

Models of Bilingual Programme used to provide Bilingual Education in selected Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

To achieve the goal of bilingual education in any education system, an appropriate bilingual programme ought to be structured into the education system with an effective mechanism to monitor the progress and implementation at every stage. This paper investigated the models of Bilingual programme used to provide Bilingual Education and the extent of its implementation in selected secondary schools in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. It adopted descriptive survey design, using mixed method of data collection and analysis in the form of structured questionnaire, interview guide and classroom observation schedule. The researcher employed purposive sampling techniques to select 30 teachers and 6 principals as respondents, in three private and three public secondary schools. The findings revealed that there was no clear model of bilingual programme operational in the secondary schools in Enugu State. This paper therefore recommends that the ministry of education should adopt Maintenance Bilingual Programme in the education system and train more bilingual teachers. The school administrators should encourage and support the implementation of the Bilingual programme in their schools. This will help to bridge the gap in the linguistic competence and proficiency of the students and in turn improve their academic performance.

Key words: Bilingual education, Bilingual Programme, bilingualism, language policy in education

Introduction

The languages in Africa face the danger of extinction and death because the policy makers have failed to plan adequately for their promotion and propagation especially in the education system. Language cannot be separated from the people's ideology, development and culture. More so, language when effectively used, creates dreams, opens up opportunities and enlarges the horizon of its users at the different spheres of life and contexts. This view re-echoes the opinion of Parra (2018, p. 86) that "Bilingual education is one of the international indicators for quality education." When the language of instruction is learner friendly, it automatically translates to their success without much extra effort.

Parra (2018), further reiterated the fourth objective of the New Sustainable Development Goals 2030 published by United Nations, which seeks to guarantee quality education among the world populace. Thus, the effective implementation of bilingual education is identified as an indispensable instrument to reach this objective, as it has proved to improve learners' access to information and cognitive abilities. Wijsekera (2018, p. 87) referring to language use in education in multilingual contexts, supporting Tollefson's (2015b) assertion which holds that, "a central issue in multilingual and multicultural education is the Medium of Instruction (MoI) which is not always specified. Language policy and planning of language programmes often have a political undertone. This explains why it seems almost impossible for many formerly colonized countries of which Nigeria is one, to adopt a workable language in education policy. Ramathan (2010) in Mensah (2018) views language policy as 'rules' and 'mandates' about language use – its governance, maintenance and reproduction at a variety of levels. According to Mensah, it is a deliberate intervention strategy aimed at expanding the functions of a language within specified social or institutional domain. This means that any bilingual programme adopted by any nation is specifically aimed at meeting the language need of such nation at various levels and especially in education.

The effectiveness of bilingual education depends largely on the type of bilingual programme(s) that is/are structured into the language in education policy. Brisk (1999) asserts that “a successful bilingual programme develops students’ language and literacy proficiency, leads them in successful academic achievement, and nurtures sociocultural integrations.” This implies that when an appropriate bilingual programme is adopted as the language in education and effectively implemented, the impact is significantly positive in the students’ response to academic instruction and vice versa.

There are different models of bilingual programmes which aim at achieving bilingual education at the various levels of education. According to Baker (2006), there are three major models within which exist sub models that help to facilitate the achievement of different types of bilingual education. Under Baker’s model the major categories are Monolingual, Weak forms of Bilingual and Strong forms of Bilingual. Table 1 shows the major categories, the subcategories and their major aims:

Table 1: Types of Bilingual Programme

Types of bilingual	Sub-category	Major aim
Monolingual	(Mainstream/submersion and structure immersion, mainstream/submersion with withdrawal classes/sheltered English/content-based ESL and Segregationist).	The sole aim of this bilingual model is to make the learner monolingual through assimilation/subtractive of the L1.
Weak forms of bilingual	(Transitional, Mainstream with foreign language teaching and Separatist	This type of bilingual achieves relative Monolingualism and limited bilingualism
Strong forms of bilingual education for bilingualism and biliteracy	(Immersion, Maintenance/heritage language, two way/dual language and Mainstream bilingual).	The strong form of bilingual models aims at achieving bilingualism and biliteracy of the learners at different levels of education

Source: Baker (2006, p. 5)

a. Monolingual forms of education for bilinguals (Mainstream/submersion and structure immersion, mainstream/submersion with withdrawal classes/sheltered English/content-based ESL and Segregationist). The sole aim of this bilingual is to make the learner monolingual through assimilation/subtractive of the L1.

b. Weak forms of bilingual education for bilinguals (Transitional, Mainstream with foreign language teaching and Separatist). This type of bilingual achieves relative monolingualism and limited bilingualism.

c. Strong forms of bilingual education for bilingualism and biliteracy (Immersion, Maintenance/heritage language, two way/dual language and Mainstream bilingual). The strong form of bilingual models aim at achieving bilingualism and biliteracy of the learners at different levels of education. The strong form of bilingual education is the most used model of bilingual programme in the advanced world like the USA and Europe.

In an educational system which aims to achieve bilingualism of the learners, it is of paramount importance that an effective and strong model of bilingual programme should be

adopted into the language policy document or the curriculum. In a paper commissioned for UNESCO (2011) the contributors highlighted that in whatever context bilingual education and programme is adopted, it goes along with different goals which the policy makers wish to achieve for the educational development of the children. However, they pointed out that numerous factors influence the choice of programme(s) adopted by any nation which include political agenda, cost of implementing such a bilingual programme, teacher training, standardized testing and cultural/linguistic orientations.

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) in Nigeria provided for bilingual education. The document provided that in the first three years of primary/basic school education, the learners should be taught in their Mother Tongue (MT) and thereafter transit to English-only medium. At the secondary school level which is divided into junior secondary school (JSS) 1-3 and Senior Secondary School (SSS) 1-3, the learners are to be taught using English language while the three major languages (Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa) should be taught as a subject, (NPE, 2004, revised).

Furthermore, the NPE provided that the learners should be exposed to the language of the immediate community (LIC) and such language should be used as media of instruction or taught as a subject. Although the NPE provided what seemed like a language-in-education plan, a close study of the document reveals that there was no specific bilingual programme planned in the policy document. This affirms Benson's (2009) assertion that some of the bilingual approaches cannot properly be referred to as bilingual education or bilingual programme. At the primary school level, the NPE provided for a transitional bilingual programme in which case the learners are supposed to be taught using MT from Basic One (1) through Basic 3 and thereafter transit to English language medium from Basic 4. Hornberger (1992) noted that transitional bilingual programmes aim at making the learners monolingual by assimilating their L1 into the mainstream language, in this case English language. For example, The Nigerian education system practicing transitional bilingual, promotes supremacy of English language at the expense of the learner's MT.

Language of instruction plays a great role in facilitating teaching and learning and an effective achievement of success of the learning outcome. Disparity in the language of instruction – English language (L2) and the learners' L1 (Igbo language) has been noted to be a contributing factor to their poor performance in both internal and external school examinations in Nigeria. The secondary schools in Enugu East Local Government of Enugu State are not left out in this dilemma. This is because there is an observed imbalance in the literacy, proficiency and competence level of the learners in the secondary schools in Enugu East local Government area of Enugu State. Such disparity inadvertently has led to the poor level of academic performance of the learners across the subjects at school and national examinations. The need to balance the existing gap between the language of instruction and the overall students' response to academic instruction and general performance suffice that an effective bilingual programme should be operational at the secondary school level of education. This therefore underscores the need to advocate for appropriate bilingual programme in the education system of the study location- Enugu state, Nigeria.

Literature Review

A good number of studies have been conducted in the area of (BE) and bilingual programmes especially in the western world. For instance, in the USA, bilingual education was identified by the civil right movement of the 1960s and as such the civil right leaders advocated for the implementation of BE in the education system to accommodate every class of learners, (Crawford, 2000 in Tabatadze, (2019). This shows that BE has a long history in the USA and Europe which underscores the high-quality education experienced in the Western world.

On the contrary, in the paper commissioned for UNESCO (2011) the authors and contributors reviewed the type of bilingual programmes implemented around the globe including some countries in Africa. Some of the countries identified to be implementing bilingual or multilingual programmes at different levels were Somalia, Madagascar, Guinea Conakry, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Tanzania, Ethiopia, South Africa, China, Guatemala, and Philippines. Unfortunately, Nigeria did not appear on the list suggesting the non-existence functional bilingual/multilingual programme in her education system.

In advanced countries in the West, bilingual education has been a major focus in the education sector. For instance, North-Western Mexico, Scheter, (2018) examined trilingual education programme which existed in the education system. The findings revealed the promotion of effective students' learning output and promotion of minority languages for posterity. Esposito and Bauer (2018) carried out a study on bilingual programmes in the US and discovered that the schools which implemented traditional English only education and a dual-language bilingual programme in the USA had positive effects in the area of students' ability to perform executive functions and academic performance. The result shows that the dual bilingual programme was more successful than the English only education. Lin and He (2019) identified four main types of bilingual models/programmes operational in China. Their findings revealed significant positive impact on the learners' academic and linguistic achievement using the bilingual education programme.

Within the African continent, Terra (2018) in Mozambique education system discovered that the teachers transit early from the use of Portuguese as medium of instruction to the use English medium. This was as a result of limited mother-tongue resources, lack of teacher training in the MT and poor language proficiency in the L1. These factors are linked to the government's inadequate plan and machinery to implement bilingual education at various levels of education. This is supported by Tabatadze, (2019), who asserts that question there is often a political and institutional challenge to the adequate planning and implementation of bilingual education in any context.

Spernes and Rutor-Korir (2018) examined the medium of instruction in schools: the indigenous language, national language or the official language in a multilingual deep rural Nandi County, Western Kenya region. They were interested in discovering the learners' and teachers' preferred medium of instruction (MoI). The findings revealed that the learners preferred Nandi, Kiswahili and English languages as MoI. They concluded that bilingual education has significant impact on the learners' academic achievement hence should be encouraged.

In Nigeria, conscious effort has been made to study the possibility of bilingual education in the different states of the federation with particular attention given to minority languages according to locality. For instance, Etim, Okon, and Okon (2018) examined the first language Attrition of Lexical Structure in a contact situation with English focusing on Anaan bilingual children in Akwa Ibom state of Nigeria. The researchers sought to find out the cause of the disintegration of the learners' L1 when they come in contact with L2 in the classroom. The findings showed that when learners transit much earlier from MT medium to English medium it slows down their learning ability and they lose their L1 competence. This however, suggests that bilingual education produces better academic balance to the learners.

In a related study Aaron, (2018) undertook to examine the promotion of bilingual education using "Obolo" dialect as medium of instruction in basic schools and beyond in Delta State, Nigeria. He concludes that the promotion and implementation of Obolo bilingual education holds great academic values for the parents and learners in the state. The recommendation was that the education providers and policy makers in the state promote bilingual education especially developing the minority languages to be used as medium of

instructions in the basic schools and beyond. Similarly, Adepoju (2019) reviewed the mother tongue for early child education as provided by the NPE (2004 revised). The findings revealed that parents preferred and are more comfortable with English language medium of education than any other language. Again, he noted a variance between the adoption of an indigenous language as the medium of instruction and the parents' desire to make their children speak English language as their first language (L1). He recommends uniformity of policy implementation to reduce the conflicts existing between elites and non-fee-paying government schools in the area of medium of instruction. Anas and Liman (2016) and Anyadiegwu (2016) gave support to the parents', teachers' and pupils' preference of English language as a medium of instruction. Their study confirms high level of preference of English language against the MT.

The school system has a great role to play in the propagation and integration of our culture and Language to ensure its posterity. This would be achieved through effective bilingual programmes in the Basic and secondary schools. One of the negative effects of colonialism which remained in Africa is the inability of the African linguists to substantially work on the improvement of African languages. Consequently, the African education system depicts a very low level of indigenous language promotion. The education planners and curriculum developers have consistently paid less attention to such issues as language planning especially the MoI in schools. Thus, the resultant effect is that the school system adopts the language of the affluence and global language which is the English language.

Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design and mixed method of data collection and analysis in the form of structured questionnaire for the teachers and interview guide for the principals. The teachers (30) teaching English language, Igbo language, Science, religious education and vocational skills were selected in order to obtain information on the language used in the classroom. And the (6) principals were chosen to obtain information on the language policy and its implementation in the school. The researcher sampled 6 secondary schools comprising; 3 private and 3 public schools in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State. This aimed at gaining comparative result on the objective of the research. The quantitative data derived from demographic information were ordered, coded and analyzed using descriptive statistic tools (SPSS) version 20 and presented in the forms, frequencies and percentages. The qualitative data were recorded, transcribed, thematized and presented in a descriptive manner.

The main objective of this paper was to identify the model(s) of bilingual programme used by selected secondary schools' administrators to provide bilingual education in Enugu East Local Government area of Enugu State.

Data Presentation

Table 2 below shows the demographic information of the teachers and principals who participated in the study:

Table 2: Return Rate: Demographic Information

Participants	Questionnaires Issued	Actual Sample	Return Rate (%)
Teachers	30	30	27 (90%)
Principal interview	6	6	6 (100%)

The teachers were given 30 structured questionnaires out of which, 27 (90%) were returned, while the principals' interviews had 6 (100%) respondents. This means that the response rate was substantial to make conclusions.

The paper sought to establish the bilingual programme used to provide bilingual education in selected secondary schools in Enugu East local government area of Enugu state. It was important to highlight the teachers' knowledge and awareness of bilingual programmes as well as the provisions of the NPE (2004). The teachers are the key implementers of bilingual education because they interact with the curriculum and interpret its content according to learners' realities and learning needs of the students in the classroom. Table three below shows the response rate of the teachers to the questions seeking to obtain their awareness of the provisions or content of the NPE (2004 revised)

Table 3: Teachers' awareness of NPE (2004)

<i>Statement</i>	<i>SA</i>		<i>A</i>		<i>U</i>		<i>D</i>		<i>SD</i>	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Teachers' awareness of the language policy provided by the NPE	13	48.1	8	29.6	4	14.8	1	3.7	1	3.7
Teachers have read through the NPE language policy document	7	25.9	8	29.6	6	22.2	5	18.5	1	3.7
Teachers understood what bilingual programme means as provided by the NPE	7	25.9	12	44.4	3	11.1	2	7.4	2	7.4
Bilingual education means teaching and explaining lesson concepts in two or more languages	16	59.3	7	25.9	2	7.4	1	3.7	1	3.7

Key to the tool of response:

SA=>Strongly Agree, A=> Agree, U => Undecided, D=> Disagree and SD=> Strongly Disagree

Table 3 provides the teachers' responses on their awareness of the government policy in education which embodies the language policy for every level of education in Nigeria. This was important to establish that the teachers' lack of implementation of the policy was not out of ignorance but other factors. From the table above, the teachers were asked to state their level of awareness of the language policy provided for the secondary school level of education. The responses showed that majority of the teachers 21 (77.7%) agreed to their awareness of the NPE and its provisions while 2 (7.4%) disagreed of their awareness of the NPE provisions. Furthermore, the teachers' responses on whether they have read the NPE provisions revealed that 15 (55.5%) agreed that they had read the document while 6 (22.2%) disagreed and 6 (22.2%) were uncertain about having read the document or not.

Again, the teachers were assessed to ascertain their knowledge of the meaning of bilingual programme or education. In that regard, majority of the teachers 19 (70.3%) agreed

that they understood what bilingual education meant, while 4 (14.8%) disagreed to their knowledge of bilingual education. The rest were not sure 3 (11.1%). Finally, the teachers' confirmation of the knowledge of bilingual education as a process of teaching and explaining lesson concepts in two or more languages was sought. Their responses revealed that a majority agreed to the knowledge of the meaning of bilingual education 23 (85.2%), while 2 (7.4%) disagreed, and 2 (7.2%) were uncertain. Therefore, the teachers' level of awareness suggested that they had sufficient information needed to provide guidance for the implementation of the bilingual programme where it was designed into the school policy.

Similarly, the study sought to discover the teachers' knowledge of bilingual programme and its implementation in their schools. Therefore, Table 4 below shows the response rate of the teachers.

Table 4: Teachers' Knowledge of Bilingual Programmes

Statement	Yes		No		Missing	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Do you have a bilingual programme in your school?	12	44.4	14	51.9	1	(3.7%)
Is the bilingual programme implemented	11	40.7	15	55.6	1	(3.7%)

In Table 4 the teachers confirmed the presence or absence of bilingual programmes in their respective schools. Consequently, 12 (44.4%) teachers agreed that there seemed to be what they call bilingual programme in their school. While 14 (51.9%) disagreed on any form of bilingual programme running in their schools and 1 (3.7%) did not respond. Again, the teachers' responses showed that a bilingual programme was not implemented in the selected schools 15 (55.6%) and 11 (40.7%) agreed that there was an element of implementation of a bilingual programme in the sampled schools.

Table 5: Principals' awareness and implementation of a Bilingual Programme

Demographic Information

Statement	Yes		No	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Principals' awareness of the provisions of the language policy document of NPE and its implementation	6	100	0	0

In Table 5 the principals' interview sought to establish the model of bilingual programme in existence in their various schools. The first part of the question required a statement of affirmation in which all the principals 6 (100%) agreed that there was a form of bilingual programme operational in their schools. This affirmed some of the teachers' submission that there was a model of bilingual programme running in their schools which they were not sure of the actual name.

Furthermore, the second part of the principals' interview guide required an explicit explanation of the particular model of the bilingual programme practiced in the sampled schools. The principals' responses to the question showed that majority of the schools had what seemed to be a language policy used by the individual schools which had no paper documentation. The principals' responses were transcribed and thematized as: Use of L1 & L2

(Igbo and English language) and L2 & L2 (English and French language) in their schools. Some of the principal's responses were as follow:

“We have two, i.e. Igbo and English. We use both for comprehensive understanding for the students.” (Principal Informant 2, 2021).

“We implement the NPE policy i.e. teaching and using one native language of the immediate environment which is Igbo in our case in addition to the English language. More so, we dedicate every Friday for the use of Igbo language for every activity in the school beginning with conducting assembly and singing the national and school anthem in the Igbo language. We also celebrate the different cultural festivals in Igbo land as a way of promoting the use of the language among the teachers and students.” (Principal informant 4, 2021)

“We teach and use English and the French language in our school because that is what we want to promote in our school.” (Principal informant 6, 2021)

Results and Discussions

The data in Table 3 generally revealed the responses of the teachers that they were aware of the NPE provisions about the language in education as well as understood the meaning of bilingual education and what it implied. These responses were quite significant to the study because one of the intervening variables pointed to the teacher's ignorance of the NPE provisions on language in education as factors militating against the success of bilingual education in Nigeria. However, this level of awareness did not translate to active appreciation and promotion of bilingual education in some of the sampled schools. These responses confirmed Rehamo & Harrell (2018) findings in China where there was a widespread support for bilingual education yet, the structural and practical implementation of the programmes was marred by the stakeholders – teachers and administrators' laxity in the implementation of BE.

Similarly, observation revealed that the principals' level of awareness of the NPE (2004) and its provisions did not substantiate the level of implementation of the bilingual programme in the sampled schools. Although, all the principals of the six sampled schools were aware of the provision of bilingual education in the policy handbook, there was no implementation per se. However, in actual sense and meaning of the term - models of bilingual programme were uncommon to the teachers and principals. What they referred to as programmes practiced in their schools cannot rightly fit into bilingual programmes. The researcher's observation showed that the schools practiced what helped them to deliver their lessons. Hence, some practiced strict English language (L2) medium while others sparingly allowed occasional use of MT in the classroom teaching and learning.

The schools that agreed that there was a model of the bilingual programme were basically practicing weak transitional bilingual programme according to Baker, (2006) models of the bilingual education programme. In such a programme, the students moved from minority language (Igbo) to majority language (English language). This, however, leads to assimilation and subtraction of the students' L1 which was occasionally used in the education system. The general outcome of this model of bilingual education becomes monolingual – where the students were taught in the majority language (English) with less use of the minority language L1. The research finding of Malarz, (2018) affirmed that this type of bilingual programme does not stress the child's native language (L1) and thus, does not teach the student to read or write in the native language. From the observation schedule, most of the teachers practically taught in English language without necessarily explaining any part of the lessons in the students' L1.

Conclusion

In conclusion, from available data and responses to research questionnaires and interview guide, it was clear that the teachers and principals of sampled schools were aware of Language policy documents as issued by the NPE (2004). Also, some have read the document and had the knowledge of what bilingual education was meant to achieve in teaching and learning and in the educational achievement of the students. However, they (school administrators) had little or no idea of the effective models of bilingual programmes and how to apply them to teaching and learning for optimal results. Furthermore, there is no available plan to adopt any of the effective models of the bilingual programme within their respective schools which would help to provide the needed bilingual education in order to attain the goal of bilingualism. Apparently, they (school administrators) have vague knowledge of the models of the bilingual programme as provided by Baker, (2006) and even other sources. Almost all the sampled schools were observed practicing early transition programme whose aim was the assimilation and subtraction of the students' L1 and instantly replace it with L2 medium.

Conclusively, the paper highlighted that the major problem for the non-implementation of bilingual education in the education system is the lack of clear guideline on the type of bilingual education needed for effective bilingualism as well measures for its successful implementation. Similarly, from observation, it was obvious that the teachers lacked proficiency in the L1. On the part of the education authority, there was a lack of effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to checkmate the laid down policy and its implementation in the school. Inadequate financial and material resources for the implementation of educational programme generally and in particular, bilingual education poses serious challenge in the system as highlighted in this study.

Recommendation

The findings of this research revealed that there was no named Model of bilingual programme(s) running in the sampled secondary schools in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State. Therefore, the researcher recommends that, keeping in view the models of bilingual programmes as outlined in Baker, (2006), an effective bilingual programme should be structured into the National Policy in Education in Nigeria. Preferably, the maintenance bilingual programme according to Baker (2006), which has the aim of producing fluent and balanced bilinguals, providing curriculum for both languages in a bilingual classroom, and teaching literacy consecutively should be structured into the education programme.

In addition, it has the potential of producing bilingual teachers, strengthening the cultural identity and civil rights of both students and teachers. This should be adopted into the language policy in the secondary schools in Nigeria. It is when such bilingual programmes are adopted and implemented in the Nigerian education system that the students' linguistic performance and general academic performance would witness the desired improvement. This is because research has revealed that bilingual education impacts positively on the learners' response to academic instruction and general performance.

The effectiveness of bilingual education in the secondary schools in Enugu East according to the findings was greatly hindered by the schools' administrators' nonchalant attitude towards language planning policy or programmes that would help to achieve the goal of bilingual education. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the principals provide programmes that will promote the students' L1 – Igbo language and at the same time build their L2 English language. Programmes like celebrating some of the cultural festivals and teaching the Igbo culture in the schools could be ways of instilling the love and interest of Igbo language and culture in the students. Similarly, government officials' poor monitoring and implementation of laid down educational policies and programmes contributed greatly. Thus, the researcher

recommends that the policy makers in education should put in place effective mechanism to monitor the implementation of any approved policy in education.

Furthermore, the researcher highly recommends that the Ministry of Education through its policy formulators and curriculum developers study the bilingual programmes available in the bilingual education fields and formulate language policies which will capture the most effective bilingual programme: preferably, Maintenance bilingual programme to facilitate bilingual education of the students in Enugu State. Additionally, the education ministry should as a matter of necessity monitor effectively whatever bilingual programmes provided. The monitoring should include making sure that all the secondary schools in Enugu State have a functional step-down bilingual policy in their individual schools.

Through field observation, it was discovered that some of the teachers lacked proficiency in both languages (L1 & L2). Therefore, the researcher suggests that more teachers be trained to handle the bilingual education effectively and as suggested by the teachers, Igbo language should be made compulsory and an examinable subject for the students. On a final note, parents as stakeholders in the education of their children should be co-teachers of the children on the value of bilingual education. By so doing, the love and value of their MT and cultural heritage which maintenance bilingual programme is set to achieve would be encouraged and promoted by the parents.

Disclosure of interest statement

There is no potential conflict of interest whatsoever from any author

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