Impact of Linguistic Insecurity on the English Oral Productivity of Students of Selected Colleges of Education in South-Western Nigeria

Dr. Okedigba Segun Ogunniyi, Omowon Aderonke Abiodun and Adelowo Abimbola 'Dapo

Impact of Linguistic Insecurity on the English Oral Productivity of Students of Selected Colleges of Education in South-Western Nigeria

[1*]Dr. Okedigba Segun Ogunniyi
Department of English, Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate, Nigeria

[2]Omowon Aderonke Abiodun
Department of General Studies (English Language Unit), Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate, Nigeria

[3]Adelowo Abimbola 'Dapo
Department of English, Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate, Nigeria

Abstract

Purpose: This work studied the phenomenon of linguistic insecurity among colleges' of education students in South-Western Nigeria to determine its impact on their English oral productivity. Casual observation has shown that a good number of colleges' of education students in South-Western Nigeria are usually not at ease communicating in the English language. So, they seldom communicate in the English language when they interact with one another.

Methodology: The Deficit Hypothesis as postulated by Bernstein (1971) provided the theoretical underpinning. It used purposive sampling to sample three colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria. Random sampling technique was employed to sample 120 respondents from each of the colleges; yielding a study sample of 360. A self-constructed questionnaire tagged "Impact of Linguistic Insecurity on English Oral Productivity Questionnaire (ILIEOPQ)" was the instrument employed. Data generated were analysed using frequency counts and simple percentages.

Findings: The results showed that majority of colleges' of education students in South-Western Nigeria did experience linguistic insecurity whenever they communicated with their friends and course-mates in English language; a phenomenon which is not unconnected with their deficiency in English language. Lack of confidence was found to be a major factor for this. Linguistic insecurity in English language also had negative effects on the English oral productivity of students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria resulting in many of them speaking their first language more than they did speak English language while in school. Findings also showed that colleges' of education students in South-Western Nigeria employed some strategies to cope with their linguistic insecurity in English language. This notwithstanding, the standard or quality of the English language they spoke was not good enough.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The findings have shown linguistic insecurity as a major cause of the poor oral performance of Nigerian learners in English language. The findings could help stimulate the initiation of appropriate measures by concerned stake-holders. Such measures could include learners of English as a second language endeavouring to speak the English language more regularly at school. Similarly, teachers should lay more emphasis on the spoken English of their pupils/students.

Keywords*: English Language, Linguistic Insecurity, Oral Productivity, Colleges of Education, South-Western Nigeria*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a very important property of man. It is an arbitrary means of communication open to human beings to communicate their feelings, ideas, opinions, thoughts, etc. to one another. This is because language is social. Language allows people to communicate with one another by following an established set of rules just as people use their languages to establish their identities (Kim, Siong, Fei & Ya'acob 2010). However, in the world today, languages of the world do not enjoy equal status as some languages are thought to be more prestigious than others. This inequality in the prestige of various languages is believed to be generating linguistic insecurity among the speakers/users of the different languages (Trudgill, 2003).

Research has equally shown that linguistic insecurity also exists at an intra-lingual level as any language that is spoken by a sizeable number of speakers that are separated by space, social class and education is bound to have varieties. Among these varieties, one variety is usually chosen or recognised as the standard variety. This variety enjoys more social acceptability and official recognition than the rest. It is the variety in which the language is codified; it is used in education and formal communication amongst other roles. Speakers who use varieties different from the standard are sometimes not at ease communicating with other speakers who use the standard variety because they feel that their own varieties are deficient arising from some negative opinions that they have about the forms of the languages at their disposal. This seriously affects the quality of their communication with other speakers whom they think possess better varieties of the language. This phenomenon is called "Linguistic Insecurity" (Nordquist, 2018). Linguistic insecurity is the state of lack of confidence that a language speaker demonstrates in his/her own variety of the language. This work examined the impact that linguistic insecurity had on the verbal communication of students of selected colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria in English language.

Owing to linguistic insecurity, the linguistic productivity, especially oral, of some language speakers is being negatively impacted. The phenomenon has been found to affect both native speakers and second language learners. There are (language) speakers who experience some sort of psychological discomfort using their languages because they feel that the varieties of their respective languages at their disposal are less attractive than the standard varieties. It is how this phenomenon impedes English oral productivity of students of selected colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria that formed the focus of this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The American linguist, William Labov, introduced the term *linguistic insecurity* in the 1960s (Nordquist, 2018). Bucci and Baxter, cited in Daftari and Tavil (2017), define linguistic insecurity as the negative self-image that a speaker has regarding his or her own speech variety or language. Daftari and Tavil (2017) opine that linguistic insecurity refers to the anxiety or lack of confidence by speakers and writers who feel that the form of the language they use does not conform to the principles and practices of the standard variety experience. Baron, cited in Nordquist (2018), gives three sources from which the notion of linguistic insecurity emanated. One is the notion that a variety (of a language) is more prestigious while others are less (prestigious). Second, is the exaggerated idea of correctness in language. The third is the feeling of cultural inferiority or insecurity. Calvet, cited in Tchoutouo Ketchassop (2020:309), identifies three types of linguistic insecurities which are *formal*, *status* and *identity*.

Formal linguistic insecurity is the type of insecurity that arises from the form of the language whereby a (language) speaker thinks that his/her way of speaking the language does not conform to the norm or the standard. In other words, he/she believes that his/her productivity in the target language is not as good as what he/she intends to produce. Tchoutouo (2020:309) argues that people living in English-speaking African countries might suffer from formal linguistic insecurity if they think their way of speaking the English language falls short of the Standard British English.

On the other hand, Tchoutouo (ibid.) sees *status linguistic insecurity* as a situation whereby a speaker believes the language he/she is speaking has no status or legitimacy. Such a speaker has in his/her mind a language that he/she believes he/she should be speaking but is not being spoken ostensibly because that language enjoys a low status. She gives the example of Pidgin English in most English-speaking African countries which is seen by many of its African speakers as a language that has no status; a situation which may lead to status linguistic insecurity. She explains the third form; *identity linguistic insecurity*, as a situation whereby a speaker feels that the language he/she speaks does not correspond to the community he/she considers as his community or the community to which he/she would like to belong. She cites the situation in many African countries whereby the languages of the erstwhile colonial masters are being promoted to the detriment of the local languages. So, some Africans who use any of these colonial languages may not feel secure using them because they do not see such languages as theirs. Formal linguistic insecurity is the focus of this paper.

Bucci, Wilma, and Baxter (1984) say that linguistic insecurity is a product of a personal perception of a lack of "correctness" of one's own speech which is not necessarily based on any objective deficiencies in one's variety of a language. Modern linguistic knowledge has, however, dispelled the wrong notion that a variety of a language is superior to another variety of the same language. Today, linguists think that all varieties of a language are linguistically equal as means of communication irrespective of the different social judgments attached to all the varieties (Labov, 1972).

Daftari and Tavil (2017) studied the impact of non-native English teachers' linguistic insecurity on leaners' productive skills. They used eighteen teachers in a language institute in Turkey and three hundred students as respondents. The study found that novice teachers (or the less-experienced ones) felt less comfortable but highly linguistically insecure than experienced teachers. They also found that non-native English teachers' insecurity did not have any significant correlation with students' speaking and writing achievements in English. The study, however, failed to take account of such factors that could have been responsible for this; such as the home backgrounds of the students, their attitude to the language, aptitude, etc. Ordinarily, it is expected that where a teacher of English language is less confident in the classroom, the achievements of his or her students would be negatively impacted.

Kanwal and Aftab (2021) studied the effects of linguistic insecurity on ESL learning using 30 L_1 Punjabi speakers. The respondents were 15 males and 15 females. The study sought to determine whether intermediate Pakistani students had attitude of linguistic insecurity for Punjabi and whether female Punjabi speakers were more linguistically insecure than their male counterparts. It also sought to determine whether the linguistic insecurity of L_1 Punjabi speakers affected their ESL learning. The study found that L_1 Punjabi speakers had the attitude of linguistic insecurity for their language. This attitude of linguistic insecurity was found to be

higher among women than men. However, it was found that the attitude of linguistic insecurity which L_1 Punjabi speakers had for their mother tongue positively impacted their learning of English language as second language.

From the literature review, it could be seen that all the reviewed works are foreign as there is a dearth of scholarly works on linguistic insecurity in Nigeria generally and on its impacts on the learning of English language by its Nigerian learners in particular. There is, therefore, the need to study the phenomenon in Nigeria to determine whether it truly exists among students who learn English as their second language. Furthermore, it could be seen that the samples used by virtually all the works reviewed were small. It is believed that a larger sample could yield a different result hence the need for this present study with a relatively bigger sample. In Nigeria, every factor but linguistic insecurity has been blamed for the poor performances of students in English language. The findings of this study will change the narratives as stake-holders shall get to know that linguistic insecurity is a major factor in students' or learners' performance in English language.

Theoretical Framework

The Deficit Hypothesis as postulated by Bernstein (1971) provided the theoretical underpinning for this study. Bernstein's deficit hypothesis is hinged on his conviction that there are two different codes of the same language available to leaners of English as a second language depending on the social backgrounds of the learners. These are the "elaborated code" and the "restricted code." Children from middle class homes are believed to possess the elaborated code while children from working class homes have the restricted code. The vocabulary of the restricted code is limited just as its range of grammatical constructions is also limited. According to the theory, children from working class homes have poor command of the grammar of the language as well as difficulties in expressing complex ideas because they possess the restricted code. On the contrary, however, children from middle class homes possess the elaborated code which has a large vocabulary and a wide range of grammatical constructions which enable whoever possesses the code to use the code in communicating complex ideas.

Bernstein is of the opinion that children from working class homes are not as proficient as children from middle class homes in English because they possess a form of English language that is not good enough for them to communicate effectively in the language. His belief is that there is a correlation between social class and the use of either elaborated or restricted code. In his report, Bernstein said that one is likely to find the use of the restricted code in a working class home while one will likely find the use of both the restricted and elaborated codes in the middle class home.

He posits that members of the working class have access to restricted codes only which they learned in the socialization process while members of the middle class have access to both the restricted and elaborated codes. Therefore, a working-class person will communicate using the restricted code due to the environment in which such a person was raised and the socialization process he/she passed through. However, a person from the middle class can also communicate in the restricted code if situation calls for it even though he/she is also exposed to the elaborated code.

Bernstein concluded in his studies that English children from working class homes were deficient in their command of English language because they were restricted to only the

restricted code while children from middle class homes were more proficient in the language because they had access to the elaborated code in addition to the restricted code.

This theory has been chosen as the theoretical guide for this work because of its capability to offer an explanation for the linguistic insecurity which a number of students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria experience whenever they speak English language; which is the fact that those students who feel insecure speaking English language are most probably in possession of the restricted code and are most likely to come from non-educated homes where children are not usually exposed to the English language.

Statement of the Problem

Although the subject of linguistic insecurity has enjoyed considerable attention from scholars in some other countries of the world (*cf.* Bucci & Baxter, 1984; Daftari & Tavil, 2017; Nordquist, 2018; Tchoutouo Ketchassop, 2020; Kanwal and Aftab, 2021), it has attracted little or no attention from scholars in Nigeria. The subject, however, needs to be studied in Nigeria to enhance a better understanding of the phenomenon and its implications for the teaching and learning of English language in Nigerian schools. Similarly, casual observation has shown that a good number of students of colleges of education in Nigeria seldom communicate in the English language when they interact with one another, except when it is extremely necessary. Many of them communicate in the dominant local languages in their respective colleges while those that choose to use the English language speak corrupted English. Many of these students are usually not at ease communicating in the English language. Ultimately, the oral productivity of the affected students in the English language suffers. This study, therefore, examined the impact of linguistic insecurity on the English oral productivity of students of selected colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria with the aim of offering recommendations that could help students overcome the problem and enhance their oral proficiency in the language.

Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

 i. To establish whether or not students in colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria suffer   from linguistic insecurity while communicating in English language.
 ii. To establish the impact which linguistic insecurity has on the English oral productivity of students of Nigerian colleges of education, especially in South-Western Nigeria.
iii. To determine whether or not students of Nigerian colleges of education who suffer linguistic insecurity in English language adopt coping strategies, and what such strategies are.

Research Questions

The following research questions were to be answered by this study:

 1. Do students in colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria suffer from linguistic insecurity while communicating in English?
 2. Does linguistic insecurity have any impact on the English oral productivity of students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria?
 3. Are there ways by which students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria cope with linguistic insecurity in English language?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of all students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria. South-Western Nigeria is made up of the six states of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo. Of all the states in the region, only Ekiti does not have a college of education presently. Out of the eight colleges of education in the region, three colleges were purposively sampled for the study. Purposive sampling technique was employed in order to avoid the danger of having two colleges being studied in a state. This also allowed the study to have a college each being selected from the southern, the central and the northern parts of the study area. Based on this, the colleges of education studied are: Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka, Lagos; Osun State College of Education, Ilesa; and Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate from Lagos, Osun and Oyo States respectively. From this population, a sample of one hundred and twenty (120) students was randomly selected from each of the colleges to give us a sample of three hundred and sixty (360).

The instrument employed in the conduct of the research was a self-constructed questionnaire tagged "Impact of Linguistic Insecurity on English Oral Productivity Questionnaire (ILIEOPQ)." The questionnaire had two sections; Sections A and B. Section A sought information on the bio-data of the respondents while Section B contained question items that sought information that could help us answer the research questions set for the study from the respondents. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, the draft of the questionnaire was presented to experts for vetting. Quantitative data generated with the questionnaire were to be presented in tables and analysed using frequency counts and simple percentages.

Two research assistants were selected from each of the colleges of education studied. They were selected from among the junior academic staff in the colleges. These research assistants helped especially in the selection of the informants and the administration and collection of the research instruments.

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The data generated with the questionnaire are analysed here. First, we present the bio-data of the respondents.

Respondents' Bio-Data

Table 1: Respondents' Sex

Sex	Male	%	Female	%
	145	40.28	215	59.72

Female respondents were in the majority in this study. They were 215 (59.72%) as against 145 (40.28%) male respondents. This is understandable because a casual observation of the compositions of students of the colleges of education used for the revealed that ladies or females were in the majority. Ordinarily, teaching is considered as a female profession in many societies in Nigeria and this explains why one tends to find more women than men in the teaching professions in many states of the federation.

Table 2: Age of the Respondents

Age	16-20 Years %		21-25 Years %		26 Years and Above	
	156	43.33%	128	35.56%	76	21.11%

The data in Table 2 above indicate that respondents whose ages fell between 16 and 20 years were 156 (43.33%); those between 21 and 25 years came next with 128 (35.56%) while those aged 26 years and above were the least with 76 (21.11%). This means that the colleges of education sampled were peopled mostly by young people of below age 26.

Table 3: Respondents' Year of Study

Course Level	Year One %		Year Two %		Year Three	
	110	30.56%	133	36.94%	117	32.50%

In Table 3, the data there indicate that majority of the respondents were drawn from among students who were in their second year of study in the sampled colleges with 133 (36.94%). Those in Year Three came next with 117 (32.50%) while students in Year One were the least sampled with 110 respondents (30.56%).

Table 4: Respondents' Home Backgrounds

Home Background	Educated Home %		Non-educated Home %	
	81	22.50%	279	78.50%

In Table IV, the data show that majority of the respondents came from homes where the parents had little or no formal/Western education. 279 of the respondents; representing 78.50%, came from such homes. Only 81 of the respondents; that is, 22.50%, had parents that were educated. One implication of this finding is that there are more students from non-educated homes than are those from educated homes in colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria. Another implication is that there is the probability of many students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria being less proficient in English language than they are in their respective mother tongues because of the fact that children from non-educated homes speak more of their mother tongues than they do of English.

Answering the Research Questions

Data generated from the analyses of the responses of the respondents to the question items in Section B of the questionnaire are used to answer the three research questions set for the study.

Research Question 1: *Do students in colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria suffer from linguistic insecurity while communicating in English?*

The data generated from the analysis of the respondents' responses to items 1-10 of the questionnaire as shown in the table below are used to answer Research Question 1.

Table 5: Responses of Students on Linguistic Insecurity While Communicating in English

S/N	Item	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Are there some of your friends and course-mates who speak English language more fluently than you do?	243	67.50	117	32.50
2.	Do you then think that those friends or course-mates are socially better than you because they are more fluent than you in English language?	235	65.28	125	34.72
3.	Do you see yourself as being inferior to your friends and course-mates because you are less fluent in English?	224	62.22	136	37.78
4.	Have you ever felt nervous while communicating in English with your friends or course-mates on campus?	287	79.72	73	20.28
5.	Were you nervous because you felt the quality of your English was not good enough?	221	61.39	139	38.61
6.	Were you able to overcome the anxiety within a short period?	223	61.94	137	38.06
7.	Do you think you have enough vocabulary of English language which you require to effectively communicate in	127	35.28	233	64.72
8.	Do you feel confident speaking English language in the classroom?	178	49.46	182	50.56
9.	Is the quality of your oral productivity in both your mother tongue and English language nearly equal?	168	46.67	192	53.33
10.	Is the quality of your oral productivity higher in English language than it is in your mother tongue?	129	35.83	231	64.17

From the analysis of the data on the responses of the respondents to Item 1, it could be seen that majority of the respondents (243:67.50%) were of the opinion that there were some of their friends and course-mates who were more fluent than them in English language. 235 (65.28%) of the respondents believed that their friends and course-mates who spoke English language more fluently than they do were socially better than them as depicted by the data in Item 2. In Item 3, the combined effects of the results in Items 1 and 2 appear to have direct impact on the findings in Item 3 where majority of the respondents; that is, 224 (62.22%), confirmed that they did feel inferior to some of their friends and course-mates who are more fluent than them in English. The affected respondents have taken the variety of English spoken by their more fluent colleagues to be superior to theirs. Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that they were socially inferior to their more fluent colleagues since their variety of English is inferior. Some sort of inferiority complex has thus set in for them; a development that might have effect on how they interact with their so-called "more fluent" friends and course mates. This wrong notion held by majority of the respondents does not have any linguistic backing as modern linguists are of the opinion that no variety of a language is superior or inferior to another (Labov, 1972).

Majority of the respondents in Item 4; 287: 79.72%, admitted that they had at one time or the other experienced some sort of nervousness while speaking English with their friends or course-mates. It could, therefore, be safely said that an average student of a college of education in South-Western Nigeria has experienced linguistic insecurity at one point of his sojourn in

the college. The nervousness experienced by many of the respondents whenever they spoke English language with their friends or course-mates was found to be due to their own conviction that the quality of English language that they possessed was not good enough to communicate with especially among friends or mates who used "better" English. This was revealed by the data in Item 5.

In the analysed data for Item 6, majority of the respondents (223: 61.94%) were able to overcome their nervousness within a short time. This is a good development as it implies that linguistic insecurity can be overcome by learners or speakers of English as a second language. 233; representing 64.72% of the respondents in Item 7, submitted that they did not possess enough vocabulary of English language which they required to effectively communicate in English. We are tempted to believe that the non-possession of enough vocabulary of English language could be a major source of their nervousness whenever they tried to speak English with their friends and course-mates.

In Item 8, a slight majority of the respondents; 182: 50.56%, submitted that they were never comfortable speaking English language during lectures. This should be understandable; they were yet to completely overcome their nervousness. Confidence matters in virtually every human endeavour. There have been situations where as native speakers of our different first languages we did perform poorly in our speeches, at least pending when we regained our composure.

The qualities of the oral productivity of the respondents in both their mother tongue and English language were far apart as affirmed by 192 of the respondents; representing 53.33% of the sample, in Item 9. From the result of the analysis of the data in Item 10, majority of the respondents (231: 64.17%) were of the opinion that the quality of their oral productivity in their mother tongue was higher than that of English language. The implication of this is that majority of the respondents had a better command of their mother tongues than they did of English.

From the analysis of the data in Items 1 to 10 to answer Research Question 1, it has been found that majority of students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria do experience linguistic insecurity whenever they communicate with their friends and course-mates in English language; a phenomenon which is not unconnected with their deficiency in English language. The matching of the respondents' responses with their home-backgrounds revealed that majority of the respondents who had the attitude of linguistic insecurity in English language came from non-educated homes. This finding agrees with the position of Bernstein's Deficit Hypothesis that children from working class homes were deficient in their command of English language because they were restricted to only the restricted code while children from middle class homes were more proficient in the language because they had access to the elaborated code in addition to the restricted code.

Research Question 2: *Does linguistic insecurity have any impact on the English oral productivity of students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria?*

The data generated from the analysis of the respondents' responses to items 11-14 of the questionnaire are used to answer Research Question 2.

Table 6: Responses of Student on Impact of Linguistic Insecurity on English Oral Productivity

S/N	Item	Yes	%	No	%
11.	Do you speak English more regularly than you speak your mother tongue on campus?	105	29.17	255	70.83
12.	Do you sometimes transfer some forms and meanings in your first language in to spoken English thinking that they are the same in both languages?	229	63.61	131	36.39
13.	Have you ever been mocked by your friends or course-mates because they believed that the quality of the English language you were speaking was poor?	263	73.06	97	26.94
14.	Were you demoralised by the mockery?	197	54.72	163	45.28

The data in Item 11 show that 70.83% of the respondents spoke their mother tongue more regularly than they did speak English language. While one may want to argue that the fact that the colleges used for the study are mostly populated by Yoruba-speaking students was the reason majority of the respondents spoke their mother tongue more regularly than English language on their campuses, it may not be out of place to say that the anxiety majority of them suffered whenever they tried to speak English among their friends and course-mates was equally a strong factor for their non-regular speaking of English language on campus.

From the data in Item 12, 229; representing 63.61% of the respondents, confirmed that they had sometimes transferred some forms and meanings in their first language into their spoken English because they thought such forms and meanings were the same in both languages. This is nothing else but linguistic interference; a phenomenon which is found in the speeches of "young" second language learners. At the level of education of the respondents, it is expected that they would have mastered the English language enough for them to avoid the intrusion of features of their first language into the English language. It is our belief that the intrusion was a product of the linguistic insecurity suffered by majority of these respondents.

From the data in Item 13, it can be seen that students who experience linguistic insecurity could be mocked by their colleagues if they produce expressions that are ungrammatical in English language. 263 of the respondents; that is, 73.06%, had at one time or the other been mocked by their friends and course-mates for committing grammatical errors or blunders. 197 (54.72%) of the respondents that had been mocked were demoralised by the mockery as made evident by findings in Item 14.

Findings from the data in Items 11-14 above have shown that linguistic insecurity has some impacts; albeit negative, on the English oral productivity of students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria. This finding is similar in some way to that of Kanwal and Aftab (2021) who found that the attitude of linguistic insecurity which L_1 Punjabi speakers had for their mother tongue negatively affected their learning of Punjabi but positively impacted their learning of English language as their second language. In the case of the present study, the attitude of linguistic insecurity which students of colleges of education in South-Western

Nigeria had for the English language negatively impacted their oral productivity in the language while positively impacting their mother tongue. Inferiority complex, loss of self-confidence and non-possession of enough vocabulary of English have been found to play a major role in causing linguistic insecurity in English language usage by students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria.

Research Question 3: *Are there ways by which students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria cope with linguistic insecurity in English language?*

The data generated from the analysis of the respondents' responses to items 15-19 of the questionnaire are used to answer Research Question 3.

Table 7: Responses on Ways by Which Students Cope with Linguistic Insecurity in English Language

S/N	Item	Yes	%	No	%
15.	Do you sometimes switch over to your first language (code-switch) while communicating with your friends and course-mates in English language?	253	70.28	107	29.72
16.	Do you code-mix while speaking English language with your friends and course-mates in the school?	242	67.22	118	32.78
17.	Do you use mannerisms such as *emm*, *umm,* etc. when speaking English language your friends and course-mates?	255	70.83	105	29.17
18.	Have you ever tried avoiding verbal communication in English because you were afraid you might commit errors?	225	62.50	135	37.50
19.	When you do not have the right words to express yourself in English, do you sometimes use gestures and mime instead?	193	53.61	167	46.39

Students in colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria do switch over to their first language (code-switch) while communicating with their friends and course-mates in English language as part of the means of coping with linguistic insecurity in English language. This was the position of 253 (70.28%) of the respondents as obtained from the data in Item 15. Ordinarily, this should not have attracted any attention but for the fact that the linguistic conditions that could warrant code-switching were not present especially with the respondents having friends and course-mates who had different mother tongues. Code-switching is, therefore, a kind of leeway for the respondents to cover their linguistic insecurity in English language occasioned by their deficiencies in the language.

Code-mixing is another means by which majority of the respondents (242:67.22%) said they coped with linguistic insecurity in English as contained in the data in Item 16. Code-mixing, which is the linguistic act of inserting small chunks or words of one language into another by conversants during conversation, is possible in a bilingual or multilingual situation where the conversants understand the two languages in use. Though code-mixing is a normal phenomenon in a bilingual or multi-lingual setting, we want to believe that most of the

respondents code-mixed because they lacked the right English words to express themselves at some points of their interactions or conversations.

In Item 17, 255 of the respondents; representing 70.83%, submitted that they used mannerisms when speaking English language with their friends and course-mates as another means by which they coped with linguistic insecurity in English language. We want to believe that students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria employ mannerisms mainly to buy themselves some time while shopping for the words to use. So, those mannerisms are like some kind of stop-gap measures employed by people who suffer linguistic insecurity in English.

Silence or outright avoidance of communication in English was considered and used as a form of coping strategy by majority of the respondents as the data in Item 18 reveal where 225 of the respondents; representing 62.50%, so affirmed. This finding contradicts the position of Tomioka (1989) and VanPatten & Benati (2010) who believe that silent periods are more common in children than in adult learners as there are communication demands on adults. But talking of the level of proficiency of the affected respondents in English language, however, we may metaphorically refer to them as "children." This strategy is not good as it is bound to negatively affect the competence of whoever uses it in English language especially if it is allowed to last longer than necessary since a language spoken is a language learnt.

193 of the respondents; that is, 53.61%, confirmed that they employed gesticulations and miming as another means by which they cope with the linguistic insecurity which they experienced in English language. This implies that these students sometimes "acted" or demonstrated their messages (by way of signs) rather than vocalising them.

Findings from the data above have shown that students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria have devised some strategies by which they try to cope with their attitude of linguistic insecurity in English language and achieve their communication needs. All those things that the respondents claimed they did to cope with their linguistic insecurity in English language are called "communication strategies." They are solutions to the communication problems encountered by second language learners. The problems usually arise because such learners lack the required linguistic resources to make effective use of the target language. Richards and Schmidt (2009) say communication strategies are those things which second language learners use to overcome their communication problems in order to achieve their intended meanings. It must be said, however, that native speakers also sometimes use these strategies (with the exception of code-mixing and code-switching).

Conclusion

Students of selected colleges of education have been sampled and studied to determine the impact of linguistic insecurity on the English oral productivity of students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria. It has been found that students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria suffer linguistic insecurity in English language. The phenomenon was also found to have negatively impacted their oral productivity in the language. The social backgrounds of students were found to be key determinants of who suffers and who does not suffer linguistic insecurity in English language among students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria. Students from non-educated homes were found to be the worst sufferers of linguistic insecurity in English language. It is our position that linguistic insecurity in English language is high among students of colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria

because majority of the students are from non-educated homes and possess a form of English language that is not good enough for them to communicate effectively in.

Recommendations

Following from the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered. First, students should make deliberate efforts on their own to attain proficiency (oral and written) in English language before they gain admission into tertiary institutions because it is the English language that they will need more for their socialisation and academics at that level of education.

Again, students should know that their self-confidence greatly matters when it comes to oral communication generally. It matters the more when one communicates in a second language with people who have different first language(s) as it is the case with English language in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This recommendation becomes necessary because it was found from the findings of this study that most of the respondents who suffered from linguistic insecurity agreed that they were always nervous while communicating in English with friends and course-mates.

In addition, students should continue to speak the English language always in their schools even if they are going to commit errors for which they are going to be booed or mocked by their friends. This is because perfection comes with consistent practice; a language regularly spoken is a language learnt and mastered.

Teachers in primary and secondary schools should lay more emphasis on the spoken English of their pupils/students. They should encourage their pupils/students to speak English language while in school. It should be noted that the spoken English is the medium that students in tertiary institutions use more on a daily basis just as it is also the medium in which they commit more grammatical errors given its extemporaneity.

Finally, parents should complement the efforts of school teachers by allowing or encouraging their children to make use of English language at home. While we are not saying that children should not speak their first languages, we are advocating more use of English language because the children will need English language more in their educational endeavours than they will do of their first languages.

Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

All the authors of this work declared no vested interest.
OOS: Conceptualization, data collection, re-drafting of the proposal, data analysis, reviewing and editing the final draft.
OAA: Conceptualization, methodology, data collection, data analysis, writing the final draft.
AAD: Data collection, drafting of the proposal, data analysis.

REFERENCES

Bernstein, B. (1971). Class, codes and control. *Applied Studies Towards a Sociology of Language*, Vol. 2. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bucci, Wilma & Baxter. M. (1984). Problems of linguistic insecurity in multicultural speech contexts. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 433 (1), Discourses in reading and linguistics, 185-200. http://www.academia.edu/15209048/Production_and_perception_of_stop_consonants_inSpan

Daftari, G. E. & Tavil, Z. M. (2017). The impact of non-native English teachers' linguistic insecurity on   learners' productive skills. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, Vol. 13. Issue 1, pp. 379-398. www.jlls.org .

Kanwal, S. & Aftab, S. (2021). The effect of linguistic insecurity on ESL learning: A case study of L_1 Punjabi speaker. *Jahan-e-Tahqeeq*, Vol. 4. Issue 3, pp. 36-46. https://jahan-e-tahqeeq.com/index.php/jahan-e-tahqeeq.

Kim, L.S., Siong, L.K., Fei, W. F. & Ya'acob, A. (2010). The English language and its impact on identities of multilingual Malaysian undergraduates. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, Vol. 10. Issue 1, pp. 87-101.

Labov, W. (1972). The reflection of social processes in linguistic structure. In Joshua A. Fishman (Ed.). *Readings in the Sociology of Language*. Massachusetts: Mouton.

Nordquist, R. (2018). *Linguistic Insecurity*. https://www.thoughtco.com/richard-nordquist-1688331.

Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (eds.). (2009). Communication strategy. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. NewYork: Longman.

Tchoutouo Ketchassop, A. C. (2020). Solving linguistic insecurity by an application of the Haugen model of language planning: The case study of the Nda'nda' language in Cameroon. *American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research (AJHSSR)*, Vol. 4. Issue 9, pp. 307-315. www.ajhssr.com.

Tomioka, T. (1989). The Silent Period Hypothesis. *Sanno Junior College Bulletin*, 22, 150-162

Trudgill, P. (2003). *A glossary of sociolinguistics.* Edinburg: Edinburg University Press.

VanPatten, B. & Benati, A. G. (2010). *Key terms in second language acquisition*. London: Continuum.