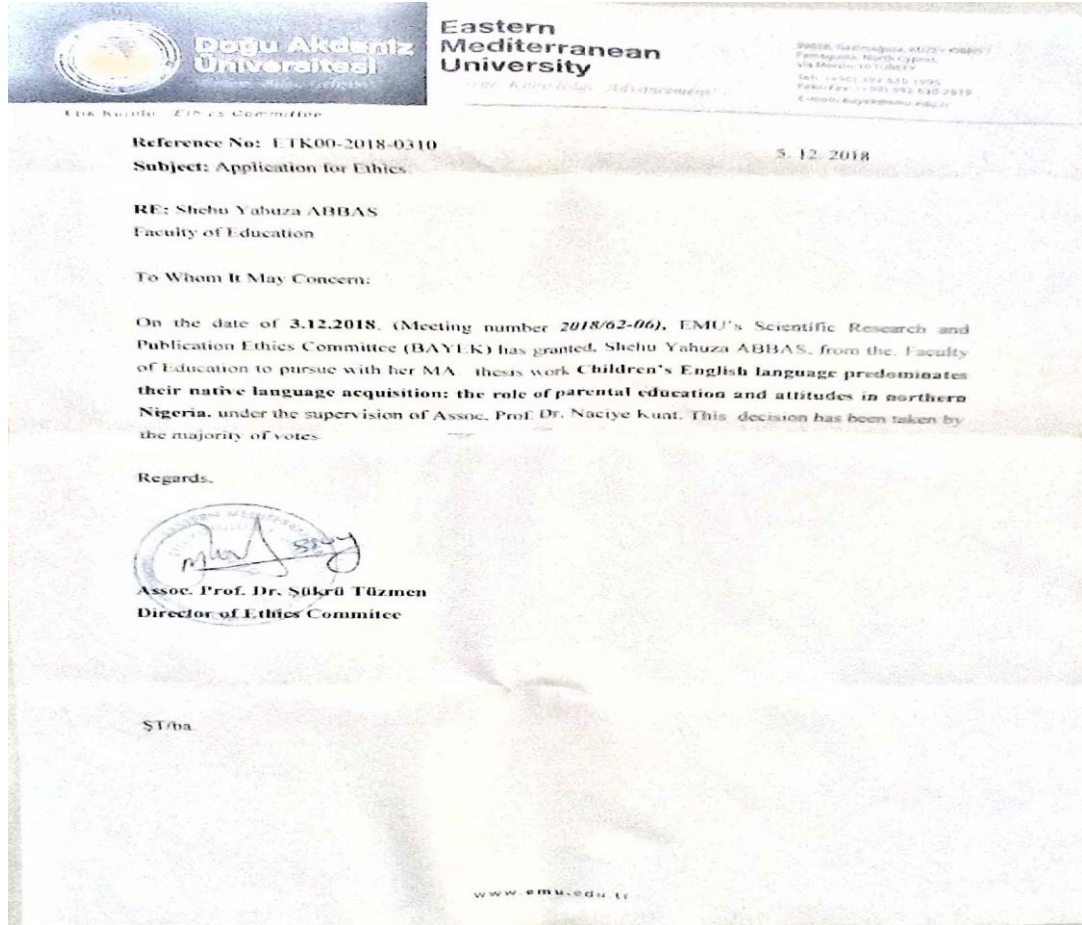
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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A: Ethics Committee (BAYEK) Approval



## Appendix B: Institution Permission Letter

# NASARAWA STATE POLYTECHNIC

P.M.B 109, Lafia, Nasarawa State Nigeria.

### OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

**Ag. Rector:**

*Dr. Augustine A. Gabu*, FIICA  
rector@nasarawastatepoly.edu.ng  
09063458668



**A.g Registrar:**

*Mukhtar S. Wakeel*, FIICA, FCAI, MNIPR  
mukhtarwakeel@gmail.com  
08035985691

26<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2018.

Our Ref: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Ref: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Head of Department  
Language Teaching,  
Eastern Mediterranean University,  
Famagusta, North Cyprus

Sir

#### PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER QUESTIONNAIRE AND CONDUCT INTERVIEW

The bearer, Shehu Yahuza Abbas who is a Master student of Eastern Mediterranean University, Famagusta, North Cyprus is conducting his research on Children's English Language Acquisition Predominates Native Language Acquisition: Role of Parental Education and Attitudes in Northern Nigeria. has been granted the permission to administer questionnaire and conduct interview with staff who are parents in the Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Please accept this as our gesture towards contributing to education and humanity in general.

We wish him success in his research and good luck.

Mukhtar, S. Wakeel  
Ag. Registrar

*Registrar*  
NASARAWA STATE POLYTECHNIC  
LAFIA

## **Appendix C: Participant Consent Form and Invitation**

### **Participant Consent Form and Invitation Letter for Parents Questionnaire.**

#### **An Investigation of Children’s English Language predominates native Language acquisition: Role of Parental education and attitudes in Northern Nigeria.**

I, Shehu Yahuza Abbas of ELT Department undergoing my Master degree doing thesis under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Naciye KUNT on Children’s English Language predominates native Language acquisition: Role of Parental education and attitudes in Northern Nigeria. You are requested to voluntarily take part in this research study.

The purpose of this study is to further investigate and to synthesize literature on children’s English Language predominance over their native languages focusing on parental education and attitudes in Northern Nigeria. There shall be confidentiality in keeping records of this research. To demonstrate this, records of the research will be kept through which retrieval shall be only by using coded and secured password.

Participation is entirely your decision. Your decision will in no way affect what you are entitled. It is your right not to answer any question or even withdraw completely from responding on the questionnaire. Furthermore, it is your right to request that no material from your response be used; in addition, it is your right to ask questions before, during and after this research.

---

#### **CONSENT**

When you sign below, this indicates that you have accepted to voluntarily participate in the research in which you have understood all the information after you have read.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Name: ----- Signature:-----

Date: -----



## Appendix D: Parents Questionnaire

### Parents Questionnaire

Read each statement and then respond respectively as to your decision whether you:

SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = Neither Agree nor Disagree; D = Disagree;

SD = Strongly Disagree. Mark the appropriate column with an **X**.

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.					
2	My attitude makes it easier for the child to learn English language than others.					
3	If my child gets to speak this language very well, he will have many opportunities and benefits in future.					
4	It is important to practice and a lot.					
5	I would like the child to learn the language so that he/she can get to know its speakers better.					
6	Children guess when they don't know word in a foreign language.					
7	Learning English language is a matter of imitating.					
8	I have a clear value and positive attitude about English language.					
9	I always use English language to speak to my child at home.					
10	I try to make it easier for my child to understand and speak English Language.					
11	I use toys, CD ROMS, videos, computer games, etc. to facilitate my child's English Language learning.					
12	Children speak English with more excellent accent.					
13	I take English to be more valuable to my native language.					
14	I don't often speak my native language to my child as I do speak English Language.					
15	I feel more fulfilled when my child speaks English					

	Language.					
<b>S/N</b>	<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
16	Children are born with special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.					
17	Learning English Language is mostly a matter of parents exposing their children to the language.					
18	It is easier for children whose parents are educated and speak English to learn the language.					
19	It is easier for a child who already speaks a foreign language to learn another language.					
20	Nigerians think it is important to speak English Language.					
21	Children try to learn from parents who speak English.					
22	I speak my native language fluently.					
23	I don't speak my native language with my children.					
24	It is necessary for the child to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.					
25	Children learning English see it different from learning native language.					
26	I like it when children speak English and their native language equally good.					
27	I speak to my child consciously to make him/her learn English language.					
28	I correct my child when he/she speaks English Language.					
29	Children who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.					
30	My level of education and attitude encourage the acquisition of my child's native language.					
31	Positive attitude and my level of education have good effect on my child's English language learning.					
32	I don't mind my child losing his/her native language.					
33	I speak equally both English and my native language to my child.					

## Appendix E: Background Questionnaire

### Background Questionnaire

These questions are meant for this research purpose only. Your response will be kept confidential. Please answer these questions and tick the appropriate boxes.

1. Gender: Male  Female
2. Age: 25 – 30 years old  31 – 35 years old  36 – 40 years old   
41 – 45 years old  46 – 50 years old  51 -55 years old  56 – 60 years old  above 60 years old
3. Occupational Status:  
Public/Civil Servant  Private Entrepreneur  Artisan
4. Educational Status:  
Primary School Certificate  JSCE  SSCE  Diploma/ND/NCE   
HND/Degree  Master/Post Graduate  Doctorate  Others
5. Nationality: Nigerian  Non-Nigerian
6. At what age did you start to learn English? 0 – 3 years old  4 – 10 years old   
 11 – 17 years old  18 years old and above
7. How many other languages can you speak? 1  2  3  4  5
8. How fluent can you speak English? Very Fluent  Fluent  Not Fluent
9. Have you ever travelled or lived in an English-speaking country? Yes  No
10. How often do you speak English? Very Often  Often  Rarely

## **Appendix F: Parents Interview Questions**

### **Parents Interview Questions**

**Interview Questions for Children's English Language predominates native Language acquisition: The Role of Parental education and attitudes in Northern Nigeria.**

1. How will you describe children's ability to learning English Language?
2. Do you value and have positive attitude to your child speaking English Language?
3. How can you explain your literacy level at influencing your child's acquisition of English?
4. What will you say at parents' literacy level and its effects on their children's acquisition of their native language?
5. Does your child have any benefits or opportunities to achieve in respect of his/her ability to speak English Language?
6. Do you facilitate your child's English Language development through the use of toys, CD ROMS, video, computer games, etc.?
7. Do you see any reason for giving less attention to native language?
8. Do you see any reason for your child to becoming good at speaking both English and native languages?
9. Is your child likely to lose anything at foregoing his/her native language for English Language?
10. Do you have any other information to add on the child English Language and or native language acquisition?

## Appedix G: Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory

### BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING INVENTORY (BALLI)

Read each statement on the following pages. Please respond to the statements as they apply to English language study.

Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement. For example, if you strongly agree (SA), mark:

Strongly agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Undecided (U)	Disagree (D)	Strongly disagree (SD)
X				

Please respond to each statement quickly, without too much thought. Try not to change your responses after you choose them. Please answer all the questions.

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.					
2. Some languages are easier than others.					
3. If I get to speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.					
4. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.					
5. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.					
6. It's okay to guess if you don't know a word in a foreign language.					
7. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating.					
8. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well.					
9. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.					
10. It is easier to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.					
11. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.					
12. It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent.					
13. If I learn to speak this language very well, it will help me get a good job.					
14. You shouldn't say anything in a foreign language until you can say it correctly.					
15. It is easier to speak than to understand a foreign language.					

Adapted from: "The Beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students", E. Horwitz, *MLJ* 72, 283-294