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MULTIPLE LINGUISTIC EXPERIENCE AMONG STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, NIGERIA: AN AFFORDANCE THEORY PARADIGM

NWAGBO, OSITA GERALD
Department of Linguistics, African and Asian Studies
University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria
Tel: +2348027925545 e-mail osynwagbo@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The use of more than one language by individuals may be the norm in contemporary times, but the experience has been connected with conflicting perceptions and problematic identity projections. This study examines the linguistic experience of Igbo students in the University of Lagos who use two indigenous languages (Igbo and Yoruba), a language of wider communication, (Nigerian Pidgin), and two foreign languages (English, and French/Chinese). This is with a view to delineating language use in different settings, code switching patterns, language attitudes, and identity projections. 42 male and female Igbo students studying Igbo (16), French (14), and Chinese (12) were purposively sampled and a questionnaire was used to elicit information from the participants. It was found that Igbo, English and Yoruba were the only languages used in both formal and informal settings, while French and Chinese were used only in formal situations. Nigerian Pidgin was used exclusively in informal encounters. Naturally, code-switching was a common interactional strategy involving most language combinations. Majority of respondents were positively attuned to Igbo, English, French and Chinese, for utilitarian reasons. A minority of the respondents reported a sole Igbo identity while a majority indicated hyphenated and multiple identities thus highlighting identity dilemma in their social perception. Notably, multiple language use is beneficial as it avails speakers the opportunity of interacting and identifying freely with people from other ethno-linguistic groups.

Keywords: Igbo, multilingualism, affordances, language use, language attitudes.

Introduction

In contemporary times across the world, the phenomenon of speaking more than one language by an individual or the recognition of different languages in a society, is a fact that is taken for granted. The fact remains that, due to recent trends in migration and other social and cultural factors that mesh different ethnolinguistic groups, nearly all nations in the world have developed a multilingual status, and there is hardly any monolingual speaker anywhere, as generally, individuals have a native-like proficiency in their heritage language as well as a passing knowledge of another language. Though level of proficiency may not be symmetrical, the possession of a low degree of competence in one of two languages does not make one less a bilingual than one with a native-like proficiency in two languages. As against the exclusive and restrictive position of earlier scholars such as Bloomfield (1933) that multilinguals need to have native-like competence or equal proficiency in the two languages, later sociolinguists (Hall, 2001; Dewaele, 2016; Edwards, 2013) have adopted a more open and inclusive multilingual framework that recognizes and accommodates varying competence levels. Thus, bilinguals are not required to posses equal competence in the two languages at their disposal; a native-like competence in one of the two languages (particularly the indigenous tongue) and

a fair competence in the second language s sufficient to acknowledge a speaker as bilingual. Consequently, this paper aligns with the position of contemporary sociolinguists that multilinguals do not need to have same level of ability in the languages they use. It suffices that, they can sustain conversation in the languages, even if in either sound or structure, or both, they are found wanting in some respects.

This scenario is particularly the case in Africa, where people use their heritage language and an official language, either English or French, as the case may be. In some instances in Africa, due to inter ethnic marriage, or linguistic acculturation/assimilation, some people develop native-like competence in two indigenous languages. Unlike Europe, in Africa, more precisely Africa south of the Sahara, where it is possible to find as many as 300 or more languages in the same country, individual multilingualism promoted by language contact situations is as pervasive as societal multilingualism in Europe. Many Africans are at home with, at least three languages, as follows: mother tongue, official language which is foreign, and language of wider communication. For instance, in East Africa, most individuals speak their native tongue, Swahili, English while in Anglophone West Africa, such as Ghana or Nigeria, individuals speak their mother tongue, English and Pidgin. In some instances, some people speak another community language other than their own, bringing the number to four. Nwagbo's (2019) research on Igbo bilinguals in Lagos confirms that in urban spaces such as Lagos, Nigeria, second generation Igbo, born in Lagos speak Yoruba (host community language) like native speakers, in addition to their native tongue, English and Nigerian Pidgin (NP).

Notably, the two indigenous languages plus the official language are used as the need arises in the daily encounters of the speakers. It is necessary to state that, when people are proficient in two or more languages, they do not use the languages arbitrarily; rather they deliberately choose where to use each language and when. These choices may depend on the attitude of speakers toward the languages and sometimes in spite of their attitudes. The process of using another language whether indigenous or foreign, involves the principle of adaptation, or what has been termed alignment. Alignment has been defined as the flexibility with which bilinguals adapt and integrate the languages they have learnt into their environment (Atkinson et al, 2007). Put differently, alignment entails deploying language to serve certain ends or purposes in the social environment. Actually, the objective of bilinguals is not to achieve full mastery of a language for needs and uses. Rather, they aim at reaching a degree of fluency that is adequate for the needs they want that language to serve. Their principal objective is repertoire development; that is, acquiring sufficient knowledge of the other language necessary for communication. Success in communication therefore depends on aligning their dual or multiple languages as needs and situations require (Kramsch, 2002).

On the strength of this construct, this study aims at examining the dynamics of living with four or five languages among Igbo students of the University of Lagos, Nigeria studying different language courses. This is with a view to harnessing the languages they used in different domains, their attitudes to the languages, code management during interaction and identity projection.

Language choice in multilingual settings

As a social phenomenon, multilingualism is widespread throughout Africa, and indeed the whole world. As a result, the idea has attracted the interest of researchers from all over the globe, and research on the subject has yielded varied definitions of the concept. A multilingual individual is described by Edwards (1994) as "A person who has the ability to use three or more languages, either separately or in various degrees of code-mixing…" (Edwards, 1994, in Kemp, 2009: 15). In the view of Kemp (2009: 11) most sociolinguists and psycholinguists define 'multilingualism' as the use of three or more languages, even though the definition of language is a problematic one, given the vexed issue of dialect and language. While defining bilinguals, Grosjean (2010) expanded the concept to include those who use two or more languages or dialects in their lives. Following from Grosjean, individuals who have facility in two different languages in addition to a dialect or two of one of the languages can pass for multilinguals. This is an inclusive definition which makes most people multilinguals. Since the notion of dialectal variety as separate from the standard variety is not shared by all linguists, this inclusive idea is restricted.

Hall's (2001, in Conteh, 2007:3) combined view of bilingualism and multilingualism as terms used to "refer to pupils who live in two languages, who have access to, or need to use, two or more languages at home and at school, is suggestive of the traditional view of multilinguals as people who use more than two different languages. The complex language use does not mean, however, that, they are fluent in the two or three languages or that they are competent in all the tongues. Hall's reference to "living in two languages" implies that each language represents a world or unique perspective; therefore two languages means two different worlds or perspectives. In the view of Wei (2013:26) multilingualism is 'co-existence, contact and interaction of different languages' at the individual or societal level while a multilingual is 'someone who can function in two or more languages in conversational interaction' (Wei, 2013: 33).

In its own definition, the council of Europe (2011) distinguishes between societal multilingualism and individual multilingualism, by referring to the former as multilingualism and the latter as Plurilingualism. It defines multilingualism as 'Multilingualism' refers to the presence in a geographical area, large or small, of more than one 'variety of language' i.e. the mode of speaking of a social group whether it is formally recognized as a language or not; in such an area individuals may be monolingual, speaking only their own variety', and defines Plurilingualism as 'Plurilingualism' refers to the repertoire of varieties of language which many individuals use, and is therefore the opposite of monolingualism; it includes the language variety referred to as 'mother tongue' or 'first language' and any number of other languages or varieties. Thus in some multilingual areas some individuals are monolingual and some are plurilingual. In the fashion of the Council of Europe, other scholars have coined other terms to separate individual and societal multilingualism; Moore and Gajo (2009) used multilingualism to refer to the societal experience and plurilingualism, to refer to the individual experience in several languages. Earlier, Hamers and Blanc (2000) used the term 'bilinguality' while Aronin and O Laoire (2004) used the term 'multilinguality' to refer to the individual experience in use of several languages. Irrespective of the terms used, the fact remains that contemporary societies recognize multiple languages in their social space, as well as individuals who speak a number of them. In most African societies, this is the norm as most individuals have facility in more than two languages typically involving their mother tongue,

a foreign language and a language of wider communication, such as Pidgin or Swahili, as the case may be.

Multilingualism and related issues

Some of the most prominent issues related to multilingualism are domain, code alternation and identity. Domain (promoted by Ferguson) is seen as a context where it is more appropriate to use one language than another. This is premised on the understanding that, language choice and use is conditioned on participants, topic of discussion and setting or where the interaction is taking place. Some institutional domains recognized include home and family, school, office, market, neighborhood, and so on. For instance, in a country like Nigeria where English is an official language, the home represents a domain favouring the use of indigenous languages by family members, about family matters, while the office represents a domain favouring the use of the official language among workers about formal issues. The outcome of this fixed condition is that, multilinguals keep their languages apart; language A is used here and language B is used over there. This is hardly the case given the fact that, codes are no respecter of settings and participants. It is instructive to note therefore that, multilinguals do not keep their languages apart; during interaction, they use the languages they know irrespective of setting and topic. Garcia (2009) asserts that, multilinguals draw from the codes in their repertoire during communication and do not see the codes as separate from one another.

This is evidenced when multilinguals switch from one code to another in a discourse (code switching) or even switch within a sentence (code mixing). The fact is that, multilinguals see their languages as valuable resources they utilize in the course of interaction. Needless to say that such creative switching of codes is activated only amidst fellows who understand the languages used (Hudson, 2001). Specifically, the transition occurs when a bilingual incorporates a word or phrase from his L1 into the L2 during interaction. Gass and Selinker (2008) suggest that the practice of using more than one language in a conversation could be motivated by the lack of a concept in one language and its presence in the other language, and sometimes it might be triggered by the social context. In other words, the practice sometimes makes up for inadequacies in the first language and also enhances or facilitates conversation.

A sensitive issue concomitant to multilingualism is the notion of identity projection. Although the use of several languages by an individual is positively linked to integrative merits, the users have often been challenged with issues of performance and identity projection (Griffith, 2002; Mejaizmit, 2007). Language has been found to be a major tool for showing who we are. Individuals often feel that they belong to a particular group because they share the same language and thus share an US feeling. The implication is that, the choice of one language instead of another is related to identifying with either your own ethnic group or another ethnic group. It follows therefore that, when bilingual changes to another language, he/she assumes a different identity other than the identity projected in the initial language. Ultimately, language is a primary marker of identity. This is especially so in many African communities where the language is bipolarly indexed as a peoples' means of communication, as well as the people themselves. In other words, the language is the community or the community is the language. For instance, Igbo is the language of the Igbo; Yoruba is the language of the Yoruba; Igalla is the language of the Igalla, etc. One of the fallouts of language and identity construct is the possibility of multilinguals to identify with various languages, and therefore manifest

mixed or variegated identities. In some rare cases, identity dilemma is the result, where a multilingual is confounded and disconcerted about his real identity.

The theoretical approach

The study will be guided by the theory of Affordances propounded by Gibson (1979). Affordance is actually a psychological theory that studies the perception and behavior of animals and humans as a function of what the environment offers. According to Gibson (1979:223), the theory of affordances "implies that to see things is to see how to get about among them and what to do or not do with them". Gibson (1979: 224) also states that

> The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill. The verb to afford is found in the dictionary, but the noun affordance is not I have made it up. I mean by it something that refers to both the environment and the animal in a way that no existing term does. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment

Notably, Gibson's notion of affordances is an outcome of his interest in optics and perception with respect to animals in their natural habitat and thereafter to humans in their environment. However, the Theory of Affordances is not limited to psychology but has been used in other fields including sociolinguistics. From a linguistics perspective, Segalowitz (2001), Van Lier (2007) and Dewaele (2010) have engaged the concept from the perspectives of language learning and teaching while Aronin and Singleton (2010) widened the frontiers of affordances to include language choice and use. The latter are of the view that, affordances is vital in terms of handling variegated aspects of multilingualism. Hence, Aronin and Singleton (2010) describe the idea of affordances of multilingualism that covers individual language affordances and social language affordances, both of which constitute language affordances (also, Rindler-Schjerve and Velten, 2007; Huguet, 2007; Cenoz, 2009)

Individual affordance is used to describe affordances by which an individual can interact with others or make use of language(s). Social language affordance describes affordances or possibilities provided by a particular community at a particular time, in relation to approving the acquisition and use of a language or languages. It is important to state that, social language affordances are manifested in various ways in each community. For instance, in the 18th century, Habsburg empire represents a setting where linguistic affordances were licensed in view of multiple languages (Rindler-Schjerve and Velten, 2007) and in contemporary times, Spain is a good example of the availability of affordances for multilingualism in some of its regions such as Valencia, Galicia, Catalonia, and each region manifests affordances in a different way (Huguet, 2007; Cenoz, 2009). According to Aronin and Singleton (2010), some language affordances are spread over vast areas while others are limited. For instance, the colonization of Africa by Europe provided affordances for European languages such as English to Nigeria and Ghana, and English, French, and Portuguese to Cameroon. In contrast, the decolonization of Africa also brought affordances for the various indigenous languages spoken in Nigeria, Ghana, and Cameroon.

There are four key points in Gibson's Affordances Theory: information about the Self, size of the animal, mutuality of animal and environment, and nesting. Information about the Self is

connected to the attention of the language user towards the language(s) in which he/she is interested, and towards he/she as a language user. Just as animals are aware and conscious of their location and that of other animals for successful hunting, eating or hiding, language users are aware of their linguistic needs in relation to other languages and speakers. This idea has been related to the classic notion of domain developed by Fishman (1965) used to delineate the fact that, language choice is not arbitrary but is conditioned by settings, topics, and interlocutors. From the point of view of affordances, domain is seen as a cluster of affordances that provide incentive for the use of one language in a setting. Thus, a domain represents an environment that licenses affordances and favours a set of languages rather than others in a multilingual community (Aronin and Singleton, 2012). Instead of Fishman's speaker, setting and topic, Aronin and Singleton (2012) used a slightly different nomenclature (user, environment and language) to capture the idea of domain, where user covers interlocutors and signs, and environment covers a wider range of space than setting.

The size of the animal is associated with the features of the language user and the features of the language. Precisely, it states that what is an affordance for a group of users of a language may not tally with affordance for another group of users. Alternatively, some users may not take advantage of an affordance or consider it of no use. For instance, in the immigration context, first generation immigrants may not be interested in learning and using the new language but prefer the heritage language, as opposed to the latter generations. In these situations, there are many opportunities or affordances for using the new language, which were not utilized by the first generation immigrants, as a result of their attachment to their culture.

Mutuality of animal and environment signifies that, the observer and the environment are complementary. For animals, the links to the environment is limited to the physicals, but for humans, it is not. The moral, emotional, cognitive elements constitute affordances; thus linguistic affordances include curricular, school buildings and libraries, teaching of indigenous and foreign languages, possession of professional teachers, availability of books and dictionaries for learners, language policy and type of planning, etc. These tangible and intangible materials are affordances.

Nesting refers to the relationship between animals in the environment according to their kinds. Gibson (1979) explains that, leaves are nested within trees, trees are nested within canyons, and canyons are nested within mountains. The essence of this concept is that smaller units are embedded or nested within larger units. In language use, it is used to express the view that, smaller units such as a family possess a different range of affordances than larger units such as a school or office. The unique nature of the home described as an informal setting limits its affordances for language than a larger unit such as the school with a more expansive range of linguistic affordances (Aronin and Singleton, 2012).

The Method

Participants were pooled from two departments in the faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, Nigeria between 2017 and 2018. The departments are Linguistics, African and Asian Studies and European Languages. The Department of Linguistics, African and Asian Studies hosts two African Languages (Igbo and Yoruba) and one Asian language (Chinese). Department of European Languages hosts two European languages (French and Russian). Since the target

subjects are multilinguals, the search was narrowed to Igbo students in the faculty of Arts who spoke Yoruba (the host community language) and who were studying Igbo or other foreign languages, apart from English. In other words, all the participants were Igbo by ethnicity. The aim was to select students who spoke at least, four languages comprising two indigenous languages, one or two foreign languages, and one language of wider community. The restriction necessitated the use of purposive and snow-ball sampling to pool a total of forty two (42) respondents made up of 16 respondents from the Igbo unit, 12 respondents from French unit, and 14 respondents from Chinese unit of the two departments. The reason why no respondent was chosen from the Yoruba unit was the fact that, most of them reached at the time spoke only three languages, consisting of Yoruba, English and Pidgin. The students of Russian were not available at the period of data collection.

Data was elicited from respondents with the aid of a 4-page questionnaire. The focus of the inquiry was in the areas of language use across domains, language attitudes, code alternation, and identity projection. Igbo Students Studying Igbo (ISSI) reported being proficient in four languages comprising two native tongues (Igbo and Yoruba), English and Nigerian Pidgin (NP). Igbo Students Studying French (ISSF) reported being proficient in five languages consisting of two native tongues (Igbo and Yoruba), two foreign languages (English and French) and Nigerian Pidgin. Igbo Students Studying Chinese (ISSCH) also reported being proficient in five languages including two native tongues (Igbo and Yoruba), two foreign languages (English and Chinese) and Nigerian Pidgin. The ISSF claimed high proficiency in French due to the fact that, they had undergone the mandatory immersion programme in French domiciled in the French Village, Badagry, Lagos while the ISSCH respondents also claimed high proficiency in Chinese given the two-year mandatory immersion programme in China. Precisely, the programme requires them to spend their first and final years in University of Lagos, and the second and third years in the University of Soochow, China. All the ISSF and ISSCH respondents were in their final years of study in the University of Lagos, while the ISSI comprised 300-level and final year students.

Data presentation and analysis

The data will be presented in the following way: language use, language attitudes, code switching, and identity projection.

Language use

The data on language use is an inquiry on the different settings where respondents used the languages in their repertoire. The result is presented below

Table 1. Language use (ISSI) (N=16)

	Settings				
Languages in use	**Home (n)** %	**Classroom (n)** %	**Hostel & Common Rooms (n)** %	**Societies & Clubs (n)** %	**External Spaces (n)** %
First Native Language (Igbo)	16 100%	16 100%	5 31.2%	-	12 75.0%
Second Native Language (Yoruba)	6 37.5%	-	16 100%	-	10 62.5%

First Foreign Language (English)	16 100%	16 100%	16 100%	16 100%	16 100%
Nigerian Pidgin (NP)	-	-	16 100%	-	16 100%

The result shows that a significant majority of the ISSI used their four languages across the five settings though in varying degrees. In the home domain, all the respondents reported using their FNL (Igbo) and FFL (English) in domestic interactions, while a minority (37.5%) used SNL (Yoruba). No respondent reported using Nigerian Pidgin (NP) in their homes. In the school setting, specifically, the classroom, all the respondents (100%) reported using their FNL (Igbo) and FFL (English) while none reported using either the SNL (Yoruba) or NP. The reason for the dominance of Igbo and English in this setting is the fact that while Igbo is their course of study in the University, both Igbo and English are instructional tools.

In the school hostel and common rooms, all the respondents (100%) used their FFL (English), SNL (Yoruba) and NP, while an insignificant minority (31.2%) used their FNL (Igbo). In societies and clubs setting, all the respondents used their FFL in interactions and none used their FNL,SNL or NP. In the school external spaces, all the respondents (100%) used their FFL, and NP, while a reasonable number (75.0%) and (62.5%) used FNL and SNL respectively.

Table 2. Language use (ISSF) (N=12)

	Settings				
Languages in use	**Home (n)** %	**Classroom (n)** %	**Hostel & Common Rooms (n)** %	**Societies & Clubs (n)** %	**External Spaces (n)** %
First Native Language (Igbo)	12 100%	-	10 93.3%	-	4 33.3%
Second Native Language (Yoruba)	6 50.0%	-	12 100%	-	3 25.0%
First Foreign Language (English)	12 100%	12 100%	12 100%	12 100%	12 100%
Second Foreign Language (French)	-	12 100%	3 25.0%	-	12 100%
Nigerian Pidgin (NP)	-	-	12 100%	-	12 100%

The result shows that, for the ISSF, their course of study is not used in some settings. In the home setting, no respondent used their SFL (French) and NP while all of them (100%) used their FNL and FFL, and reasonable number (50%) also used their SNL. However, in the classroom setting, all the respondents used both FFL and SFL, while none used their FNL, SNL and NP. This result is unmarked like the ISSI case, due to the fact that French is their course of study, as well as an instructional language with English. In the hostel and common room setting, almost all the respondents used their FNL, SNL FFL and NP, but an insignificant number (25.0%) used French, even though it is their course of study in the university. In the

Societies and club setting, none of the respondents used Igbo, French, Yoruba and NP while all (100%) used English. In the External Spaces setting, an insignificant minority (33.3%) and (25.0%) used their FNL and SNL respectively while English, French and NP were dominant, as the three languages were used by all (100%).

Table 3. Language use (ISSCH) (N=14)

Languages in use	**Settings**				
	Home (n) %	**Classroom (n)** %	**Hostel & Common Rooms (n)** %	**Societies & Clubs (n)** %	**External Spaces (n)** %
First Native Language (Igbo)	14 100%	-	4 28.6%	-	6 42.8%
Second Native Language (Yoruba)	4 28.6%	-	14 100%	-	5 35.7%
First Foreign Language (English)	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%
Second Foreign Language (Chinese)	-	14 100%	-	-	14 100%
Nigerian Pidgin (NP)	-	-	14 100%	-	14 100%

The result above reveals that the SFL (Chinese) was not reflected in most of the settings, almost like the French example. Chinese was not used in the home, hostel and common room, and societies and clubs. In the home setting, English and Igbo were dominant (100%) while a minority (28.6%) also used Yoruba. However, in the classroom, all the respondents (100%) used SFL (Chinese) and FFL (English), while none used FNL, SNL, and NP. In the hostel and common room setting, English, Yoruba and NP were dominant as all the respondents (100%) used them, while a minority (28.6%) also used Igbo. In the Societies and Club setting, all used English and none used the other languages. In the External Spaces setting, FFL (English), SFL (Chinese) and NP was used by all (100%) while a minority (42.8%) and (35.7%) also used Igbo and Yoruba respectively.

Language Attitudes

The inquiry on language attitudes examined the belief system of respondents on the four or five languages they used with respect to value of language and self-esteem. The data is presented below

Table 4. Language attitude (ISSI) (N=16)

Attitude dimensions	**Responses**				
	SA (n)%	**A (n) %**	**N (n)%**	**D (n)%**	**SD (n)%**
My First Native Language is beneficial	12 75%	4 25%	-	-	-
My First Native Language is a significant part of my life	14 87.5%	2 12.5%	-	-	-
My Second Native Language is beneficial	6 37.5%	10 62.5%	-	-	-
My Second Native Language is a significant part of my life	2 12.5%	2 12.5%	6 37.5 %	6 37.5 %	-
My First Foreign Language is beneficial	14 87.5%	2 12.5%	-	-	-
My First Foreign Language is a significant part of my life	8 50.0%	8 50.0%	-	-	-
Nigerian Pidgin is beneficial	-	4 25.0%	6 37.5 %	6 37.5 %	-
Nigerian Pidgin is a significant part of my life	-	-	8 50.0 %	8 50.0 %	-

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

The language attitude investigation shows that the ISSI evinced positive attitudes for their FNL and FFL in both dimensions of value and self-language relations. A total of 75% of the respondents reported that their FNL was beneficial while more (87.5%) reported that they had a strong affinity with their first native language. Incidentally, while more respondents (87.5%) reported that their FFL (English) was beneficial, less number reported that their FFL was a significant part of their lives. This implies that a majority of the respondents were more culturally attached to their FNL than their FFL, but considered their FFL to be more valuable to them than their FNL. Although all the ISSI agreed to the value of their SNL (Yoruba), a majority (37.5%) thought that the language was not a significant part of their lives, while an equal number were neutral to the inquiry. Their disposition to NP showed that a significant majority did not consider the language as valuable and none reported any attachment to the language in terms of significance.

Table 5. Language attitude (ISSF) (N=12)

Attitude dimensions	**Responses**				
	SA (n) %	**A (n) %**	**N (n)%**	**D (n)%**	**SD (n)%**
My First Native Language is beneficial	10 83.3%	2 16.7%	-	-	-
My First Native Language is a significant part of my life	12 100%	-	-	-	-

My Second Native Language is beneficial	-	6 50.0%	2 16.7%	4 33.3%	-
My Second Native Language is a significant part of my life	-	4 33.3%	2 16.7%	6 50.0%	-
My First Foreign Language is beneficial	8 66.7%	4 33.3%	-	-	-
My First Foreign Language is a significant part of my life	12 100%	-	-	-	-
My Second Foreign Language is beneficial	8 66.7%	4 33.3%	-	-	-
My Second Foreign Language is a significant part of my life	6 50.0%	6 50.0%	-	-	-
Nigerian Pidgin is beneficial	-	6 50.0%	2 16.7%	4 33.3%	
Nigerian Pidgin is a significant part of my life	-	-	8 66.7%	2 16.7%	2 16.7%

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

The linguistic attitude of the ISSF shows that they were more positively disposed to three of the languages in their repertoire. Almost all the respondents (83.3%) and (100%) endorsed the value and affinity with their FNL respectively. Nearly the same number posted the same result for the value and attachment with their FFL (66.7% and 100%) and a significant number (66.7% and 50%) posted the same positive evaluation for their SFL (which is their course of study in the University of Lagos) in terms of value and affinity with the language. However, this is not the case for their SNL and NP; although a considerable number (50%) simply agreed to the value of their SNL, the other half were either neutral (16.7%) or disagreed with the proposition. In terms of affinity with the SNL, a minority (33.3%) agreed, while a simple majority disagreed with the proposition. The inquiry on the value of NP showed that a simple majority thought that NP was beneficial, but none reported that they had any affinity with the language of wider communication. While a majority (66.7%) was neutral, the rest disagreed and strongly disagreed with the proposition.

Table 6. Language attitude (ISSCH) (N=14)

Attitude dimensions	**Responses**				
	SA (n) %	**A (n) %**	**N (n)%**	**D (n)%**	**SD (n)%**
My First Native Language is beneficial	12 85.7%	2 14.2%	-	-	-
My First Native Language is a significant part of my life	12 85.7%	2 14.2%	-	-	-
My Second Native Language is beneficial	-	12 85.7%	-	2 14.2%	-
My Second Native Language is a significant part of my life	-	4 28.5%	2 14.2%	8 57.1%	-
My First Foreign Language is beneficial	10 71.4%	4 28.5%	-	-	-

My First Foreign Language is a significant part of my life	14 100%	-	-	-	-
My Second Foreign Language is beneficial	6 42.8%	8 57.1%	-	-	-
My Second Foreign Language is a significant part of my life	8 57.1%	6 42.8%	-	-	-
Nigerian Pidgin is beneficial	-	4 28.5%	4 28.5%	6 42.8%	-
Nigerian Pidgin is a significant part of my life	-	-	3 21.4%	7 50.0%	4 28.5%

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

In the fashion of the ISSF, the ISSCH displayed positive evaluation to their FNL, FFL, and SFL, Chinese, their course of study. A majority of the respondents strongly agreed to the value of their FNL (85.7%) and affinity with the language (85.7%), while a minority (14.2%) simply agreed to the two propositions. In the case of their SNL (Yoruba), while a majority (85.7%) simply agreed to the value of the language, and a minority (14.2%) simply disagreed, a majority (57.1%) simply disagreed that Yoruba was a significant part of their lives. The inquiry on their disposition to their FFL, showed that all the respondents enjoyed a strong affinity to English, while a majority (71.4%) believed that English was beneficial to them. In the instance of their own course of study, (Chinese), a simple majority (57.1%) simply agreed to the value proposition and a significant minority (42.8%) strongly agreed, while a majority strongly agreed to the affinity proposition and a minority simply agreed. The result of the inquiry on NP revealed that a majority (42.8%) was opposed to the value proposition, while a minority accented. While no respondent reported any affinity with NP, a simple majority (50.0%) simply disagreed, and a minority (28.5%) strongly disagreed with the affinity proposition.

Code switching

The inquiry on code switching examined the combinations of languages the respondents used in their interactions and the combinations they did not use. The data is presented below

Table 7. Code switching (ISSI) (N=16)

Responses	**Language combinations**					
	FNL & SNL (n)%	**FNL & FFL (n)%**	**FNL & NP (n)%**	**SNL & FFL (n)%**	**SNL & NP (n)%**	**FFL & NP (n)%**
YES	-	16 100%	16 100%	16 100%	16 100%	16 100%
NO	16 100%	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**16**	**16**	**16**	**16**	**16**	**16**

The result reveals a near symmetry with regards to code switching among the various language combinations used by ISSI respondents. All the respondents reported switching between FNL (Igbo) and FFL (English), FNL and NP, SNL (Yoruba) and FFL (English), SNL and NP, and between FFL and NP. However, no respondent reported switching between FNL (Igbo) and SNL (Yoruba).

Table 8. Code switching (ISSF) (N=12)

Responses	**Language combinations**									
	FNL & SNL (n)%	**FNL & FFL (n)%**	**FNL & SFL (n)%**	**FNL & NP (n) %**	**SNL & FFL (n)%**	**SNL & SFL (n)%**	**SNL & NP (n) %**	**FFL & SFL (n)%**	**FFL & NP (n) %**	**SFL & NP (n) %**
YES	-	12 100%	4 33.3%	12 100%	12 100%	2 16.7%	12 100%	12 100%	12 100%	4 33.3%
NO	12 100%	-	8 66.7%	-	-	10 83.3%	-	-	-	8 66.7%
Total	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**	**12**

The result reveals a discrepancy with regards to code switching among the various language combinations used by ISSF respondents. All the respondents (100.0%) reported using a total of six language combinations in their interactions, as follows: FNL & FFL, FNL and NP, SNL & FFL, SNL & NP, FFL & SFL, and FFL and NP. With respect to FNL and SNL, no respondent reported using the two indigenous language combinations in their interactions. The report for the rest of the combinations was a mixture of use and non use. A greater proportion of respondents reported not using a combination of FNL and SFL (66.7%), SNL and SFL (83.3%) and SFL and NP (66.7%). On the contrary, a minority reported using the same combination of languages in their interactions.

Table 9. Code switching (ISSCH) (N=14)

Responses	**Language combinations**									
	FNL & SNL (n) %	**FNL & FFL (n) %**	**FNL & SFL (n) %**	**FNL & NP (n) %**	**SNL & FFL (n) %**	**SNL & SFL (n) %**	**SNL & NP (n) %**	**FFL & SFL (n) %**	**FFL & NP (n) %**	**SFL & NP (n) %**
YES	-	14 100%	3 21.4%	14 100 %	14 100 %	4 28.6 %	14 100 %	14 100 %	14 100 %	6 42.9%
NO	14 100 %	-	11 78.6%	-	-	10 71.4 %	-	-	-	8 57.1%
Total	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14

The result reveals a discrepancy with regards to code switching among the various languages used by ISSCH respondents. As in the ISSF sample, all the respondents reported using six language combinations in their interactions as follows: FNL (Igbo) and FFL (English), FNL and NP, SNL (Yoruba) and FFL (English), SNL and NP, FFL (English) and SFL (Chinese), and FFL and NP. In contrast, no respondent used a combination of FNL and SNL, while other combinations were not utilized by all the respondents in their interactions. A significant majority reported not using FNL and SFL (78.6%), SNL and SFL (71.4%), and SFL and NP (57.1%), while a minority reported using the same language combinations in their interactions.

Identity Projection

The inquiry on identity projection sought to evaluate the effect of using four different languages on the identity of the respondents. This projection is restricted to the way they saw themselves and the way they thought other people saw them. The data is presented below

Table 10. Identity projection (ISSI) (N=16)

Identity Proposition	Identity profiles			
	Igbo (n)%	Yoruba (n)%	English (n)%	Igbo/Yoruba (n)%
How I see myself	10 62.5%	-	-	6 37.5%
How people see me	10 62.5%	6 37.5%	-	-

The result reveals that a significant majority of the ISSI (75%) saw themselves as Igbo and almost the same number (62.5%) also thought that others saw them as Igbo. In contrast, a minority (25%) had a mixed concept or perception of self, seeing themselves as both Igbo and Yoruba. A fraction of the respondents (37.5%) thought that others saw them as Yoruba.

Table 11. Identity projection (ISSF) (N=12)

Identity Proposition	Identity Profiles				
	Igbo (n)%	Igbo/Yoruba (n)%	English (n)%	French (n)%	Igbo/French (n)%
How I see myself	4 33.3%	2 16.7%	-	-	6 50%
How people see me	4 33.3%	2 16.7%	-	6 50%	-

The result reveals that a simple majority of the ISSF (50%) had a mixed identity perception, as they saw themselves as both Igbo and French. A minority (33.3%) reported a singular identity as Igbo while an insignificant minority (16.7%) also reported a mixed identity perception, as they saw themselves as both Igbo and Yoruba. In terms of the perception of others on the identity of the respondents, a majority (50%) reported being seen by others as French only, while a minority (33.3%) and (2.16%) reported being seen by others as Igbo only and Igbo/Yoruba respectively.

Table 12. Identity projection (ISSCH) (N=14)

Identity Proposition	Identity Profiles					
	Igbo (n)%	Yoruba (n)%	English (n)%	Chinese (n)%	Igbo/Chinese (n)%	Igbo/Yoruba//Chinese (n)%
How I see myself	6 42.9%	-	-	-	6 42.9%	2 14.2%
How people see me	9 64.2%	5 35.8%	-	-	-	-

The result shows that a majority of the respondents had a mixed identity perception of themselves. A good number of the respondents (42.9%) reported a dual Igbo/Chinese identity while an insignificant minority (14.2%) reported a multiple Igbo/Yoruba/Chinese identities. A significant minority (42.9%) reported a mono Igbo identity perception. In regards to the perception of others, a majority of the respondents reported being seen by others as Igbo only (64.2%) while a minority (35.8%) reported a mono Yoruba perception by other people. It is noteworthy that, no respondent reported a mono Chinese identity perception in this regard.

Discussion of findings

The discussion of findings will follow the structure of analysis, vis-à-vis language use, attitudes, code switching and identity projection. In the aspect of language use findings suggest that, domain had a significant influence on language choice. The home provided affordances for the use of their indigenous language. All the respondents used Igbo in their homes irrespective of their course of study. Although the study did not investigate degree of proficiency and frequency of use, it is sufficient that a multilingual uses his or her indigenous language even if sparingly and with a low facility. This is especially so given the more inclusive and expansive definition of bilingualism by scholars such as Grosjean (1989) and Dewaele (2016). The classroom domain also influenced the choice of language in school; in this instance, two languages were used: English and the language of study. As the official language of Nigeria, English is used as a language of instruction across schools, irrespective of course of study. Even though Igbo is used to teach Igbo in the University of Lagos as a rule, French is used to teach French and Chinese is used to teach Chinese, English is nevertheless incorporated in the instruction. This is to say that, Igbo, French and Chinese are bilingual classes, especially Chinese where the teachers are still undergoing training. Thus, the domain and the language policy provided affordances for the use of English in school by the students. The affordances provided by the official domain for Igbo, Chinese, and French is based on the fact that they are courses of study; as a result, it is essential that the language of these courses be used in their teaching irrespective of their status as indigenous and foreign languages. Thus, sources of affordances include the classroom, teachers, curriculum, fellow students, and the course of study. The use of the second native language (Yoruba) and Nigerian Pidgin is prominent in the Hostel/Common room domain; these are informal places where students retire after classroom work, so it is expected that, part of easing the tedium of the day is using informal tongues during interactions. Yoruba is the host community and the language is a second native tongue to immigrants including the students in this study. Thus, the informal nature of the domain as well as the host community setting provided affordances for the use of NP and Yoruba. The formality of the Societies and Club setting provided affordances for the sole use of English and no other language. In contrast, the neutrality of External Spaces provided affordances for the thriving of multiple languages, especially English and NP, and to a low degree Igbo, Yoruba, French and Chinese. In all, the low use of languages such as NP is on account of nesting; the neutrality of NP means that it was nested within the more dominant languages such as English. Nesting also explains the fact that the school formal setting provided more affordances for the use of multiple languages than the home which has limited affordances due to its informal nature.

Language attitude measurement showed glaringly that, the respondents were more positively inclined to their indigenous language (Igbo) and their first foreign language (English) than other languages, with respect to value and self image. This positive evaluation stems from the

utilitarian value of Igbo and English to the students. Igbo is their indigenous language as well as their course of study in the university; so the value of Igbo is tied to employment opportunities it will afford them after graduation. A language that paves a way to success and upward social mobility is indeed a prestigious language with high status, even if it is a regional or local variety. Undoubtedly, English is the default language for interaction among people in a heterogeneous setting such as Lagos and also an international language with enormous socio-economic possibilities. In terms of value and prestige, English towers above native languages as a result of the political, economic, and social power it wields in the country. High proficiency in English is capable of opening doors of privileges and stretching horizons of power. Additionally, French and Chinese were also positively evaluated on the basis of value; the importance of the two languages to the students is not in doubt. French and Chinese are languages of power; aside the fact that they are international languages, they are incidental to economic growth of an individual and nation. As France spreads its sphere in Africa through Allianse Francaise, China is diffusing its influence in Africa through the Confucius Institute, one of which is domiciled in the University of Lagos. The French and Chinese programmes in the University of Lagos afford students the opportunity to travel to France and China respectively for the purpose of training and research as the case may be. Such prospects help, in no little way to enhancing the life of students socially and economically. On the whole, positive inclination to these languages is hinged on self development and socio-economic power, and therefore provided affordances for their utilization. In contrast, their second indigenous language (Yoruba) and NP were negatively appraised; this negative assessment is due to the fact that these are languages with little or no instrumental value to the students, especially NP which is neither a course of study nor a language of instruction, nor a language with economic value as the others.

The investigation of code switching reveals a discrepancy in the combination of languages used. It also shows that participants provided affordances for using a number of languages in the same interaction. A significant majority of the respondents used a greater proportion of the language combinations in varying degrees. The implication of this finding is that the languages were not kept apart from each other. This is to say that, irrespective of status, the various languages were not strictly compartmentalized and used in isolation of others. Rather, respondents used each language at their disposal, as long as there was a participant with whom to use it. An outstanding result is that the respondents did not use the combination involving their First Native Language (Igbo) and their Second Native Language (Yoruba). What could possibly account for this experience is lack of participants with whom to use the combination. Notably, the Yoruba are the host community and only a handful of them understand or speak Igbo. This is in consonance with Korth's (2005) assertion that, host communities are usually self fulfilled and see no need to speak the language of immigrants, while immigrants are expected to learn the language of their hosts for a number of reasons. Related to this study, the respondents were able to separate Igbo and Yoruba due to the fact that their Yoruba friends in school and elsewhere did not have facility in Igbo. The same reason explains the dearth in the number of respondents who used a combination involving French and Chinese. Given the fact that there are few people who use these foreign languages in Nigeria, it is rarely the case that they are alternatively used with other languages. The exception is where they are used with English, though this use is restricted to their fellow students in school who are proficient in both languages. In sum, participants, and to a little degree domain, provided affordances for code switching among the respondents.

In the area of identity projection, a greater number of respondents had mixed or heterogeneous identities and this is reflected in the way they were seen by others. This finding confirms the view that language is inextricably intertwined with ethnic identity. When someone who speaks language A speaks language B, he sees himself as a member of the culture that owns language B, and correspondingly, language B speakers see him as one of them. Additionally, his kin who speak language A see him as having assumed another identity. This finding confirms Korth's (2005) view that bilinguals identify with the groups whose languages they speak and in this way highlight a mixed or heterogeneous identity. The implication of mixed identities is identity dilemma, whereby, in the extreme case, an individual is confused or finds it difficult to delineate his ethnic identity. Identity dilemma is also the result of being rooted, not only in a language but in the culture the language expresses. This includes sharing their food, belief system, world view, and even abiding in their geographical space which guarantees regular meeting and interaction with the other group. Affordance in this instance is provided by the desire or quest to identify with another language group and culture.

Conclusion

Multiple language use is the norm in many African societies as a result of various languages in the social space. Language contact occasioned by immigration ensures that other languages are learned and used in different domains. In this study, it has been established that language use in the home domain is limited to the respondents' indigenous language (Igbo) and English, whereas language use in the formal school domain includes a wide variety of other languages such as NP, Yoruba, French, and Chinese. Understandably, positive attitude to the array of languages in the respondents' repertoire is determined by utilitarian value; as a result, the courses of study (Igbo, French, Chinese) and English which is an instructional language, were positively evaluated than NP and Yoruba. Incidentally, these languages were not kept apart from each other or restricted to certain domains. Rather, they were used simultaneously, given the availability of participants and need. Notably, most of the respondents experienced dual or mixed ethnic identities due to acquisition of other languages other than their own. In sum, multiple language use is an interesting reality in multilingual African countries south of the Sahara. The experience not only enhances inter-ethnic interaction, but inter-ethnic camaraderie and solidarity. In Africa replete with ethnic rivalry, learning a second native language would definitely help to lighten ethnic boundaries and ease tension. This position is anchored on the fact that, individuals who speak another native language have more understanding of that ethnic group than those who do not. This is not to say that intra-ethnic conflicts and hostilities do not occur, nor that language is the cause of friction between ethnic groups. Rather, this paper posits that, acquiring the language of the other would to a little degree minimize the tensions and suspicions that naturally arise from differences in language.

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