Comparative Analysis of English Language Learners' Errors across Different Linguistic Backgrounds

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Abstract

The focus of the study is the comparative analysis of English as a second language learners' errors across different linguistic backgrounds in Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The population for the study consisted of senior secondary school students in Ondo State. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select four secondary schools and 26 students from four schools in Akoko Ondo State(12 male, 14 female). The sample consisted students from three linguistic backgrounds (Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa). The instrument used to gather data was a verbal ability test. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the test- retest method (r = 0.83). Four research questions were answered. The findings revealed that there was a significant difference in the scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds in their use of tenses, pronouns, spellings and pronunciation. On the basis of these findings it was recommended that students are to be given time to pay attention to their use of English tenses, pronoun, spelling and pronunciation so as to maximize their academic potentials and possibilities. There is need to give teachers chance to experience in-service training and seminars. This will make them conversant with current development in pedagogy and language itself.

Keywords: Comparative Analysis, English as a Second Language, Errors, Linguistic Backgrounds.

1. Background to the Study

Language is essential to human existence, that is, the easy flow of human interaction will not be possible without language. It becomes necessary to see language as not only the instrument of communication among the members of the speech community who are members of the same culture but also a system of rules that the learners have to acquire. Lado (1977) sees language as "a complex system of communication with various levels of complexity involving intricate selection and ordering of meaning, sounds and largest units and arrangement." Precisely, language holds the key to knowledge acquisition. This makes its teaching-learning process central to any educational system.

As English language is concerned, it has its speech community which could be traced down to England, Greek, United States of America, etc. It was firstly introduced to Africa through colonization while the European invasion led to the spread of English language in Nigeria. For most Nigerians, English serves as a second language: a language selected by a bilingual or multilingual country. It also serves as a common medium of communication among Nigerians from different ethnic backgrounds speaking different languages. It is also the country's official language in which case it is used by government functionaries. The importance of English language in Nigeria cannot be overstressed.

The nature of Nigeria being a multilingual society with complex linguistic situation led to the introduction of English language to ameliorate the language diversity. According to Kachru (1981), English as a second language refers to the outer world circle which involves the spread of English and its institutionalization as a second language (L2) in non-native environment. Historically, the regions where institutionalized varieties are used have at one time or the other gone through extended periods of colonization by the users of the inner circle. Pariola (1988) suggests that English will be the only one of two or more codes in linguistic repertoire of such bilinguals or multilinguals. Bamgbose (1982) postulates that English has acquired an important status in the language policies of most of such multilingual nations:

We in English education need to find redundant ways to point out that English belongs to the world and every nation which uses its does so with different tone, color, and quality. English is an international auxiliary language. It is yours as much as it is mine… It is a language of the world (Larry Smith, 1976a).

The importance of learners' errors in the process of learning English as a second language has been widely discussed in the field of language acquisition. According to Robert and Graffiths (2008), it is problematic to find a definition of errors since they can be seen from different views. Lenon (1991) relates errors to native-speaker-utterances, although there are various

variations among people who consider themselves to be a native speaker which make it difficult to find standard English (Robert & Graffiths, 2008).

Corder (1981) views the errors learners make as the major element in the feedback system of the process of language teaching and learning. Through the information derives by the teacher from the errors, he varies his teaching procedures and materials, the pace of the progress and the amount of practice which he plans at any moment. The errors committed by the learners also reveal to the teacher the level of progress the learner has attained and what remains to learn. A proper analysis of learners' errors enables teacher to find out and take series of pedagogical precautions toward them. Corder (1981) also points out that the study of errors is also a fundamental part of applied linguistics because it provides a validation of finding of contrastive linguistic studies. Edrogan (2003) points out that errors are means of feedback for the teacher reflecting how effective he is in his teaching style and what changes he has to make to get higher performance from his students. Errors according to Brown (1994), is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker reflecting the inter-language competence of the learners. However, James (1995) categorizes errors in terms of grammatical correctness and acceptance. He relates errors to ignorance, inferring that error correction is the study of linguistic ignorance, the investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance. James continues his suggestion that the learners' ignorance of the target language (TL) can be expressed in terms of grammaticality, acceptability, correctness, and strangeness and infelicity. Jibowo, Iteogu & Abayomi (2005) in their contribution point out that a proper analysis of learners' errors will lead to a radical change in teacher's attitude towards learners' performance. They stress the need for teachers to expect variability in measuring the learners' attempts in terms of L2 and L1 variation in given situation.

The behaviourist view on second language learners' errors according to the proponent of the theory B.F Skinner (1957) is that language learning should be seen as a process of habit formation: the acquisition of a series of responses to external stimuli developed through a process referred to as operant conditioning. This behaviourist theory could be traced to his verbal behaviour. The theory applied functional analysis approach to analyze language behaviour of a target language in terms of natural process as related environmental consequences and the effect they have on human interaction. Skinner's theory (1957) relies on the component of classical conditioning of conditioned and unconditioned stimuli and operant conditioning.

The behaviourist views language learning as the process of habit formation. Language learning as a process of habit formation refers to learning a language as a result of behaving in language which involves the period of trials and errors where a child tries and fails until he is able to produce the pattern spontaneously. To behaviourists, imitation, association, reinforcement, punishment and repetition are the key words on learning a particular language. It also related with audio-lingual method of teaching which is based on the behaviourists belief that language learning is the acquisition of correct language habits. As this theory focuses on the trials and errors of learners until success, errors were considered to be counterproductive since they led to the formation of bad habits which if left uncorrected resulted in fossilisation. People could learn new languages through observing other individuals' behaviour and listening to their utterances which were treated as a model input reaction patterns and then imitating the received material repetitively to gain proficiency (Medwell, Wroy, Moure & Graffiths 2014).

According to Brown (1987), each error was seen as unwanted negative and detrimental for second language learners. The next aspect strictly connected with the behaviouristic understanding of errors which was the concept of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH). Lado states in the preface that errors were thought to be the side of the faulty transfer of L1 habits... As a reaction against the behaviourist view of learning as a process of habit formation, the major proponent of mentalist theory, Noam Chomsky in his work of 1959 opposed Skinner's approach of operant conditioning. Chomsky states that language learning was a product of rule formation, that is, it is a cognitive process (Robert & Graffiths, 2008).

Mentalists believe that when the child learns the rule governing the way a language functions, he will be able to use the rules to form further sentences in the language through hypothesis formation. Consequently, it became clear that language learners form hypothesis which are not completely random but underlie certain rules. Chomsky introduced a species-specific (human), domain-specific (language), biological endowment: a genetically encoded predisposition to learn languages which is called Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Chomsky believes that human acquire or learn language because they possess the mental capacity through a mental process generalizing the rules through a process of mental reality which analyses actual behaviour. He related that the first language of a child is not learned but acquired because a child at birth possesses an innate capacity to acquire language naturally. While receiving language input, a learner is able to glean enough evidence to trigger the correct setting of the parameter for that particular language.

The behaviourist and the mentalist theories focus on second language learners' errors. They view errors through different perspectives. While the behaviourists view the second language learners' errors as a result of first language interference that is the old habit of first language may be helpful in learning second language, as something negative, the mentalists view errors as something positive which serves as the evidence of the occurrence of learning in second language learning situation.

In language studies, there have been two schools of thought in respect of learners' errors (Maicusi & Lopis, 2000). In contrastive analysis, the theoretical base of which was behaviourism, errors are seen as "bad habit" that has been formed. The response was based on the stimulus. It was assumed that interference of the mother tongue (L1) was responsible for errors made during the transition period of learning the target language. Errors were considered to be a sign of inadequacy of the teaching

techniques and on the other hand it was seen as a natural result of the fact that since the nature we cannot avoid making errors. The idea of the error as an effect to be avoided has been especially supported by behaviourism being considered as an obstacle to language learning. According to Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), errors occur as a result of interference when the learners transfer native language habits into the second language (L2). It was also believed that interference takes place whenever there is a difference between native mother tongue and the target language. The contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) can be briefly defined as the assumption (based on behaviourism) that all language learning depends on the mother tongue or L1 and where there are similarities between both, no mistakes will occur in the L2, whereas on the other hand where there are differences between L1 and L2, errors are likely to occur (Richards & Rodgers, 2001,). This hypothesis is based on Lado's suggestion in linguistic across culture where he states "in the comparison between native language and foreign language lies the key to ease all difficulties in foreign language learning" (Lado, 1957).

Lado underlined the tight relation between Contrastive Analysis and language learning. Contrastive Analysis is just one more among a number of analyses. The most important contribution of this kind of analysis is the delimitation of second language structures which obstructs learning. Base on this information, it is possible to make decisions concerning teaching. In fact, it is the knowledge of the difficulties which result from the difference between first language structures and target language ones that permits the development of efficient strategies to face errors.

Error Analysis supplanted Contrastive Analysis owing to the work of Corder (1967) who saw it from a different point of view: a learner's errors then provide evidence of the system of the language that he is using. Error analysis is a branch of applied linguistics concerned with the compilation, study and analysis of errors made by second language learners and aims at investigating aspects of second language acquisition. Corder (1985) describes error analysis as a means of using utterance of learners to assess whether they have or not learnt the particular linguistic points that the teacher has been trying to teach. The concept was developed based on the belief that errors indicate the learners' stage of second language learning/acquisition (Jibowo, Iteogu and Abayomi, (2005).

Error Analysis is concerned with the same problem as Contrastive Analysis but from an opposing point of view. In Error Analysis, the error has been defined as a deviation from the norm of the target language and a distinction has been made between errors and mistakes. Brown (1980) insists that "it is crucial to make a distinction between mistakes and errors" because they are technically two very different phenomena. If the learner is able to self-correct after using an incorrect expression or utterances, we are talking about a mistake. On the other hand, when the learner produces an unintentionally deviant utterance and is not able to self-correct it, he/she committed an error (James, 1998). The errors take place when the deviation arises as a result of lack of knowledge. Crystal (1987) comments that "error analysis is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign, using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistics.

Edrogan (2005) insists that error analysis emerged in sixties to demonstrate that the learners' errors were not only because of the learners' native language but also they reflected some universal learning strategies. It deals with learners' performance in terms of cognitive processes they make use of in recognizing or coding the input they receive from the target language. In language learning, there are errors which learners committed with varying degrees of consistency and error analysis contains that learners' errors are inherent within the language system and not necessarily native language induced.

Empirically, errors could be traced to the learners who as a result of their innate ability to learn language form hypotheses which are tested and manifest themselves in the formation of wrong analysis by overgeneralization after observing some paradigms. The mentalist theory supports claims that errors are inevitable because they reflect various stages in the language development of the learners. Thus the learner process new language data in his mind and produces rules for its production, based on the evidence. There are instances of errors where the data are inadequate.

Contrastive analysis is of the opinion that second language learners with the same linguistic background encounter the same linguistic difficulties while those from different linguistic backgrounds encounter different linguistic difficulties. It focuses on L1 interference as the major source of learners' errors while there are different bases of errors that are not occurred as a result of L1 interference. There are some uniform or intra-lingual errors made by learners irrespective of their first languages.

Contrastive studies are undertaken in order to discover and describe the differences between L1 and L2 while error analysis confirms or disproves the predictions of the theory underlying bilingual comparison. Error analysis as a result of that is an experimental technique for validating the theory of transfer and also the most wide-spread practice because it has proven to be the most effective approach to L2 learners' errors and its focus on the importance of errors in second language learning process.

From the ongoing arguments between contrastive analysts and error analysts, contrastive analysts see mother tongue interference as the cause of second language learners' errors while error analysts support the fact that there are uniform errors committed by learners' regardless of their first languages. The focus of contrastive analysts is that, learners from the same linguistic background tend to commit the same linguistic errors while learners from different linguistic tend to commit different linguistic errors as a result of their first language interference (L1).

The work under study ascertains the position of Error Analysis (EA) that L2 learners' errors are not only committed due to L1 interference but also there are other uniform errors committed by learners irrespective of their first languages. The

study focuses on comparative analysis of ESL learners' errors across different linguistic backgrounds in order to ascertain that second language learners from different linguistic backgrounds tend to commit the same errors in their learning of English language regardless of their first languages.

2. Statement of the Problem

The purpose of second language learning is to generate or acquire the effectiveness and competence in using the target language. The effective use of this language is based on the theoretical acquisition of the accurate and appropriate rules and the structures of the target language as well as the literature of the target language to be useful in all ramification of life. Errors are seen as a negative response or interference due to the stimuli-response approach and as a positive-response through the mental capacity that takes place during learning. Errors as seen from different perspectives could be categorized according to the linguistic background of the learners.

Therefore, one could suggest that if there are errors from English as a second language learners of different linguistic backgrounds, there must be a proper comparison between the errors so as to provide the adequate solution to the errors and also to classify the errors if as a result of Mother Tongue interference or as a result of some other factors.

This is in line with the view of contrastive analysis (CA). However, EA believes that learners' errors are not only products of LI interference. According to them L2 errors are also traceable to other sources other than LI interference. It is against this background that this study seeks to carry out a comparative analysis of English as a second language learner's errors across different linguistic backgrounds.

3. Research Questions

The following questions have been generated to guide this study thus:
- Do ESL learners from different linguistic backgrounds encounter the same difficulty with English pronouns?
- Do ESL learners from different linguistic backgrounds encounter the same difficulty with English spelling?
- Do ESL learners from different linguistic backgrounds encounter the same problem with English pronunciation?

4. Hypotheses
- There is no significant difference in English tense scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.
- There is no significant difference in English pronoun scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.
- There is no significant difference in English spelling scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.
- There is no significant difference in English pronunciation scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

5. Significance of the Research

The result of this study would help teachers to categorize the second language learners' errors from different linguistic background and formulate an appropriate educational curriculum towards the learning goals of the learners irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds. It would help the teacher to pinpoint those areas of English language where his/her students go wrong for various reasons and to devise remedial measures to make his/her teaching and learning more rapid and effective. The study would also help the syllabus designers to identify those items that are important to be included or recycled in the syllabus. It would also help ESL learners to have insight into the errors committed irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds and how to overcome them.

6. Methodology

The researcher made use of descriptive design. The population of the study consisted of all students of government owned secondary schools in Ondo State. A sample of twenty-six (26) students in senior secondary school three (SS III) were selected from four (4) co-educational government owned secondary schools (A.U.D Grammar School, Oroke High School, Community Comprehensive High School and Agboronkin Comprehensive High School) in Akoko region of the state. For each school, there are three (3) Yoruba respondents to make of twelve (12), one Hausa respondent to make a total of four (4), while the Igbo respondents vary from one (1) in A.U.D grammar school, two (2) in Oroke High School and Community High School respectively and five (5) in Agboronkin Comprehensive High School, altogether making a total of ten (10). The instrument used for data collection is verbal ability test. The data collected was analyzed using Descriptive Statistics Counts and Percentage based on their ethnic groups.

7. Results

Question I: Do ESL learners from different linguistic backgrounds commit the same errors in the use of pronouns?

Table VI: Showing difficulty in the use of pronoun across different linguistic backgrounds.

Linguistic Backgrounds and Frequency of Errors

Difficult Pronoun Types	HAUSA %	FREQ.	IGBO FREQ.	%	YORUBA FREQ.	%
HONORIFIC PRONOUN	3	75%	4	40%	8	67%
1ST PERSON PLURAL SUBJECT	3	75%	3	30%	6	50%
1ST PERSON PLURAL OBJECT	3	75%	4	40%	8	67%
3RD PERSON PLURAL SUBJECT	4	100%	2	20%	5	42%

3RD PERSON SINGULAR SUBJECT	I	25%	7	70%	7	58%
3RD PERSON SINGULAR OBJECT	2	50%	-	%	5	42%

Source: Field, 2017

The table above shows that 75% of Hausa respondents, 40% of Igbo respondents and 66.7% of Yoruba respondents encounter difficulty with the use of honorific pronoun, while 75% of Hausa respondents, 30% of Igbo respondents and 50% of Yoruba respondents encounter difficulty with the use of 1st person plural pronoun in the subject position. 75% of Hausa respondents, 40% of Igbo respondents and 66.7% of Yoruba respondents encounter difficulty with the use of 1st person plural pronoun in the object position. 100% of Hausa respondents, 20% of Igbo respondents and 41.7% of Yoruba respondents encounter difficulty with the use of 3rd person plural pronoun in the subject position. 25% of Hausa respondents of Hausa respondents, 70% of Igbo respondents and 58.3% of Yoruba respondents encounter difficulty with the use of 3rd person singular pronoun in the subject position. 50% of Hausa respondents, 0% of Igbo respondents and 41.7% of Yoruba respondents encounter difficulty with the use of 3rd person singular pronoun in the object position.

Question II: Do ESL learners from different linguistic backgrounds encounter the same difficulty with English spelling?

Table VII: Showing difficulty in English spelling across different linguistic backgrounds.

Linguistic Backgrounds and Frequency of Errors

Words Mis-Spelt	HAUSA		IGBO		YORUBA	
	FREQ.	%	FREQ.	%	FREQ.	%
PSYCHOLOGY	3	70%	7	70%	11	92%
PNEUMONIA	4	100%	10	100%	12	100%
COMMITTEE	4	100%	7	70%	10	83%
RECEIPT	2	50%	9	90%	8	67%
PHYSICS	2	50%	4	40%	5	42%
ACCOMMODATION	3	75%	8	80%	11	92%
NECESSARY	2	50%	8	80%	8	67%
RAPPORT	4	100%	10	100%	12	100%
PRONUNCIATION	4	100%	10	100%	12	100%
SUCCESS	I	25%	3	30%	6	50%

Source: Field, 2017

The table above shows that 75% of Hausa respondents, 70% of Igbo respondents and 92% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with spelling of "psychology." 100% of Hausa respondents, 100% of Igbo respondents and 100% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "pneumonia." 100% of Hausa respondents 70% of Igbo respondents and 83% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "committee". 50% of Hausa respondents, 90% of Igbo respondents and 67% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "receipt." 50% of Hausa respondents, 40% of Igbo respondents and 42% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "physics." 75% of Hausa respondents, 80% of Igbo respondents and 92% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "accommodation." 50% of Hausa respondent, 80% of Igbo respondents and 67% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "necessary". 100% of Hausa respondents, 100% of Igbo respondents and 100% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "rapport". 100% of Hausa respondents, 100% of Igbo respondents and 100% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "pronunciation". 25% of Hausa respondents, 30% of Igbo respondents and 50% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the spelling of "success."

Question III: Do ESL learners from different linguistic backgrounds encounter the same problem with English pronunciation.

Table IX: A table showing difficulty in English pronunciation across different linguistic backgrounds

Linguistic backgrounds and frequency errors

Wordsmis-Pronounced	HAUSA	IGBO	YORUBA
	FREQ. %	FREQ. %	FREQ. %
VILLAGE	I (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
POTTAGE	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
LOBSTERS	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
OIL	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)
CRABS	0 (0%)	3 (30%)	0 (0%)

Source: Field, 2017

The above table shows that 25% of Hausa respondents, 0% of Igbo respondents and 0% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with pronunciation of "village". 0% of Hausa respondents, 0% of Igbo respondents and 0% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the pronunciation of "pottage". 50% of Hausa respondents, 0% of Igbo respondents

and 0% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the pronunciation of "lobsters". 0% of Hausa respondents, 50% of Igbo respondents and 0% of Yoruba respondents encountered difficulty with the pronunciation of "oil". 0% of Hausa respondents, 30% of respondents and 0% Yoruba **respondents** encountered difficulty with the pronunciation of "crabs".

7.1 Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I: There is no significant difference in English tense scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Table X: Linguistic Backgrounds

Linguistic Backgrounds	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F (cal)	F (cri)
Between Groups	1.799	6	0.300	0.464	2.66
Within Groups	11.641	18	0.647		
Total	13.440	24			

Source: Field, 2017

From the above table X, it could be seen at 0.5 that F-critical value (2.66) is greater than F-calculated vale (0.464) which implies that the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there was a significant difference in English tense scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference in English pronoun scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Table XIV: Linguistic Backgrounds

Linguistic Backgrounds	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F (cal)	F (cri)
Between Groups	6.155	8	0.769	1.772	2.55
Within Groups	7.383	17	0.434		
Total	13.538	25			

Source: Field, 2017

From the above table, it could be seen at 0.05 that f-critical value (2.55) is greater than f-calculated value (1.772) which implies that the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference in English pronoun scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Hypothesis III: There is no significant difference in English spelling scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Table XI: Linguistic Backgrounds

Linguistic Backgrounds	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F (cal)	F (cri)
Between Groups	2.574	7	0.368	0.607	2.58
Within Groups	10.964	18	0.609		
Total	13.538	25			

Source: Field, 2017

From the above table XII, it could be seen at 0.05 that F-critical value (2.58) is greater than F-calculated value (0.604) which implies that the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference in English spelling scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Hypothesis IV: There is no significant difference in English pronunciation scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Table XIII: Linguistic Backgrounds

Linguistic Backgrounds	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F (cal)	F (cri)
Between Groups	3.794	3	1.265	2.855	3.05
Within Groups	9.744	22	0.443		
Total	13.538	25			

Source: Field, 2017

From the above table XIII, it could be seen at 0.05 that F-critical value (3.05) is greater than F-critical value (2.855) which implies that the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference in English pronunciation scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds.

8. Discussion of Findings

The focus of the study is the comparative analysis of English as a second language learners' errors across different linguistic backgrounds.

- Hypothesis one attempts to find out if there is no significant difference in English tense scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds. Findings from this study reveal that there is a significant difference in English tense

scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds as a result of L1 interference in their use of English tense. This agrees with Rahman & Maskud. A (2015) that EFL learners' native language (L1) influence can be claimed to be one of the reasons behind their failure.

- Hypothesis two and research question one attempt to find out if there is no significant difference in English pronoun scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds. Findings from this study reveal that there is a significant difference in English pronoun scores of student from different linguistic backgrounds due to the fact that linguistic background of ESL learners interferes with their use of English pronoun. This relates with Ojetunde C. F (2012) that English pronoun errors are traceable to the cultural background of their linguistic background.
- Hypothesis three and research question two attempt to find out if there is no significant difference in English spelling scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds. Findings from this study reveal that there is a significant difference in English spelling scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds. This supports Ringbom & Harvis (2009) findings that spelling problems are often influenced by cross-lingual transfer because learners apply pattern from their native language.
- Hypothesis four and research question three attempt to find out if there is no significant difference in English pronunciation scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds. Findings from this study reveal that there is a significant difference in English pronunciation scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds. This relates with Avery & Ehrlich (1992) that learners transfer their L1 sound patterns into the second language and this transfer is likely to cause foreign accent. It is reflected by the mispronunciation of words by non-native speakers. Sound system of the native language can influence the learners' pronunciation of a target language.

10. Conclusion

The aim of the researcher has been to do the comparative analysis of English as a second language learners' errors across different linguistic backgrounds among SSII students of Akoko, Ondo State and also to find out: if students from different linguistic backgrounds such as Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo encounter similar difficulty in their use of English tenses, pronouns, spellings and pronunciation. Since the finding reveals that there was a significant difference in English tense scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds, there was a significant difference in English pronoun scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds, there was a significant difference in English spelling scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds, there was a significant difference in the English pronunciation scores of students from different linguistic backgrounds, research efforts should be focused on the influence of linguistic background on students' use and achievement in English language.

11. Recommendation

In line with the findings, conclusion and educational implication of this study, the following recommendations are made.

- Students are to be given time to pay attention to their use of English tenses, pronouns, spellings and pronunciation of English words so as to maximize their academic potentials and possibilities.
- There is need to give the teachers chance to experience in-service training and seminars. This will make them conversant with current developments in pedagogy and language itself.
- Conversant use of correct tenses, pronouns, spelling and pronunciation of English language should be encouraged among secondary school students.
- Textbooks for English language teaching should be those, among other things, that throw light on some of the discovered English language problems and the solution to the problems.
- School administrators need to provide appropriate learning materials that take care of the problems identified.

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