

An Assessment of Levels of Bi-Literacy among Bilingual Learners at the Middle Basic Education: Cases of Imo and NASARAWA States of Nigeria and their Implications for the Nigerian Languages Education Policy

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Abstract- The National Policy on Education (NPE) on languages, makes provisions for every Nigerian child in school to be bilingual; in the sense that the NPE provides for the use of the mother tongue (MT), or the language of the immediate environment/community (LIE/LIC), as a medium of instruction at the first three years of primary education, otherwise called the Early Basic, and transition to English language medium, at the Middle Basic, (i.e., from Primary 4). The implication is that, at the early basic, both the MT or the LIE/LIC as a subject and the other content subjects would be taught in the prescribed medium of MT/LIE, while English studies would be taught in English medium, and conversely, at the Middle Basic where English is the medium, except for MT/LIE as a subject. Some of the basic skills targeted at the primary education level are functional literacy and numerical skills. Literacy is simply the ability to read and write in a given language. This study, hence, aims to ascertain whether the bilingual pupils in Imo and Nassarawa States, of Nigeria, have achieved the bi-literacy of the NPE, (that is, acquired literacy skills/achieve proficiency in both Ìgbò/English and Hausa/English), as case may be. It also seeks to compare the learners' level of literacy between Igbo and English and Hausa and English, respectively, between male and female bilinguals, and between Imo and Nasarawa states bilinguals. The study also compares the learners' level of literacy between Ìgbò and English and Hausa and English, respectively, between male and female bilinguals, and Imo and Nasarawa bilinguals. The research was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. The population of the study is purposively the Grade 5 of the Middle Basic while samples of 400 pupils were expected to be chosen randomly from 10 primary

schools, proportionately selected (200 pupils from five (5) schools for each state). Data was collected through researchers-constructed tests of simple comprehension passages in English and its equivalents in Ìgbò and Hausa languages, as well as a simple wordlist of day-to-day vocabulary in English, Ìgbò and Hausa, rendered into the target relevant languages by the respondents/pupils. Data was collected through researcher-constructed tests titled - Bi-literacy Reading and Writing Test (BRWT), comprising simple comprehension passages in English and its equivalents in in Ìgbò and Hausa languages as well as translation exercises from English sentences into Ìgbò and Hausa, respectively. Data was analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation and t-test. Findings showing the biliteracy levels point out that both the bilingual Basic 5 pupils in Imo and Nasarawa states are bi-literate in Igbo/English and Hausa/English, respectively. Nonetheless, there is a significant statistical difference in the biliteracy levels of bilingual Basic 5 pupils in Igbo/English and Hausa/English, respectively. The Imo bilinguals are more literate in English than in Igbo while the Nasarawa bilinguals are more literate in Hausa than they are in English language. Although, the female bilinguals in Imo and Nasarawa respectively, achieved slightly higher biliteracy Mean scores in English than their male counterparts, there is no significant statistical biliteracy difference between male and female Imo and Nasarawa bilingual Basic 5 pupils. Their mean scores difference is negligible. These findings will assist in pedagogical improvements in the NPE on language education. They will also enhance further research on the effective delivery of language in all levels of education. Language policy statements will be

reached using these findings. Teachers in both states will make adjustments in their language classes where necessary, using these findings.

Indexed Terms- Literacy skills, functional literacy, bi-literacy, bilingual, Middle-Basic Education

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is the process of imparting and acquiring skills, competences, ideas etc.; resulting in attitudes and behavioural changes. It is lifelong tools for functional, dynamic and pragmatic livelihood. Education can be achieved in or outside the formal school system. This is evident in the lives of Africans and Nigerians in particular, before the entrant of the European Missionaries and the advent of colonial rule. Prior to the advent of colonial rule, the place called Nigeria today was organized into ethnic regions, simply called tribes. Each tribe had her distinct but similar ways of educating their young ones. Education was pure induction into responsible, responsive and self-reliant adulthood. The process was carried out in the native language; and everything went well, with no intrusion, invasion, infiltration and adulteration of any kind. School, which is the structure for formal education, was introduced by the European Missionaries, whose mixed agenda were of trade and the evangelization of Africa. The school system was necessitated by the need to facilitate their initial agenda through literacy.

Literacy is basically the ability to read and write in a given language. Historically, the initial literacy race in African and Nigerian schools, was not carried out in vernacular (the western terminology for native languages). This made colonial-driven African education nonfunctional and inadapttable, as was clearly reported by the Phelps-Stokes Commission on African education in 1922. The discoveries and the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission orchestrated and reinforced the fact that an African child was best taught in their native language or the mother tongue (MT). As a followed up to the recommendations of the Phelp-Stokes Commission, the British Government then stipulated in a policy in 1941, that instructions in the early years in school should be in the native languages and nothing more and that a child should not move to a new class unless

they have made good grade in vernacular (Hair, (1967), Osokoya, 1987 Ikonne, 2020, Enwere 2023). It was against the backdrop of these stipulations, that the use of indigenous languages for the beginning of education was birthed. This also marked the origin of mother tongue literacy in African and Nigerian education.

Empirical Evidence for Bilingual Education in Nigeria

Historically, Nigeria is a multilingual nation state, having over 500 indigenous languages spoken across the ethnic nationalities. In the face of multilingualism and diverse cultural backgrounds of the various ethnic nationalities and by reason of colonial relationship with Britain, English became the official language of Nigeria, being the language of governance, education, administration, the law court, and the language of wider and mass communication, etc. To balance out the dividends of colonial relationship, British government introduced bilingual education in Nigerian school system before Nigeria's independence. By bilingual education, the Nigerian child was taught in his mother tongue (MT) or the language of the immediate environment (LIE), as well as in the English medium. This was the practice in all the regions of Nigeria before independence. However, many years after independence, Nigeria could not keep the tradition of mother tongue medium of instruction in schools. The shift was occasioned by the stereotype believe that English language is superior to the indigenous languages, in line with the notion that as an international language, English would ensure unhindered access to the global interaction, and more so, offers better chances for job opportunities.

Other antecedent arguments were that the multi lingual status of the nation would require the use of a neutral language in the interest of national unity and to deemphasize the various ethnic agitations, as well as bridge the gaps among the various indigenous languages. The resultant effect of all factors has contributed to the truncation of bilingual education in Nigeria.

Despite what English offers, agitations have heightened against the preference of English medium to mother tongue medium in the school system. Streams of research findings stressing the cognitive, affective, psychological and socio-cultural benefits of

mother tongue medium of instruction to Nigerian children have been and are still on-going. For this reason, linguists and educationists like, Chumbow (1990), Obialor (1990), Fafunwa et al, (1989), Emenanjo et al. (2003), Anyanwu and Ikonne (2017), UNESCO (2003) and Ikonne, (2020), have lent support to mother tongue education, emphasizing that the child learns better and develops faster cognitively, affectively and in psycho-motor, if they are taught in their mother tongue continuously over a period of time. Furthermore, Chumbow (1990), reveals that the end product of mother tongue first education is literacy in both the mother tongue and the foreign language. But teaching the child directly in the foreign language makes the child literate in the foreign language, with little or no concern for literacy in the indigenous languages. Chumbow further notes that proficiency in in both a foreign and indigenous language can readily be achieved in a well-organized programme, since the basic skills of reading can be readily transferred from one language to another. He maintains that the teaching of the child's mother tongue first has a long-term benefit to the child's learning process.

In consideration of the importance of home language in the education process and in the bid to meet the international language need of the nation, the government of Nigeria finally endorsed bilingual education in her language policy. This is encapsulated in the language provisions of the National Policy on Education, NPE (1977, revised 1981, 1998, 2004 and 2003) which stipulate the use of the mother tongue (MT) or the language of the immediate environment/community (LIE/LIC), as medium of instruction at the first three years of primary education, otherwise called the Early Basic and transit to English medium from the Middle Basic (i.e., from primary 4). The implication is that at the Early Basic, both the MT/LIE/LIC and English studies would be taught as subjects, all other content subjects would be taught in the prescribed MT/LIE medium, while English studies would be taught in English medium and conversely, at the Middle Basic, English is the medium for teaching English studies as subject and all other content areas except

for MT/LIE as a subject. In this sense, bilingualism was constituted into the educational system, where every child receives their initial education in the

mother tongue or the language of the immediate community and continues in English language later. This was emphasized by Olagoke (1979), who stresses that, "the best medium for teaching the children at the initial stages of their education is their MT, and it is after a firm linguistic foundation has been laid in it that, there should be a change to the use of English medium at all stages". This paves the way for easy acquisition of functional and permanent numeracy skills, literacy as well as biliteracy skills for the Nigerian child.

Bilingualism and Bi-literacy Explicated

Bilingualism and Bi-literacy are two different concepts and can be misconceived at times, hence the need to explain them. The term bilingualism is used to describe someone who can only fluently speak two languages. A person who is bi-literate is also considered a bilingual, but a person who is bilingual is not necessarily bi-literate, hence, being bilingual does not necessarily bring about bi-literacy in an individual. A bi-literate person is a person who has the capacity to read and write in two designated languages, hence, is also considered bilingual. The major difference is that a person who is bilingual is not necessarily biliterate in view of the meaning of biliteracy.

Bi-literacy is the capability for developing reading and writing proficiency in two languages. Biliteracy has the goal of achieving fluency in both reading and writing in the two languages involved. Bi-literacy in the context of this study involves the Nigerian school child acquiring knowledge and skills to read and write in their home language and in the official language, English language, hence, the reason for this study. Proficiency in both reading and writing in the two school languages an average Nigerian is exposed to are the intents of bi-literacy. Functional bi-literacy therefore, is meant to produce in the pupils the ability and skills of reading for comprehension and meaning and encoding appropriately in the two school languages of relevance to the child. Bi-literacy is therefore, the end product of bilingual education system which empowers the child to be literate and function appropriately in two languages. It goes beyond bilingualism. The Nigerian context requires the bilingual pupils to be literate and proficient in the two languages - their mother-tongue or the language

of the immediate environment and the English. Hence, bilingual education is entrenched in Nigerian educational system.

The Problem

Learning is said to be more meaningful, more effective and more creative when conducted in the mother tongue, and that children taught in their MT are more confident in expression and skillful in their curriculum adaptation. Promotion of mother tongue (MT)-education in Nigerian schools' curriculum dates back to the early 20th century, spanning the UNESCO meeting of Specialists (1951), which expressed the opinion that "education is best carried out in the Mother Tongue (MT)", recommending that initial education should be carried out through the medium of the MT and the extension its use to "the later stages as possible" (Bamgbose 1976). Initial literacy in the MT was also upheld by the 1969 Nigerian Curriculum Convention, affirming that a primary pupil "should be well grounded in their Mother Tongue" (Bamgbose 1976). This later gave birth to the language provisions of the National Policy on Education (NPE 1977, revised in 1981, 1998, 2004

and 2013). Its subsequent entrenchment into the 1979 and 1999 Constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria made it a constitutional issue to educate the Nigerian child in the "language of their immediate community", beginning from the early stage of primary education. This accounts for beginning of bilingualism in Nigeria education.

Teaching exclusively in the mother tongue in Nigeria could not be the only option in the multilingual nation, hence the idea of combining the mother tongue with the official language English. Every Nigeria child by implication is bilingual. Sequel to the bilingual education provided in the NPE, every Nigerian child at the middle basic education level is expected to be bi-literate in their mother-tongue or the language of the immediate environment and the English. Driven by the fact that literacy has been introduced in MT for three years and that English was gently introduced before the transition into the English medium proper from basic four, it is expected that a Nigerian pupil would be functionally bi-literate before they migrate to the Upper Basic level of education. Hence, this study on the assessment of levels of bi-literacy among

bilingual learners at the middle-basic education. This assessment is considered not just pertinent but imperative in order to identify the pupils' needs, identify and fill the curriculum gaps and effect the training and retraining lapses.

Research Questions

Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. The research questions are:

1. To what extent are the Ìgbò/English and Hausa/English bilingual Basic 5 pupils bi-literate in Imo and Nasarawa States?
2. To what extent do the bi-literacy levels of the Ìgbò/Hausa male and female bilingual Basic 5 pupils differ in Imo and Nasarawa States respectively?
3. To what extent do the bi-literacy levels of the Ìgbò and Hausa bilingual Basic 5 pupils differ?

The Null Hypotheses

1. There is no significant bi-literacy difference between Ìgbò/English and Hausa/English among the bilingual Basic 5 pupils.
2. The bi-literacy levels of male and female Basic 5 pupils in Ìgbò/English and Hausa/English do not differ significantly.
3. There is no significant difference between the bi-literacy levels of the Ìgbò and Hausa bilingual Basic 5 pupils based on state - *Imo and Nasarawa*.

Theoretical Support for Bilingual Education in Nigeria

Bilingual education in Nigeria is an offshoot of both colonialism and multilingualism. In pursuant of sustainable, functional education in Nigeria, bilingualism is the approved practice in the educational system as provided in the Nigerian Policy on Education (NPE). Bilingual education is for the support of the development of Nigerian indigenous languages and the international language for global visibility through the teaching and use of the official language, English in education (Bamgbose 1976).

Research Procedure

The study areas were Imo and Nasarawa states of Nigeria. Imo State, located in the south-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria, was carved out of the former East Central State in 1976, with its capital in Owerri. Imo state is administratively divided into 27 Local Government Areas (LGAs), and is bordered by Anambra to the north, Rivers state to the south, and Abia state to the east. The capital city, Owerri, being the major city of the state, is both the administrative and commercial center of the state. The indigenes are native speakers of Igbo language. Owerri made up three local government area, is also the educational nerve center of the state, with many primary schools.

Nasarawa state is located in North Central Nigeria, with thirteen local government councils, with its capital in Lafia. It is bordered to the east by Plateau and Taraba states, to the north by Kaduna state, to the west by the Federal Capital Territory and to the south by Benue state.

Akwanga is one of the major local government areas of Nasarawa state and a gateway to the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, and a host to diverse tribes from across the nation. The local government also hosts many primary schools, both private and government-owned. Basically, the schools are located in the center of the local government where bilingual education is provided with regards to the National Policy on Education in Nigeria.

The study design was a survey. The population of the study was purposively the bilingual Igbo and Hausa speaking Middle Basic 5 pupils in Imo and Nasarawa states. Five (5) primary schools were proportionately selected in Owerri North LGA of Imo State and of Akwanga LGA of Nasarawa state, respectively. From the contact classes, a total sample of 302 Basic 5 pupils were purposely drawn (121 from Imo, 181 from Nasarawa). Basic 5 pupils were considered most appropriate for the assessment on the ground that they had completed the Early Basic education in the mother tongue or language of the immediate environment (MT/LIE) medium and have experienced one full year in the English medium. In this regard, they are quite familiar with bilingual literacy of the national policy on education (NPE) requirements. In the same vein, this grade of learners was selected in order to obtain information on their overall language proficiency in

the areas of - vocabulary, reading and writing (functional literacy skill) before they transit into the Upper Basic education level, which a lot of pupils do from Basic 5. Also, there is the need to identify possible curriculum adaptation and delivery gap in order to rectify it through training and retraining processes before the pupils accelerate higher in their education ladder.

The instrument for data collection was the researcher-made tests titled, 'Bi-literacy Reading and Writing Test (BRWT)'. The instrument consisted of two sections. Section A, sought Demographic information of the participants while section B was the tests proper, comprising reading comprehension passages in Igbo, Hausa and English languages, as well as translation of simple sentences from English into Igbo, English into Hausa and vice versa. The instrument had both face and content validity from seasoned Basic Education teachers, experts in language education (English, Igbo and Hausa) and measurement and evaluation. Although reliability estimation of the instrument was not ascertained, the experts certified the tests appropriate for the age, readability and mental levels of the participants.

The instrument was administered to the participants by the researcher while some were done by tutored research assistants. The comprehension passages were allotted 60% cumulatively (shared equally between Igbo and English; Hausa and English while the translation exercises were allotted 40% (shared equally between Igbo and English; Hausa and English giving a total of 100%. All the exercises in English got 50%, all in Igbo and Hausa got 50% respectively. The benchmark for literacy was the Mean score for each language. Thus, the ability of the participants to achieve Mean score of 25 and above in the relevant languages qualifies them literate in those languages. In this context, a bilingual Igbo Basic 5 pupil is adjudged bi-literate if they achieve Mean score of 25 and above in tasks in English and Igbo respectively, and same for the bilingual Hausa Basic 5 pupil.

Data collected were analyzed using the statistical tools. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions. Hypotheses 1 was tested with paired t-test while hypotheses 2

and 3 were tested using MANOVA. All hypotheses were tested at .05 levels of significance. Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22 (SPSS-22) was used for data analyses.

II. DATA PRESENTATION AND RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent are the Igbo/English and Hausa/English bilingual Basic 5 pupils bi-literate in Imo and Nasarawa States?

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of Igbo Bilingual Basic 5 Pupils' Bi-literacy in Igbo and English in Imo State

<i>Bi literacy</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Igbo</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>32.61</i>	<i>11.91</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>39.13</i>	<i>10.18</i>

Mean and Standard Deviation of Hausa bilingual Basic 5 pupils' bi-literacy in Hausa and English in Nasarawa State

<i>Bi literacy</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Hausa</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>35.49</i>	<i>13.45</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>31.13</i>	<i>15.90</i>

Table 1 shows that mean achievement scores and standard deviation in bi-literacy test of bilingual pupils in Igbo (= 32.61, SD = 6.07), English (= 39.75, SD = 10.18), and Hausa (= 35.49, SD = 13.45), English (= 31.13, SD = 15.90). For Imo State Basic 5 pupils are more literate in English language than Igbo language. This is evident by the higher mean achievement score obtained for English language. Conversely, in Nasarawa State, a higher mean achievement score was obtained for Hausa meaning that Basic 5 pupils in Nasarawa are more literate in Hausa than English language.

Research Question 2:

To what extent do the bi-literacy levels of the Igbo/Hausa male and female bilingual Basic 5 pupils differ in Imo and Nasarawa States respectively?

Table 2

a. Mean and Standard Deviation of Difference in bi-literacy levels of the Igbo Male and Female bilingual Basic 5 Pupils in Imo State

<i>Bi literacy</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Igbo</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>31.88</i>	<i>12.85</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>37.25</i>	<i>11.12</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>40.95</i>	<i>9.36</i>

b. Mean and Standard Deviation of Difference in bi-literacy levels of the Hausa Male and Female bilingual Basic 5 Pupils in Nasarawa State

<i>Bi literacy</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Hausa</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>31.52</i>	<i>16.71</i>
	<i>Female</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>31.40</i>	<i>15.44</i>
<i>English</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>34.03</i>	<i>15.89</i>
	<i>Female</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>36.85</i>	<i>10.84</i>

Table 2 indicates that mean score and standard deviation of Basic 5 pupils Imo State based on gender in Igbo was male (= 31.88, SD = 12.85) and female (= 32.31, SD = 11.50); for English language male (= 37.25, SD = 11.11) and female (= 40, SD = 9.36). The result obtained in Imo State for bilingual Basic 5 pupils implied that negligible mean difference between male and female in Igbo whereas female pupils seem to be more literate in English language than their male counterpart. Similarly, in Nasarawa State mean score and standard deviation of Basic 5 pupils based on gender in Hausa language for male (= 31.52, SD = 16.71) and female (= 31.40, SD = 15.44); for English language, male (= 34.03, SD = 15.89) and female (= 36.84, SD = 10.84). This indicates that the mean achievement score of male and female Basic 5 pupils on the bi-literacy achievement test for Hausa is almost the same but female pupils scored more in English language than their male counterpart.

Research Question 3: To what extent do the bi-literacy levels of the Ìgbò and Hausa bilingual Basic 5 pupils differ based States respectively?

Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation of Difference in bi-literacy levels of the Ìgbò and Hausa Bilingual Basic 5 Pupils as based on States

Bi literacy	State	N	Z	SD
Igbo/Hausa	Imo	121	32.61	11.91
	Nasarawa	180	31.13	15.90
English	Imo	121	39.75	10.18
	Nasarawa	180	35.49	13.45

Table 3 revealed that the mean and standard deviation of the level of bi-literacy of the Ìgbò and Hausa bilingual Basic 5 Pupils in Imo and Nasarawa States are (= 32.61, SD = 11.91) and (=31.13, SD = 15.90) respectively. Based on the result, the mean difference of the bi-literacy level of Ìgbò and Hausa bilingual Basic 5 Pupils in the two states is small. For English in the two states, Imo State has higher mean score of (= 39.75, SD = 10.18) than Nasarawa State (= 35.49, SD = 13.45). This implies that bilingual Basic 5 pupils in Imo State are more literate in English language than their counterparts in Nasarawa State.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant bi-literacy difference between Ìgbò/English and

Hausa/English among the bilingual Basic 5 pupils.

Table 4

Paired t-test Analysis of Bilingual Basic 5 Pupils' Bi-literacy in Ìgbò/English and Hausa/English

Bi literacy	N	Mean	SD	T-Value	Df	Sig.
Igbo	123	32.61	11.91	10.54	120	.000
English	180	35.49	10.18	5.72	179	.000
Hausa	180	35.49	13.45	5.72	179	.000
English	180	31.13	15.90	5.72	179	.000

Table 4 reveals that t-value (120) = 10.54, $p (.000) < \alpha$ level (.05). Based on the result, the hypothesis that postulated that there is no significant bi-literacy difference between Ìgbò/English among the bilingual Basic 5 pupils is therefore, rejected. This implies that the difference is statistically significant. Similarly, t-value (120) = 5.72, $p (.000) < \alpha$ level (.05) for Hausa/English among the bilingual Basic 5 pupils is statistically significant.

Hypothesis 2: The bi-literacy levels of male and female Basic 5 pupils in Ìgbò and English and Hausa and English do not differ significantly.

Table 5

a. Multivariate Test of bi-literacy levels of male and female Basic 5 pupils in Ìgbò and English

<i>Effect</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypothesis df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial eta Square</i>
<i>Intercept Pillai's Trace</i>	.936	883.824 ^b	2.000	120.000	.000	.936
<i>Wilks' Lambda</i>	.064	883.82 ^b	2.000	120.000	.000	.936
<i>Hotelling's Trace</i>	14.730	883.826 ^b	2.000	120.000	.000	.936
<i>Roy's large root</i>	14.730	883.826 ^b	2.000	120.000	.000	.936
<i>Gender Pillai's Trace</i>	.043	2.713 ^b	2.000	120.000	.070	.043
<i>Wilks' Lambda</i>	.957	2.713 ^b	2.000	120.000	.070	.043
<i>Hotelling's</i>	.045	2.713 ^b	2.000	120.000	.070	.043
<i>Roy's largest root</i>	.045	2.713 ^b	2.000	120.000	.070	.043

Multivariate Test of bi-literacy levels of male and female Basic 5 pupils in Hausa and English

<i>Effect</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypothesis df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial eta Square</i>
<i>Intercept Pillai's Trace</i>	.873	612.422 ^b	2.000	120.000	.000	.936
<i>Wilks' Lambda</i>	.127	612.422 ^b	2.000	120.000	.000	.936
<i>Hotelling's Trace</i>	6.881	612.422 ^b	2.000	120.000	.000	.936
<i>Roy's large root</i>	6..881	612.422 ^b	2.000	120.000	.000	.936
<i>Gender Pillai's Trace</i>	.027	2.713 ^b	2.000	120.000	.070	.043
<i>Wilks' Lambda</i>	.973	2.713 ^b	2.000	120.000	.070	.043
<i>Hotelling's</i>	.028	2.713 ^b	2.000	120.000	.070	.043
<i>Roy's largest root</i>	.028	2.713 ^b	2.000	120.000	.070	.043

Table 5a reveals a no significant multivariate main effect for gender with Wilks' λ value = .957,

$F(2, 120) = 2.713$, $p(.070) > \alpha$ level (.05). Based on the result, the hypothesis was retained showing that F was not significant which implies that the bi-literacy levels of male and female Basic 5 pupils in Ìgbò and English do not differ significantly. The result also showed that the partial eta squared associated with the main effect of gender was .043. Similarly, Table 5b indicates a significant multivariate main effect for gender with Wilks' λ value = .973, $F(2, 178) = 2.457$,

$p(.089) > \alpha$ level (.05). Based on the result the hypothesis was retained showing that F was not significant which implied that the bi-literacy levels of male and female Basic 5 pupils in Hausa and English do not differ significantly. The result also showed that the partial eta squared associated with the main effect of gender was .027.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the bi-literacy levels of the Ìgbò and Hausa bilingual Basic 5 pupils' bases on state - *Imo and Nasarawa*.

Table 6

Multivariate Test of bi-literacy levels of the Ìgbò and Hausa bilingual Basic 5 pupils based on state- Imo and Nasarawa

<i>Effect</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypothesis df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial eta Square</i>
<i>Intercept Pillai's Trace</i>	.902	1371.919 ^b	2.000	298.000	.000	.902
<i>Wilks' Lambda</i>	.098	1371.919 ^b	2.000	298.000	.000	.902
<i>Hotelling's Trace</i>	9.208	1371.919 ^b	2.000	298.000	.000	.902
<i>Roy's large root</i>	9.208	1371.919 ^b	2.000	298.000	.000	.902
<i>State Pillai's Trace</i>	.044	6.879 ^b	2.000	298.000	.001	.044
<i>Wilks' Lambda</i>	.956	6.879 ^b	2.000	298.000	.001	.044
<i>Hotelling's</i>	.046	6.879 ^b	2.000	298.000	.001	.044
<i>Roy's largest root</i>	.046	6.879 ^b	2.000	298.000	.001	.044

Table 8, a one-way MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate main effect for state with Wilks' λ value = .956, $F(2, 298) = 6.879$, $p(.001) < \alpha$ level (.05). The result showed that F was significant which implied that there is a difference in the bi-literacy levels of the Ìgbò and Hausa bilingual Basic 5 pupils in Imo and Nasarawa respectively. The result also shows that the partial eta squared associated with the main effect of location was .044. The null hypothesis was therefore, rejected.

III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Generally, the findings show that both the bilingual Basic 5 pupils in Imo and Nasarawa states are bi-literate in Igbo/English and Hausa/English, respectively. However, there is a significant statistical difference in the biliteracy levels of bilingual Basic 5 pupils in Igbo/English and Hausa/English, respectively. The Imo bilinguals are more literate in English than in Igbo while the Nasarawa bilinguals are

more literate in Hausa than they are English language. Although, the female bilinguals in Imo and Nasarawa respectively, achieved slightly higher biliteracy Mean scores in English than their male counterparts, there is no significant statistical biliteracy difference between male and female Imo and Nasarawa bilingual Basic 5 pupils. Their mean scores difference is negligible.

Finally, the findings show a statistically significant biliteracy difference between the Imo Basic 5 bilinguals and their Nasarawa counterparts with the Mean scores of 39.75 and 35.49 respectively in English, 32.61 and 31.13 respectively in their mother tongue. Thus, Imo bilinguals are more biliterate than the Nasarawa bilingual Basic 5 pupils.

In conclusion, the findings of this study are impressive. It is hope rising to establish that the bilingual Basic 5 pupils are biliterate to a great extent. It is a prove that bilingual education is successful in Nigeria. The results also are proofs of effective curriculum implementation and adaptation by the teachers and learners respectively. However, more efforts are required to boost the literacy levels of the Imo bilinguals in Igbo while the Nasarawa bilinguals require a boost in their literacy levels in English.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Viewing from the findings that the Imo bilinguals are more literate in English than in Igbo, it is hence recommended that the teachers in Imo schools should get more intentional with mother tongue/LIC medium at the Basic levels to enable the pupils match their MT literacy with their literacy in English, in line with the provisions of the New National Language Policy that provides for extended MT/LIC medium up to Upper Basic education in Nigeria. For the Nasarawa bilinguals who were found to be more literate in Hausa language than English, while it is considered a plus to be literate in MT/LIC, it is recommended that English be taught in English as it is the provisions of the NPE to enable the learners amass vocabulary and sustainable literacy skills in both MT and English, being fully aware that literacy in the official language cannot be undermined.

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