



## ESSENTIALS OF MOTHER TONGUE AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION TO READING SKILL ON STUDENTS' COMPREHENSIVE PASSAGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BAUCHI STATE

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### Introduction

This research examines the essentials of mother tongue as a medium of instruction to reading skill on students' comprehensive passage in schools. However, the research work is to bring the awareness of teachers, at primary school level, education administrators, critical stakeholders, curriculum experts, book publishers and host of others to be able to understand the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, and the benefits it gives to educational development of children and the society at large. As enshrined in the national policy of education (1969). So that teaching and learning will become more effective. The basic postulates of the reader-response theory and reader-response approach in class emphasize the crucial role of the reader on the literary and aesthetic experience when reading a literary text. The students' way of understanding and perceptions of a written text, as well as the experience of the student, influence the interaction between the student and a text. This interaction contributes to the development of interpretation of the text and reconstruction of the ideas expressed in the text. The article examines the possible ways of implementing the reader response theory in a literature class, including written assignments, personal responses to a literary text and in-class discussions. There is need of incorporating students into reading skill approaches for the enhancement of students' outcomes in both narrative and descriptive written passage. The study intends to adopt qualitative research approach, through purposive sampling technique. In addition, interviews were conducted and questionnaires were administered on the targeted primary schools in order to ascertain their responses. Participants of this study were drawn from the 20 primary schools

across the (20) Local Government Areas of Bauchi State. In the same manner, (200) primary schools used for the study, ten (10) pupils.

The importance of education is unarguable. The Nigeria national policy on education (2004) stipulated that the medium of instruction in lower primary should be the mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment and at a later stage English. It has rightly been noted that for proper meaningful and purposeful education at the primary level the mother tongue or the prevailing language of the locality should be used as the language of instruction. The use of mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment in the lower primary school classes is to foster efficient learning and functional literacy in the primary schools. The level of the development of children's mother tongue is a strong predictor of their second language development. Children who come to school with solid foundation in their mother develop strong literacy abilities in the school language.

When parents and other care givers (grandparents) are able to spend time with them in a way that develops their mother tongue vocabulary and concept. Children come to succeed educationally. Children's knowledge and skills transfer across language from the mother tongue, they have learned in the home to school language. Transfer across can be two-way-when the mother tongue is promoted in the, (e.g. in a bilingual education programme) the concept language and literacy skills that children are learning in the majority language can transfer to the home language. In short, both language nurture in order the other than the educational environment permits children access to both languages.



Education in mother tongue (MT) has two interpretations. The first readily comes to mind and which generated enough heat is using the mother tongue (MT) in a classroom where target language (TL), for example, English is used as the medium of instruction either for translating a word, explaining a structure, even checking comprehension children, I 70s and 80s even in the 90s who dare use their (MT) in school environment, either are physically punished (Cummins, 2005,2) or finally sectioned. The second interpretation and which has far reached implication than the first, in the policy of using the mother tongue itself as the medium of instruction. Its proponent argues, will help the students to learn efficiently in a language that they are familiar with, so that they could participate meaningfully in learning process (Atkinson, 1993). The fact of the matter is that teaching children in their MTs in a multicultural and multilingual country like Nigeria has continued to generate a lot of debate over the years. While some scholars point to the enormous gain accruable from such an endeavor, others have failed to see with a child which is tutored in a local language can cope with the demands of the technologically developed global village who's of the major language of communication is certainly not the child's local language used in teaching him.

The concept mother tongue is used synonymously with one's first language or pejoratively to indicate one's vernacular (Awoniyi, 1973), the fact is, whenever people hear of mother tongue, the first thing that registers in their minds is the word 'mother' followed by the language which that mother speaks. This line of thinking may not be entirely wrong. One should be quick to add that in the broadest of terms, there are types of relationship's; biological and social. A need, then a rise for a reinterpretation of the concept mother who sometimes may not have any generic connotations (Ouane, 1990) but merely relates to the linguistic community in which a person is born and nurtured. Skutnabb-Kangas (1981) notes that a person who first introduces and establishes a regular and lasting linguistic sound of communication with the child may or not be his biological mother tongue therefore, should be seen as that language a child knows first.

Looking at these definitions and considering the fact that language is more of a social phenomenon than a psychological one, one will be tempted to redefine. MT as that language which the child is first introduced into the social environment in which he lives and which allows him function as a contributing of that society.

Teaching and learning are central to the concept of education, like in any other field; the teaching-learning situation is done through some known methodology. It is less pedagogical truism here to talk of the method of starting from known to known. The mother tongue (MT) of the child is referred to have as —known while English is the unknown. As teaches, the mother tongue helps to actualize this method in the classroom. Mother tongue (MT) would help us to teach virtually all subject well, for example literature one reason why most of our students are afraid of literature is because the rich emotional heritage of the average. Nigerian acquired through his mother tongue was not probed and channeled to a study of his literature, however, primitive the literature might be where this is done; the child would smoothly transfer the literacy skills he had learnt through the medium of the MT to any foreign literature in later life. MT plays an important role in learning and teaching a foreign language like English. When he runs into difficulty he could always fall back on the mother tongue (MT). In addition, more people would be able to red books and literature on how a particular instrument is made when written or translated to their MT mother tongue. People who are technically-oriented could try their hands on such things and communicate their finding in their MT with the use of mother tongues as language of medium of instrument in our schools, and informally for adults, our parents and guardians who could read and write would be able to teach their children or words at home.

From the National policy on Education (2004) as it was a policy on mother tongue, education looks fantastic. But there are some arise problems here and there. It is therefore believed that teaching children in their mother tongue in a multi lingual and multi-cultural country like Nigeria, has continued to generate a lot of debates over the years. Hence, the relevance of this work which focused on the use of Hausa



language in schools more especially lower primary school will be very significant particularly in the northern part of the country. It is important to note that pupils in the lower primary schools cannot speak or understand English language so, the designed objectives of the curricular of primary school are to be achieved. Therefore, teaching children in their mother tongue (MT) or language of the immediate community (L1) is necessary.

### **Objectives of the study**

The Objectives of the study are as follows:

5. To find out the importance of mother tongue as a medium of instruction at kindergarten grade level in Bauchi State.
6. To assess the problem of medium of instruction at kindergarten grade level in Bauchi State.
7. To identify problems of medium of instruction in kindergarten grade level in Bauchi State.
8. To proffer solutions aimed at remedying the problems identified at kindergarten grade level in Bauchi State.
9. Ascertain the difference between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach in narrative written discourse and those that are not.
10. Find the difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the major problems of medium of instruction?
2. To what extent do parents provide literacy support for their children when at home or after school in Bauchi State?
3. Do parents understand the importance of home literacy and parental support in the development of children's early language and reading skills?

4. To what extent proffer solutions aimed at remedying the problems identified?
5. There is no significant difference between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse and those who are not.
6. 2. There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse.

### **Research Methodology**

This research is Descriptive survey research. Its data will be drawn from the target population, using questionnaires and structured interviews which will be administered on the of the study. To simply put, its data was collected from twenty (20) Local Government Areas of Bauchi State (7) LGAs from Northern, (7) LGAs from Southern, and (6) LGAs from the Central Senatorial Districts of the State. In the same manner, two hundred (200) primary schools will be used for the study, 10 from each LGA (5 from urban and 5 from rural areas). In each primary school, three (3) participants between the range of 5-8 years) would be used as source of data for the study, thereby making the total of 600 participants for the study. The data to be collected for this research will be drawn from 200 primary schools 10 from each of the 20 LGAs (5 from urban and 5 from rural areas) of the three senatorial zones of Bauchi State, using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique is a sampling strategy that allows the researcher to collect data to be used in the research based on their relevance to the research. By this, 200 children between the ages of 5-8 (boys), 200 and 200 (girls) would be selected to participate in the study. The main instruments for data collection in this study are questionnaire and structured interview, which was administered on the targeted schools and their pupils.

### **Results**

First and foremost, the importance of this study is to answer the boring question being asked by many Nigeria today: on the possibility of adopting a language (Indigenous Native language) as a medium of instruction Which will improve the performance



pupils in the primary schools. This research as indicated in chapter is aimed at finding out the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction at local government. For this purpose, I chose fifty (50) teachers ten (10) from each lower primary school of the five (5) selected primary schools in Bauchi State and they belong to different sex, age, status, educational qualification and area of specialization. There were eight (8) questions in all, and these questions were prepared in order to find out the views

of the respondents as regards to the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction at lower primary school level in Bauchi State. All questions were aimed at getting opinions and suggestions from the respondents with regards to the use of mother tongue as a medium of understands and how these can be implemented in the lower primary schools, however, all the data collected from the respondents shall be discuss below:

**Table 1:**

| Variable | No. of Questionnaires Administered | Respondents | Percentage |
|----------|------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
|          | 50                                 | 50          | 100%       |

From the above table, total number of fifty (50) questionnaires were issued and returned that is, 50%.

**Table 2:** Are teachers aware on the national policy on education as regards to the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction at lower primary school level?

| Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Yes       | 31          | 62%        |
| No        | 19          | 38%        |
| Total     | 50          | 100%       |

From the above, it shows that 31 questionnaires were answered Yes, i.e., 62% and 19 questionnaires were answered No representing 38%.

**Table 3:** Do you use mother tongue as a medium of instruction from primary 1- 3 in your school?

| Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Yes       | 30          | 60%        |
| No        | 20          | 40%        |
| Total     | 50          | 100%       |

From the above table, 30 teachers indicated that they use mother tongue as a medium of instruction from primary 1 – 3 in the schools. While 20 teachers answered No.

**Table 4:** If mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction can it improve the performance of students on other related subjects?

| Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Yes       | 41          | 82%        |
| No        | 09          | 18%        |
| Total     | 50          | 100%       |

From the above table, 82% responses show that if mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction it can improve the performance of students on their related subjects. While 18% says No.

**Table 5:** Is the government taking measures on the successful implementation of this policy?

| Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Yes       | 18          | 36%        |
| No        | 32          | 64%        |
| Total     | 50          | 100%       |

The table above indicated that 64% of teachers responded No, while 35% responded Yes.



**Table 6:** What is the general performance of pupils since the implementation of mother tongue policy in school?

| Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Excellent | 09          | 18%        |
| Good      | 14          | 28%        |
| Fair      | 19          | 38%        |
| Poor      | 08          | 16%        |
| Total     | 50          | 100%       |

The table indicated that 38% answered fair and 28 teachers responded good, 18% responded excellent while 16% teachers responded poor.

**Table 7:** Do you consider the teaching of mother tongue effective in the lower schools?

| Variables           | Respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------|-------------|------------|
| Should be continued | 35          | 70%        |
| Should be abolished | 15          | 30%        |
| Total               | 50          | 100%       |

From the above table, it shows that 35 questionnaires were answered should be continued i.e., 70% and 15 questionnaires were answered should be abolished representing 30%.

**Table 8:** Is the government working to improve the service condition to enable them implement this policy?

| Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Yes       | 17          | 34%        |
| No        | 33          | 66%        |
| Total     | 50          | 100%       |

The above table indicated that 66% of teachers responded No, while 34% responded Yes.

**Table 9:** Did the government provide teaching aids, equipment such as textbooks on the mother tongue to be use for teaching/learning in your schools?

| Variables | Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Yes       | 16          | 32%        |
| No        | 34          | 68%        |
| Total     | 50          | 100%       |

From the above table, it shows that 34 questionnaires were answered No. i.e., 68% and 16 questionnaires were answered Yes representing 32%. All the above were the data collected from our respondents who happened to be teachers of some selected primary schools at the lower level in Bauchi State.

In addition, the researcher subjected the experimental group students to pre-test, treatment and post-test.

Table below:

**Table 1:** Experimental Group Students

| Group              | Pre-test | Treatment | Post-test |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Experimental Group | 01       | X1        | 02        |
| Control Group      | 03       | -         | 04        |

The researcher used all the SS2 students of two selected Senior Secondary Schools in Bogoro L.G.A, Bauchi State. Intact class was used for the research sample size. The intact class sampling is a kind of non- probability sampling used to produce result that can be generalized only by making strong assumes about the sample. It is an already-formed group that does not require any selection procedure. The researcher used probabilistic sampling technique by using random sampling in order to give equal treatment for the selection of the sampled schools. The sampling is therefore considered sufficient (Nworgu, 2022 and Gay, 2022). Paired sample t-test was used to analyze the data.



**Table 2: Sample of the Study**

| Schools           | No. of Students |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| G.S.S Bogoro      | 350             |
| C.D.S.S Bar Arewa | 350             |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>700</b>      |

**Results**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>** There is no significant difference between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse and those who are not.

**Table 3: Paired sample t-test comparing posttest between experimental and control groups**

| Variable     | N   | Mean  | SD     | T     | Df  | P    |
|--------------|-----|-------|--------|-------|-----|------|
| Experimental | 350 | 87.12 | 24.344 | 8.121 | 348 | .025 |
| Control      | 350 | 30.00 | 10.414 |       |     |      |

The results of this finding revealed that, mean experimental group =30.00, mean control group =87.12, t-value =8.121 and p=.025 which is less than .05 level of significance. This means there is significance differences between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse and those who are not. Thus, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference between the performance of students that are exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse and those who are not is rejected.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>** There is no significant difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse.

**Table 4: Paired sample t-test comparing pretest and posttest of experimental groups**

| Variable | N   | Mean  | SD     | T      | Df  | P    |
|----------|-----|-------|--------|--------|-----|------|
| Pretest  | 350 | 34.05 | 7.055  | 10.007 | 349 | .028 |
| Posttest | 350 | 87.12 | 24.344 |        |     |      |

The results of this finding shows that, mean pretest =34.05, mean posttest =87.12, t-value =10.007 and p=.028 which is less than .05 level of significance. This means there is significance effect of reader-oriented approach (ROA) in narrative written discourse. Thus, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference between pretest and posttest of students exposed to reader-oriented approach (ROA) in descriptive written discourse is hereby rejected.

**Findings of the Study**

1. The basic postulates of the reader-response theory and reader-response approach in class emphasize the crucial role of the reader on the literary and aesthetic experience when reading a literary text.
2. The reader’s way of understanding and perceptions of a literary text, as well as the experience of the reader, influence the interaction between the reader and a text.
3. The interaction contributes to the development of interpretation of the text and reconstruction of the ideas expressed in the text.
4. It examines the possible ways of implementing the reader response theory in a literature class, including written assignments, personal responses to a literary text and in-class discussions.



### **Discussion of Findings**

Student responses from these assignments were analyzed in terms of the stages of the developmental model presented by Thomson (2017). The aim of the study and analysis of these activities was to provide a clearer picture of students' attitudes, observations and personal reactions when interacting with a literary text. Students' responses were analyzed in terms of the level reached according to the developmental model, which start from the most basic literal understanding of a text, through empathy, analogy and reflection/interpretation, to the highest level of personal response to the text, which includes evaluation and recognition. In total, the responses of 8 students out of 22 in class were analyzed and evaluated.

According to the analysis and the notes of student responses of the in- class discussions, it can be concluded that 8 out of 8 recorded and analyzed student responses understood the text at level 1. This means that all of them understood the text at the level of literal understanding. The students' contributions to in class discussions showed that the students could follow the plot of the novel, understood the novel at the most basic level of text understanding and the events described. From their responses, it can be concluded that the majority of them (7), understand the text on the level of empathy, analogy and interpretation. The students are able to link the text with their personal experience and opinion, to interpret the text from their standpoint of view and to rethink their own values through in class discussions. In addition, 2 out of 8 students respond to the text at the levels of evaluation and recognition. They are able to evaluate the text and the characters in the text, comparing the values and the norms expressed in the text with their own. They are also aware of the reading process and their own reactions to the text, thus increasing self-understanding.

It is encouraged that the students accept different interpretations in Reader-Response reading process (Rosenblatt as cited in Yilmaz 2013). The examples of the students' response above indicate that they had different opinions and thoughts about the story and they accepted the varied interpretation about it. Furthermore, according to My Van (2019), it is also eminent that the responses of the students involve the readers' feelings, experiences, and background knowledge, in which it could be seen in the students' responses.

### **Conclusion**

The study reveals substantial differences in the performance of students exposed to the Reader Oriented Approach (ROA) in narrative and descriptive written discourse compared to those who are not. Moreover, a significant positive effect of ROA on narrative and descriptive written discourse is evident from the findings. This underscores the importance of incorporating ROA into educational approaches for the enhancement of students' outcomes in both narrative and descriptive written discourse.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the problems discussed on this research project, the researchers wish to provide recommendations and suggestions based on their findings.

1. The correctness of ideas and contents is the function of a good knowledge of the language transmission. In case of primary school context, it is the language most spoken in the area school is situated. Cogent understanding of the mechanics of mother tongue is based to the ability of the child in primary school to understand other subjects in the curriculum.
2. To make meaningful impact mother tongue in Bauchi State on the study of other subjects, the following matters require attention.
3. The policy makers should be consistent. One way of solving the problem of inconsistencies is to furnish and staff our public school like the private schools to attract parents who are policy makers and other parents be encourage to send their children to such public schools where mother tongue (MT) is used as a medium of instruction.
4. Workshops should be organized for primary school teachers from time to time on the languages that are already in use as medium of instruction in the pre-primary and primary schools.
5. The policy should also be extended to cater for the whole period of the primary school education and not just the first three years. This is because three years will not be enough or a child to learn it read and writes in any language, mother tongue (MT) inclusive.
6. Above all, the government in addition to funding the programme should be more



serious in ensuring that every state of Nigeria is implementing the policy. As at now, some states operate it and others do not. They should also employ more personnel to join the coordinating committee to work towards the success of (MT) mother tongue education in Nigerian primary schools.

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