

## Fish out of Water: Linguistic outsiders in a Nigerian University Setting: Impact on information access, learning and social wellbeing

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### ABSTRACT

Nigeria is a country with multiple ethnic groups; as a result, English language is used as a lingua franca to enhance information flow. Despite this, the Indigenous languages of communities are mostly used for interactions, even in university environments thereby affecting smooth interaction for those who do not understand them. This study therefore investigated the impact of being a linguistic outsider on information access, learning and social wellbeing of students. Descriptive research of a case study was used for this study. The population for this study consisted of non-Yoruba indigenous students. Judgmental sampling technique was used to select 50 non-indigenous students; structured interview was used. Results showed that Yoruba indigenous language was used lightly in the classroom and heavily outside the classroom, with mixtures of pidgin and English languages. It was found that being a linguistic outsider had a negative influence on information access. However it was not a total dependent factor to social wellbeing of students who desire for their various languages to be predominantly used and for them to enjoy equal benefits with Yoruba indigenes. This study also revealed that being a linguistic outsider does not have negative influence on academic learning. It was recommended that the stakeholders in university management promote the complete use of English language in the classroom while students should be encouraged to interpret Yoruba language when spoken in the midst of non-indigenes.

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## 1. Introduction

A fish outside of its natural habitat would naturally find it difficult to breathe and depending on how long it stays outside, it could eventually die; though one might not accept such analogy in totality for humans who have the capacity to adapt in new environment. A human being would not die as a fish would, but would have the tendency to be imbalanced psychologically (Bingham & Okagaki, 2012; Jensen, 2013; Krieger, 2011; Massimiliano & Prue, 2009). The ability to understand information and express oneself is a fundamental human right; therefore where there is difficulty in communication, there is tendency for struggle in interaction; just as a fish would struggle to breathe. Learning among students involves interactions and communication in a uniform language and this could occur either in a classroom or outside a classroom (Kuh, 2004). This means that where there is no uniform way of communicating, students would not be able to learn. Astin (1984) and Thomas (2012) have asserted that students would lose interest in their studies, have a limited access to information and would not be able to socialize well due to certain factors found in their environment. According to Astin (1984) and Thomas (2012), students from different background gain admission into universities and in turn have to face with factors in their university environment which might not align well with the attributes they have imbibed in their different backgrounds. Some of these factors are multiculturalism, different social classes and behavior and different languages; they also face the campus cultural capital with which they could create ease in their new environment.

Nigeria is a country of multiple languages, ethnic groups, and diversity of culture (Akinnaso, 1990). Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups that speak different languages and practice different culture and ideology (Anukaenyi, 2019); however each of the ethnic groups has their environments of dominance where their culture, language, and ideology rule. As well, in each academic environment, there is an ethnic group which dominates and has large population compared to others (Igbafe, 2021; Mustapha, 2005). Their dominance involves the institutionalization of their language and culture; which in turn makes such language and culture normative and people from other ethnic groups try to adjust in such environment in order to create ease in interaction and communication (Igbafe, 2021). Indigenous language has always been a means of ethnic group affiliation and segmentation; as such it portrays that those who speak it share the same ancestors and deserve preferential treatment when they are in their ethnic environment or among their ethnic group (Van Den Berghe, 1971; Igbafe, 2021). As such, indigenous languages of communities are used unofficially and accorded recognition in the communities in which they are spoken (Ajepe & Ademowo, 2016; Sani, 2021). As a result of this, they have become ingrained in communication and in interaction to such an extent that even when English language is used in interaction, indigenous language of predominance in such community is intermittently used making it difficult for those who do not understand it to comprehend the whole conversation (Shamman, 2021).

Nigerian Universities are spread across diverse ethnic environments (Igbafe, 2021) to ensure equal distribution of government benefits (Achimugu, Ata-Agboni & Abdullahi, 2013). As a result, there are not only state universities in different ethnic environments but also federal universities in almost every state in Nigeria (Sasu, 2022). The Federal Universities have their catchment areas which are States that have proximity with them (Schoolnews.com, 2021). As a result, students that fall

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into the catchment areas have better chances of gaining admission by reason of their states of origin (Omenka, 2014; Sam, Souriyavongsa, Zain, & Jamil, 2013); while those outside the catchment areas would not be given any preferential treatment but must be able to meet the criteria provided for students of their category. As a result, the population of students from a University catchment area is made up of students from the same ethnic group, who speak the same indigenous language; and they form the large population of students in such university (Danladi, 2013; Igbafe, 2021; SchoolNewsNG, 2021). In South – West Universities, the catchment areas are Lagos, Ekiti, Osun, Oyo, Ondo, and Ogun states. These are the six states that make up south-west Nigeria; and they share the same culture and language. Although Nigerian State Universities do not have catchment areas, but they are autonomous and established their state universities for the benefit of students from their ethnic base; hence cultural dominance is inherent in their establishment. Ekiti State University is in South-West Nigeria and hence shares the same boundary, culture and language as Lagos, Osun, Oyo, Ondo, and Ogun states. In the same way, other universities in other parts of Nigeria also have states they share the same boundary, culture and language with, thereby creating diversity in culture and language. As a result of these, Nigeria has adopted English language as a legal unifying language to be used in all public places (Ventures Africa, 2018).

English language is the official language in Nigeria, a lingua franca which though adopted, has become uniform language with which all ethnic groups interrelate (Ventures Africa, 2018). It has overtime become widely used in Nigeria in so much that it has influenced practical deviation from the provision of Nigerian National Policy on Education (2004, s.4, p.19(e) which states different educational levels where English language should be used in teaching and where indigenous language of a community is to be used (Anukaenyi, 2019; Danladi, 2013). Nigerian National Policy on Education provides that indigenous language is to be used in teaching at nursery, and first 3 years of primary school while English language is taught at the same time as a subject in such levels (Anukaenyi, 2019; Danladi, 2013; Faloye & Olaniyan, 2020). While English language is to be used in teaching at the next 3 senior years of primary school (Primary 4, 5 and 6) and throughout secondary school while indigenous language is taught as a subject in such levels (Nigerian National Policy on Education, 2004, s.4, p.19 (e)). These provisions on education policy has however been deviated from as reality show that children who were to learn English language as a subject in nursery and primary schools start speaking it right from home as it becomes language of communication alongside with their indigenous language (Sani, 2021). More so, the indigenous languages of communities meant to be taught as a subject in mid primary and throughout secondary schools in Nigeria with the intent that students will learn it and be able to communicate with it before university education is not impactful because of the brief period in teaching it. Thus, English language becomes the language they are conversant with for communication. However this is only rampant in urban environment and not in rural environments where universities are mostly situated. In rural universities, indigenous languages have become institutionalized to such an extent that it has become a cultural capital which provides ease in a university environment (Adeniyi, 2019). This study uses embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu, 2016) to show how indigenous language can impact on information access, wellbeing and learning of undergraduates in a Nigerian university environment.

### *1.1 Statement of the Problem*

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Nigeria is a country with multiple ethnic groups and languages; as a result, English language is used as a neutral language to carry everyone along. In a university environment where learning takes place, the usage of English language becomes important due to the presence of students from diverse ethnic backgrounds who do not understand the indigenous languages of university communities; and who would need to interact in order to access information required for learning and wellbeing. They will suffer in accessing information, learning and wellbeing if they cannot understand languages used in their university environments; despite this, the indigenous languages of university communities have become the informal languages in university environment thereby leading to concerns on how information access, learning and social wellbeing of students who do not understand them are carried out. It is in the light of this that this study investigates the impact of Yoruba indigenous language usage on non-Yoruba students' information access, learning and social wellbeing.

### *1.2 Objectives of the study*

The main objectives of this study is to find out how being a linguistic outsider has impact on the information access, learning and social wellbeing of undergraduates in a Nigerian university. The specific objectives are to:

- (a) Find out the non-Yoruba ethnic group extraction that is more predominant in Ekiti State University.
- (b) Find out the language spoken more between English language and Yoruba language among the non-Yoruba ethnic group extraction.
- (c) Investigate the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the information access of students of non-Yoruba ethnic group extraction.
- (d) Ascertain the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the social wellbeing of students of non-Yoruba ethnic group extraction.
- (e) Determine the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the academic learning of students non-Yoruba ethnic group extraction.

### *1.3 Research Questions*

The questions which this study seeks to answer would be:

- (a) Which ethnic group residing outside their ethnic base is more predominant in Ekiti State University?
  - (b) Which language do students schooling outside their ethnic base use more between English language and Yoruba indigenous language?
  - (c) What is the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the information access of students schooling outside their ethnic base?
  - (d) What is the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the social wellbeing of students schooling
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outside their ethnic base?

- (e) What is the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the academic learning of students schooling outside their ethnic base?

#### *1.4 Operational Definition of Terms*

- (a) Cultural Capital: Cultural Capital explains the possession of societal items that bestows power and recognition to its bearer and alignment or possession of cultural semblance of acceptance and recognition. It is a familiarity with the legitimate culture within a society (Crump, 2019). It becomes a capital because it can be traded with and can pave way for its bearer.
- (b) Language: A language is a group of dialects and to speak a language is to speak a particular dialect of such language (Kusumaningram & Humss, 2014). Languages have official recognition. It is spoken and understood by a group of people who also have their individual dialects but have such language as a unifying one.
- (c) Dialect: Dialect is a variety of unique indigenous language used by a group of people born in the same community, who have a deeper and unique social, cultural and or regional association ((Kusumaningram & Humss, 2014).
- (d) Indigenous language: Indigenous language is a general dialect spoken by people from the same ethnic group who have their diverse community dialects but who generally use their indigenous language as a means of recognition. It is a language that is native to a group of people in a region or geographical area who share same belief and culture (IGI Global, 2021).
- (e) Outsider: Outsider is defined as an inferior other (Welsh, 2016); an inferior other of anything.
- (f) Linguistic Outsider: A linguistic outsider can then be defined as a second-class type of a language in an environment; an unpopular kind of a language in a cultural environment.

## 2. Literature Review

The populations of students who are from surrounding communities in Nigerian universities are always very high in number (Okoroma, 2008; Omeje, Egwa & Adikwu, 2016, Ogunnika 1988; Thomas, 2012) due to the proximity their communities share with their institution of learning; although the policy of catchment areas in federal universities also contribute to this. This is also the reason behind the employment of university staff from almost the same ethnic environment (Omeje, Egwa & Adikwu, 2016). This fosters a mutual relationship between such university and its surrounding community (Akindola & Ojo, 2020; Ajepe & Ademowo, 2016; Olajire, 2021). Such relationship extend to the extent that the language of such community is naturally spoken and the culture implemented mostly because of the population of students and staff from the same geo-political zone (IGBINWEK A & Anukaenyi, 2017; Omeje, Egwa, & Adikwu, 2016; Okorie, 2022). This brings up the concept of an insider and outsider in language as those who speak and understand the indigenous language

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of such university community are insiders while those who do not are outsiders (SureFaze, 2019).

Nero (2015) asserts that the feeling of being a linguistic outsider affects the confidence level and self-dignity of outsiders who have to abandon their own mother tongue and strive to learn and communicate in the indigenous language of another ethnic group. However McCrudden (2008) have asserted that self-dignity is context specified as the opportunity to learn a new language other than one's mother tongue cannot be said to directly affect self-dignity since such individual would always have an opportunity to speak their mother tongue when they come in contact with members of their ethnic group. As a result of this, Yusuf (2012) have asserted that Nigerian indigenous languages have become a tool for integration as well as disintegration; while also becoming a tool for inclusion, exclusion, or marginalization.

Bingham and Okagaki (2012), Krieger (2011), Massimiliano and Prue (2009), Sheridan (2011) found that students who are not able to socialize and be accepted in a group have psychological issues; language is an instrument of socialization and integration. Although in Massimiliano and Prue (2009), Krieger (2011), language was not a factor of exclusion but rather academic grades, argumentative skills, oratory skills and student's knowledge of law. Despite this, Massimiliano and Prue (2009), Krieger (2011) showed that law students who were not accepted felt excluded and got depressed because they did not possess certain requirements that could have qualified their inclusion in such group. These requirements were institutionalized capital that could have made legal education easeful for those who possessed them. In support of this conclusion, Thomas (2012) found that students who were not able to acclimatize to the spoken language and culture in their environment of learning had issues with their social interaction; this in turn affected their information access. This was also the same finding in Shamman (2021) where intermittent use of an indigenous language in between a uniform language affected information flow. It was also found in Shamman (2021) that apart from the impact intermittent use of a non-uniform language had on information flow, there was also an effect on the social wellbeing of individuals who couldn't understand such language as they felt like strangers; more so since the language was not interpreted. Although Bryne (2015) found that there could always be a way of navigating an environmental factor which is by acquiring the requirements needed to be accepted in such group. Possessing such requirement does not only enhance social wellbeing but also free flow of information. Social wellbeing is defined as the ability to develop meaningful relationship with others which in turn elucidates positive emotions like happiness, excitement, contentment, and a feeling of belonging (Sinclair, 2021). Hence social wellbeing elucidates ease and continuity in information sharing thereby enhancing access. Social wellbeing has also being found to be contributory to information access as students who refused to seek the assistance of their institutional library officers because they termed them as harsh, were not able to get the assistance they required in their area of information need Ogba (2013).

In Nigeria, the ability to interact in an indigenous language of a host community or group of people has overtime become easy criteria to friendship or closeness (Igbafe, 2021; Olajire, 2021). Omusonga, Kazadi and Indoshi (2009), Melesse and Molla (2018) conclude that Indigenous language has become an issue of concern as students are affected in their academics due to their inability to interact freely in their academic environment. This was also the same conclusion in Sheridan (2011) where students who were not able to conform to the campus way of life struggled in their

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relationship as well their studies. Although studies in Faloye and Olaniyan (2020) show that students in Nigerian universities interact in both English language and indigenous language; it is not however known the extent to which they use them.

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The cultural capital of Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) is majorly a reflection of dominance occasioned by possession of an institutionalized social attribute or what is termed “capital” in an environment. In Nigeria, studies have shown that there is much use of English language in communication to such an extent that indigenous languages have been relegated to the background (Ajepe & Ademowo, 2016). However, this has not made English language a cultural capital in Nigerian society as it does not possess any social attribute in any Nigerian community. Although a uniform language enhances social interaction and learning (Jain, 2017); however Nigerian situation is such that each ethnic group with its culture and indigenous language protects its heritage which is seen as distinct and unique to other cultures. As a result, English language which is Nigeria’s lingua franca is not a cultural capital in Nigeria’s rural communities (Adeniyi, 2019) where universities are mostly situated.

Social interaction has been found to be a factor to learning (Kuh, 2004). This was also the same conclusion in Gatwiri (2015), The Educator (2018), Obanya (2006), Young, Sercombe, Sachdev, Naeb and Schartner (2013). These studies found that there cannot be learning without seamless communication. In describing communication, Reverso dictionary (2021) states that communication is a cord and one communication combines with another for a smooth flow and understanding of a message. Thus, any snap occasioned by introduction of a strange language while conveying a message leads to confusion and collapse of everything initially understood. This happens when there is a bridge in communication (Agarwal, 2012), occasioned by sudden introduction of foreign items. Dervin and Huesca in Agarwal (2012) explained in communication theory that communication is not about homogeneity of language, but about the ability to dialogue, providing interpretation when there is an introduction of a different language. Hence the introduction of a different language does not halt communication but the inability to interpret the new language introduced; this is the same case with learning that take place in a class room and outside a classroom. As a result information can be seen to be shared but not communicated due to introduction of new language that creates a bridge communication and affects learning.

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### *2.1 Theoretical Review of literature*

Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) introduced the theory of “cultural capital” which states that capital determines the amount of power, influence and comfort a person possesses in an environment. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) theory states that capital is the foundation of social life and provides the possessor with abilities to attain high status in life. It represents social assets like skills, accent, dialect, qualifications, clothing, material belonging and many others (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). According to Bourdieu (2016), Cultural Capital is made up of 3 forms which are embodied, objectified and institutionalized capital. While embodied capital signifies capital that is inborn; qualities like accent, dialect, language; objectified capital signifies material belongings like luxury car, clothes, and other things that can be purchased with money. The possession of objectified capital places the possessor in a class hierarchy that portrays Karl Marx bourgeoisie (Ryan, 2021). In an environment where embodied capital is recognized, the possession of objectified capital is not of much relevance as there are ideologies attached to embodied capital that is not equated to possession of objectified or institutionalized capital. Van Den Berghe (1971) and Igbafe (2021) assert that those who speak the same language share the same ancestral commonality and see themselves as family. Institutionalized capital is not inborn but is a result of possessing academic qualifications that creates distinction in the labor market.

Yoruba language is an embodied capital; it is an indigenous language generally spoken by Yoruba indigenes. It is differentiated from Yoruba dialects which are native languages to different communities in Yoruba region (Abiazem, 2021; Kayode-Adedeji, 2015). Yoruba indigenous language is understood and spoken generally as a uniform indigenous language whereas dialects are unique to communities. In Nigerian universities, possession of embodied capital attracts certain benefits (Huang, 2019; Olajire, 2021). According to Olajire (2021), indigenes have their admission mark lowered so that majority of them are able to get admitted; unlike the non-indigenes whose admission mark is made to be higher than those of the indigenes (Olajire, 2021). The benefits attached to being an indigenes are as a result of their birth origin; this has made indigenes insiders while every other person is an outsider (Nero, 2015; Shamman, 2021). Hence the language they speak become insider language which creates benefits for those who possess them; thereby making it a capital. Welsh (2016) define an outsider as an inferior other; an inferior other of anything, a second fiddle. A Linguistic outsider can then be defined as a person who possesses in an environment a second-class type of indigenous language that is not popular and not generally used for communication. The impact being an outsider has on information access, learning and wellbeing of those who do not possess it is the focus of this paper.

### 3. Methodology

This study investigated the impact Yoruba language usage has on non-Yoruba students’ learning, information access, and wellbeing. A case study design was used for the study. Judgmental sampling technique was used to select 50 non-indigenous students and it cut across 5 faculties; ten across

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faculties of Arts, Law, Economics, Tourism and Psychology. This study used a structured interview. Face and content validity of the interview were ascertained by experts in library and information science and a Law Librarian. Fifty copies of instruments were administered by the researcher but only 33 were returned. Thematic content analysis was used to analyze the data collected by grouping responses according to the topical concepts. Responses that answer the items in this study were given codes that reflect them and grouped under concepts while like responses were assigned the same numbers in accordance with their category. This continued until the data were analyzed and evidences of the result from different categories were selected.

## 4. Results

One research instrument which was used to obtain data answered the questions in this study. Content analysis and report of findings for this study has been arranged under the categories: demographic details, information access, learning and well-being. It is under these categories that the research questions were answered.

### *4.1 Demographic Details*

***RQ 1: Which ethnic group residing outside their ethnic base is more predominant in Ekiti State University?***

The respondents were found to come from diverse ethnic backgrounds and speak diverse indigenous languages.

#### Diverse ethnic background

The respondents were found to come from different backgrounds like: Agbor, Benin, Edo, Hausa, Igbo, Iga and Tiv. There was a predominance of just one student from each background: excluding Iga and Igbo. Iga was found to have a predominance of just 2 students while Igbo was found to have a predominance of 26 students in Ekiti State University. This answers the question on the ethnic group that has more predominance in the study area; Igbo is more predominant in the study area as a minority group.

***RQ 2: Which language does students schooling outside their ethnic base use more between English language and Yoruba indigenous language?***

In response to this question, the language spoken more at home and the language spoken more in school were ascertained.

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### Language spoken more at home

It was found that respondents' various indigenous languages were spoken more at home. Almost all the students except one; can speak their indigenous languages and do speak them freely at home, but not in school. The indigenous languages found to be spoken more at home were:

*"Agbor, Benin, Edo, Hausa, Ibo and Tiv languages"*

This implies that there is multilingualism in Nigeria; and that majority of the respondents are bilingual.

### Language spoken more in their University

It was also found that though most of the respondents are able to communicate in their diverse indigenous languages due to their background; they are not able to communicate in Yoruba indigenous language. While 6 were found to communicate well in Yoruba indigenous language, 27 were found unable to do so but rather speak English language more. For example is the evidence below:

*"... I understand and can communicate in unofficial (Yoruba) language well"*

*"... I understand Yoruba..."*

This implies that it is not only Yoruba indigenes that can speak their language; some non-Yoruba indigenes who have been able to learn Yoruba language can also do so. However it was shown that English language was spoken more by the non-indigenous students while some of them who understand Yoruba language use it to make their learning, social wellbeing and information access smooth. For example:

*"English because people understand English."*

*"English language because my mother tongue is not usually used within the school environment."*

*"English because I understand better with it."*

*"Yes, I never missed a thing being communicated..."*

*"... it enables me communicate with market women..."*

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#### 4.2 Impact on Information Access

**RQ 3:** *What is the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the information access of students schooling outside their ethnic base?*

In providing the results under this category, the impact on information access from non- understanding of Yoruba indigenous language on information access was placed under two categories. These are: language used more between English language and Yoruba indigenous language for information sharing; and impact such language has on their information access.

##### Language used more between Yoruba indigenous language and English language for information sharing

In response to the above question, it was shown that all the 33 respondents agreed that English language is used officially for information sharing. However, it was also revealed by them that Yoruba indigenous language is used unofficially. The evidences are shown under different sub-headings.

##### *Language used for teaching*

When asked about the language used for teaching, 31 respondents stated that English language is used for teaching while only 2 respondents stated that it was both Yoruba and English language in blended form that was used. For example:

*Respondent 4: "Yoruba /English [language]"*

*Respondent 2: "...lecturers communicate in English language"*

It was shown from further results that the statement by respondent 4 means that Yoruba indigenous language is usually brought intermittently while teaching with English language. Thus, the evidence of result as shown above (Respondent 4) does not mean that Yoruba indigenous language is mixed equally with English language during lectures, but that it is brought intermittently during lectures in order to provide better explanations. For example is the reactions of some of the respondents when Yoruba language is brought intermittently during lectures:

Reactions when Yoruba language is brought intermittently during lectures:

*Respondent 1: "I appear lost"*

*Respondent 3: "feeling left out"*

*Respondent 20: "I don't understand most of what is taught..."*

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*Respondent 19: "It is making me uncomfortable..."*

These evidences show that there is interruption in the flow of information when Yoruba indigenous language is brought intermittently during lectures; thereby affecting information access in the classroom.

#### *Language used in the Library*

More result also showed that English language is used predominantly in library environment; although 3 respondents agreed that English language mixed with Yoruba language is used when library officers interact with students. Four (4) respondents stated that Yoruba language is used by library staff to communicate to them, while 2 respondents stated that Yoruba and Pidgin English are used by library staff. Altogether, 9 respondents agreed that English language is not used seamlessly in the library environment, for example:

*"Yoruba"*

*"Yoruba/Pidgin"*

This result has introduced Pidgin English as another language that is also mingled with Yoruba language during information sharing. The evidence below show the reaction the use of English language and Yoruba language in blended form has on information access.

Reactions:

*Respondents no.3: "...It makes me don't like going to the library"*

However, when the respondents were asked about the influence of the official language [English language] when used by library staff, they responded that there was a positive effect. For example:

*Respondent 1: "Quick understanding, easy access"*

*Respondents 3: "It urge[s] me to study more in the library"*

*Respondent 12: "It helps to increase how I relate with people of other ethnic [groups] and improves my oral English..."*

The evidences show that use of English language in the library enhances academic engagement as well as information access. More so, it increases the motivation to study as can be seen under respondents 1 and 3. It was also found to improve spoken English language and assist in relationship as can be seen under Respondent 12.

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*Language used in students' social interaction*

It was shown that Yoruba indigenous language is used predominantly during social interaction. Pidgin English language was also shown to be a blending language with Yoruba language during students' interaction. Few respondents also stated that English language is also used with Yoruba language during students' interaction. Thus, students investigated agreed that English language which would give them unimpeded information access is not used predominantly during social interaction thereby cutting off the flow of information. For example:

Sixteen (16) respondents said Yoruba is used predominantly during students' interaction: for example: "Yoruba"

One (1) respondent said Yoruba language blended with Pidgin-English language is used. For example: "Yoruba/Pidgin"

Seven (7) respondents said English language was used alone. For example: "English language"

Two (2) respondents said Pidgin English was used alone. For example: "Pidgin"

Four (4) respondents said English language blended with Yoruba language was used: "English/Yoruba"

The results above show that four different languages are spoken among students in the university investigated; and the ability to access uninterrupted information depends on the language a group is interacting with. There are the groups of: Yoruba language (alone), English language, Yoruba language blended with Pidgin English and Yoruba language blended with English language. This shows that Pidgin English and English language are used as blends for Yoruba language during conversation. While Pidgin English does not cut the flow of information, Yoruba language or any of its blends intercepts flow of information to those who do not understand it. For example, twenty three (23) respondents who do not understand Yoruba indigenous language said there was negative influence on their information access, for example:

*Respondent 11: "Yes, definitely because most of my friends are Yoruba and I cannot communicate with them when they are interacting..."*

There is also an evidence of introduction of Yoruba language during conversation initially started in English language.

*R3: "Yes, I miss out on jokes or interesting stories."*

Eight (8) respondents said there was no negative influence on their information access as they were able to understand the indigenous language, while 2 among the 8 respondents said their friends

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always interpret to them. For example:

*Respondent 9: "No, because I understand and can communicate in unofficial [Yoruba] language Well..."*

*Respondent 2: "None, I understand Yoruba..."*

*Respondent 13: "No [effect] simply because they translate in official [English language] Language"*

This shows that the negative influence of interacting in Yoruba indigenous language is not a consistent one as it only happens when those who communicate in Yoruba language do not interpret it. The act of interpreting Yoruba language introduced during conversation is a navigating method as it assists students who would have been cut off from information flow to connect without interruption.

#### *4.3 Impact on Social Wellbeing*

**RQ 4:** *What is the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the social wellbeing of students schooling outside of their ethnic base?*

In providing the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the social wellbeing of students schooling outside their ethnic base, evidences show the following impact.

Eighteen (18) respondents said there was no impact in the classroom. For example:

*Respondent 2: "no influence...lecturers communicate in English language"*

7 respondents stated that the impact was not completely negative. For example:

*Respondent 6: "...sometimes very boring...uncomfortable."*

*R10: "fair enough but not too good."*

*Respondent 1: "...I appear lost."*

*Respondent 3: "...feeling left out."*

*Respondent 4: "...good, but sometimes I find it difficult to communicate."*

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These evidences show that though English language is used in the classroom, lecturers introduce Yoruba indigenous language intermittently without interpretation and it has negative impact on the smooth flow of information. Although some of the respondents agreed that such introduction has no impact on their wellbeing since they could understand Yoruba language; however they stated that they prefer the use of English language for interaction over Yoruba indigenous language. For example:

Thirty (30) respondents chose English language over Yoruba language for communication. For example:

*Respondent 12: "English language because my mother tongue is not usually used within the school environment."*

*Respondent 13: "English because people understand English."*

*Respondent 20: "English because I understand better with it."*

However, one respondent opted for either English or Pidgin English, for example:

*Respondent 15: "English/Pidgin...I can express myself well"*

This shows that respondents want to have a sense of belonging using a uniformed language. When asked the impact on their social well-being outside the classroom, Sixteen (16) respondents agreed that the predominant use of Yoruba language has negative influence on their wellbeing: for example:

*Respondents 3: "Yes, it does because I was not brought up in a Yoruba speaking environment."*

*Respondents 16: "It is so uneasy to interact..."*

*Respondents 1: "Sometimes it does make me feel inferior since I don't understand the language."*

*Respondents 13: "I feel so lonely a time..."*

*Respondents 2: "...I feel marginalized even though I could understand the language..."*

However, 15 agreed that there was no negative influence on them. This category of respondents also does not understand Yoruba language well but has a right attitude towards it. According to them, although the use of Yoruba language in conversation cuts the flow of information briefly; however, they have a positive attitude concerning it. For example:

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Two respondents agreed that it is another means of learning language, for example: “No, it’s also another means of learning a different language.”

While Respondents 4 agreed that it is not constantly spoken: “No, it’s not consistently spoken.”

*Respondent 13: “...yes, most people ...female want to go with or close to someone who understands and speaks their language.”*

*Respondents 17: “Yes, in some situations tribalism and ethnic favoritism is used in judging some situations...”*

*Respondent 4: “Yes...sometimes when I ask some strangers questions, they answer in Yoruba:”*

This portrays that the ability to understand the indigenous language eases flow of information and provides benefits, however it does not entirely guarantee wellbeing of non-indigenous students as can be seen under the evidences from respondents 2 and 17. According to Respondent 2, the feeling of marginalization is evident, not necessarily because they are not able to understand Yoruba indigenous language, but because of their ethnic background.

#### *4.4 Impact on Learning*

***RQ 5: What is the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the academic learning of students schooling outside their ethnic base?***

In providing the result of the impact of being a linguistic outsider on the academic learning of students schooling outside their ethnic base, evidence show that majority are not influenced negatively in their learning. For example:

Twenty-three (23) respondents agreed that there is no negative influence in learning. For example:

*Respondent 2: “No, it does not influence me in any negative way because I can understand and speak the language fluently.”*

*Respondent 1: “No, because I have friends that do interpret for me when they are with me”*

*Respondent 10: “...make me to feel inferior but it does not affect academic work...”*

Although the evidences above show that majority of the respondents do not feel negatively the impact of being a linguistic outsider on their learning, however evidence from respondent 10 shows that the inability to interact in indigenous language psychologically impact on him as it makes him feel inferior to others; however it still does not influence negatively academic work.

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More results show that 8 respondents feel a negative impact on their ability to learn. For instance:

*Respondent 16: "Yes most times I get lost in the middle of a lecture."*

*Respondent 13: "...yes, it does when it comes to getting information."*

The above results show that though being a linguistic outsider has no negative influence on learning, however it cuts flow of information briefly during lectures. Since learning is something that can be carried out independently, students find a way to learn that has no dependence on the language spoken in the university; this makes it possible for Yoruba language not to affect their academic work.

#### *4.5 How students feel regarding use of indigenous language in higher institutions*

**RQ 6:** *What advice do students have regarding use of indigenous language in higher institutions?*

It was shown that many students in this study would want English language to be used predominantly in academic environment especially during lectures. For example:

*"I think the school should be more accommodating to other ethnic groups and languages"*

*"Communicating with your mother tongue at home should be encouraged"*

*"English language should be encouraged more in our learning systems"*

*"English is an official language; therefore, it should be encouraged in any gathering"*

*"I would love it if they limit the way they use the Yoruba accent or dialect in the class."*

## 5. Discussions

The major results of this study show that:

- (1) Students from Igbo background have more population than other non-Yoruba indigenes.
  - (2) There is the practice of multilingualism made up of mixture of English language. Pidgin English and Yoruba language on one side and pure Yoruba indigenous language on another side.
  - (3) There is no seamless communication in English language without mixture of Yoruba language or Pidgin English in the university environment.
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- (4) English language and Yoruba language are both used predominantly in different environments. In the classroom, English language is used predominantly while outside the classroom, Yoruba language is used predominantly.
- (5) Intermittent use of Yoruba indigenous language during lectures delivered in English language cuts the flow of information access for students.
- (6) Yoruba indigenous language has negative impact on the information access of students who do not understand it.
- (7) Inability to speak and understand Yoruba indigenous language is not the only factor affecting the social wellbeing of students as inability to have one's indigenous language spoken predominantly and inability to have benefits accruing to Yoruba indigenes were found to be factors contributing to negative wellbeing.
- (8) Indigenous language usage does not affect majority of the students in their learning since students can take the lead in their own academic learning.
- (9) All the respondents agreed that English language should be used predominantly to carry everyone along.

The revelation that there are students from diverse ethnic background reiterates the fact that students from diverse ethnic groups gain admission into universities outside their ethnic base (Omenka, 2014). Although, the result of this study has brought in new addition by showing that apart from Yoruba students who are the host in the study environment, students of Igbo origin have large population outside their ethnic base. Thus, they will have opportunity to speak their indigenous language or mother tongue in the university environment more than other students.

It was also revealed that there is multilingualism practice in the study area with mixtures of English language, Pidgin-English language and Yoruba language. This further supports the conclusion in earlier studies that there is multilingualism in Nigeria (Frances Ayenbi, 2014). However, where Frances Ayenbi (2014) concludes that there is multilingualism of ethnic languages, this study found that the multilingualism in a typical Nigerian university is made up of the indigenous language of that campus community as dominant language, then English language and Pidgin-English language as neutral languages and other indigenous languages which are silent. More so, the dominant Yoruba language and the neutral languages are mixed up while communicating; thereby making it difficult for a linguistic outsider to be fully involved in conversation. This result also enhances Frances Ayenbi (2014) conclusion by showing that when English language is used in classrooms during lectures, it is not used seamlessly as there are mixtures with Yoruba language. Further revelation showed that between English language and Yoruba language, both rule in different environment. English language is used more in classroom environment with intermittent use of Yoruba language which is not interpreted; and Yoruba is used more outside the classroom environment. This brings support to the conclusion in Omeje, Egwa and Adikwu (2016) that the population of students from a campus surrounding environment influences a campus cultural capital; and in this case, Yoruba language.

The result showing that the respondents are cut off from communication due to their inability to understand Yoruba indigenous language has also shown that they suffer in their information

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access and social wellbeing. This reiterates the conclusion in Jensen (2013), Massimiliano and Prue (2009) that students who cannot relate in a group suffer psychologically. Although the factor responsible for non-acceptance in Jensen (2013), Massimiliano and Prue (2009) was social class and not language. Although previous literature showed that indigenous language brings advantage to learning as it makes understanding easy for students. However more revelation from the result of this study has showed that use of indigenous language in a heterogeneous setting does not bring any general advantage but a partial one as those who are not able to understand it are cut off from academic information flow; more so, all the participants recommends that English language be used predominantly to enhance learning and interaction. In conclusion, this study has some limitations.

The first limitation is getting large number of non-Yoruba indigenes to take part in the survey; hence the population was fifty. This is because of the use of qualitative method which was necessary due to scarce literature on linguistic outsider among Nigerian students. Subsequent studies would need to use quantitative method in order to have large participants. The second limitation is the scarcity of literature on the impact of language among Nigerian students; this study has covered this limitation and gap.

## 6. Conclusion

In an environment dominated by one ethnic group, the language of such ethnic group normally forms part of cultural capital of that university. Such language is also used predominantly for social interaction thereby making it difficult for those who do not understand such language to interact and access certain information. Although such language barrier could be navigated through interpretation; however there is no assurance that such would happen each time an indigenous language is used among non-indigenes. There is also no assurance that the information access, social wellbeing and learning of such students would not suffer. Although it is ideal for groups to show their identity through their indigenous language usage; however it is even better where their language is always interpreted to enhance communication and learning. Nigerian universities are learning environments and so there is a need to ensure that students are not cut off from information flow intentionally or unintentionally. Ensuring this would make it easier to not only relate but to also acquire additional languages with ease.

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