**RENEGOTIATING STUDENT APATHY TO THE USE OF STANDARD SPOKEN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA**

**BY**

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**U16/EDU/ELS/038**

**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION FACULTY OF EDUCATION, GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY THINKERS CORNER, ENUGU STATE**

**JULY, 2018**

**TITLE PAGE**

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**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION FACULTY OF EDUCATION, GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY THINKERS CORNER, ENUGU STATE**

**A RESEARCH WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ART IN EDUCATION (B.A.Ed)**

**PROJECT SUPERVISOR**

**DR F. N. ENE**

**JULY, 2018**

**CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that this is the original work of ENEH, CHINELO AGATHA, a student in the Department of Arts and Social Science Education (English and Literary Studies Education), Faculty of Education with Registration Number U16/EDU/ELS/038, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Degree in Bachelor in Education (B. Ed.).

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**Eneh, Chinelo Agatha Date**

**APPROVAL PAGE**

This is to certify that this research work *Renegotiating Student Apathy to the use of Standard Spoken English Language in Universities in South Eastern Nigeria* by Eneh, Chinelo Agatha in the department of Arts and Social Science Education has been examined and approved as meeting the requirements for the award of bachelor degree in education in the faculty of education Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu Nike, Enugu.

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Head of Department

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**External Examiner Date**

**DEDICATION**

This research work is dedicated to the lovers of English language and pedagogy.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The successful completion of this project is as a result of the efforts and assistance of many individuals to whom the researcher is very grateful for their various contributions. My profound gratitude goes to my loving parents Mr and Mrs Eneh for all their support and encouragement. I am also thankful to my wonderful supervisor Dr F.N. Ene for her patience and wealth of experience which helped make this work successful. I equally appreciate my sister Chinasa who not only typed this work, but also supported me morally. I am also grateful to my friend Peace for all her help.

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**ABSTRACT**

The incidence of the poor English spoken among Nigerian university students is an embarrassing situation which seems to have defied a myriad of solutions. The reluctance among these students to speak standard and proper English language complicates issues. The researcher is therefore interested in finding out the causes of the appalling apathy of university students to speak Standard English. The researcher therefore, conducted a research on the postulatory factors which led to the existing apathy in some randomly selected secondary schools in Enugu state in South Eastern Nigeria. From the interviews and questionnaire administered to the students, it was found that family background, academic background, quality of teachers and style of teaching influenced the students’ perception or value of Standard spoken English language and led to the apathy. The paper then suggests some ways through which students’ spoken English can be improved.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Background to the Study**

Language is central to all our lives, and is arguably the cultural tool that sets humans apart from any other species. Language is also the symbolic behaviour that allows human specialties- education, art, religion and science- to occur. We use it to practice government; we use it to preach the gospel; we use it to engage in trade; we use it in teaching and learning of everything. A beautiful fact about language as a general term is that unlike other forms of cultural behaviour, it is blind to demographics, socio economics and ethnic difference. The only variation is found in the numerous, existing types of languages used by human persons. The English language is one of these existing human languages. English today is a unique language, quite functionally and structurally different from other languages of the world. English has been accepted as a second language in Nigeria, right from the time the country was colonized by Britain. It is also the language of education and Nigerians have shown much prominence in all academic pursuits. However, the English language encounters several challenges serving as a vehicular language in the education of persons from diverse ethnic backgrounds. English language teachers face growing pressures to meet the needs of increasingly diverse learners, both in terms of ethnicity, and language, and also in terms of economic and social circumstances. According to Brown (2015), the goal of the language learners is to make sure that they can communicate what they have in mind effectively, they have to be understood when they are uttering the words. For effective communication, the researcher considers it pertinent to examine exhaustively a good number of the factors that influence effective communication in English, especially as it relates to the Nigerian undergraduates.

The de facto National Policy on Language (in Education) recognizes the multidimensional, multi-lingual three tier political party state which tries to capture the multi-ethnic and, ipso facto, multi-lingual polity which Berlin and the British have hammered into a joint existence. This policy provides for English- the official language- as the language of formal literacy, the bureaucracy, secondary and higher education, the law courts, etc, while all Nigerian languages (language of the immediate environment) can be a media of instruction in initial levels of literacy and in life-long and non-formal education. However, down through the years, this has morphed to become even the language of communication amongst students. Students in higher levels of learning (tertiary institutions) who are to be taught in English Language alone, have chosen to speak other languages but English amongst themselves. The use of the Creole language (Pidgin) and mother tongue is rampant and wide spread all through Nigerian colleges and universities. One can only imagine why this is so, as it badly affects their overall competence in the use of the English language while in school and much later in life. Nevertheless, this is not to say that a fluency or deft proficiency in one's mother tongue is undesirable or to be discouraged; no. It is to be encouraged, as it adds to the rich and diverse linguistic multiplicity of the nation. The issue at hand is that an overindulgent use of these indigenous languages by university undergraduates is a threat to their overall success in life, both within the nation and internationally. This is true because English language is not only Nigeria's official language, but is also a world language. And with the dawning of each new day, it increasingly becomes even more global and germane for attaining success in life. Consequently, in this research work, effort is made to discover why this nagging problem persists amongst Nigerian university undergraduates, how it came to be and what possible, practical steps can be taken to remedy it.

**Statement of the Problem**

It is no secret that a vast majority of students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria struggle to effectively express themselves in the English Language. This is evident in a myriad of ways, some of which include:

* the way they shy away from all forms of public speaking
* their general attitude to English language
* their oral performance in job interviews

There could be several reasons why this problem exists. One of these reasons is an overuse of vernacular and creole languages on their part. These students use coined and colloquial lingos to converse amongst themselves and very sparsely and rarely, speak good English Language. This has gone on for too long and has become a critical issue to be looked into. Consequently, challenges abound in the teaching and learning of English in Nigeria. This study is undertaken to draw attention to these existing challenges and some other influences and elements affecting the communication process.

**Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose or objective of this study is to uncover the salient and prominent reasons why there is a general apathy amongst Nigerian University students in speaking Standard English Language. Below are the specific objectives:

1) To discover the factors that led to the apathy towards the use of Standard Spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates.

2) To discover the influence of English language teaching aids and materials on the use of Standard Spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates.

3) To find out the influence of teachers' teaching methods on the use of Standard Spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates.

4) To determine the influence of cultural environment in the use of Standard Spoken English by Nigerian University students.

**Significance of the Study**

A lot of researches have been carried out on the language of communication of Nigerian university students, but what makes this study significant is its re-evaluation and fresh investigation into the possible reasons behind the growing reluctance amongst Nigerian undergraduates to use the English Language to communicate both in and outside the classroom. On the completion of this study, it would have been determined from the analysis of the data collected, most of the root causes to the general apathy amongst University students to use English Language. Therefore, the result of this study will be beneficial to teachers, parents, students, curriculum planners, employers of labour, e.t.c.

**Scope of the Study**

The researcher chose Godfrey Okoye University, Caritas University and University of Nigeria Enugu Campus as the scope of her research. These universities will be representatives of all other universities within Enugu Metropolis.

**Research Questions**

1) What are the factors that led to the apathy towards the use of Standard Spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates?

2) What is the influence of English language teaching aids and materials on the use of Standard Spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates?

3) How do teachers' teaching methods affect the use of Standard Spoken English of Nigerian undergraduates?

4) What is the influence of cultural environment in the use of Standard Spoken English by Nigerian University students?

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter covers a general review of research and related literature conducted by language experts and scholars on the topic. This review will be done under the following areas:

**Conceptual Framework**

* A Brief History of the English Language
* The Origin of English language in Nigeria
* The Position of English language in Nigeria
* Poor Listening Skills
* Learners' Attitude Towards Their Own Errors
* Teacher's Attitude Towards Learners' Errors
* Inter-lingual Interference
* Sociolinguistics.

**Theoretical Framework**

* Behavioural Learning Theory

**Empirical Studies**

**Summary of the Review**

**Conceptual Framework**

Over time, a lot of research focusing on language teaching, learning theories, teaching materials, teaching approaches have been conducted, but little research has been directed towards the topic of how the local education/teaching environment has influenced students’ learning and speaking of the English Language, especially when the students are not English majors, but studying English as non-majors due to educational requirements and professional needs. This fact may at least lead to the conclusion that local English learning and speaking obstacles in schools remain unsolved for long periods of time. Plainly, the obstacles to learning and speaking English as a second language at the university level far exceeds the limits imposed by the students’ ability and background. Methodologies established in the past do not often take the reality of the importance of the learners’ willingness to speak a language. There must be some factors that require re-examination at a more fundamental level. Understanding the many reasons why students avoid hardwork is important but understanding alone is insufficient to alter the situation. Other steps must be taken. The expectancy to learn, speak and use a language and succeed depends on what individuals attribute their past and present success or failure to, whether to stable factors such as ability, and/or to less stable factors such as learning attitudes, learning preferences, past experience, task difficulty.

Second language learning and use is most often illustrated and discussed from the point of view of scholars or/ and teachers. “However, while learning is the goal of teaching, it is not necessarily the mirror of teaching. Learners too, bring to learning their own beliefs, goals and attitudes, and decisions, which influence how they approach their learning” (Richards, 2011). However, before going any further, it is necessary to go back to the beginning.

**A Brief History of the English Language**

English is a West Germanic language that originated from Anglo-Frisian dialects brought to Britain in the mid 5th to 7th centuries AD by Anglo-Saxon settlers from what are now Northwest Germany, West Denmark and the Netherlands, displacing the Celtic Languages that previously pre-dominated the area. In Nigeria, English Language is known as the ‘second language’. A second language is one that comes after one’s primary language. Ironically, it is also Nigeria’s dominant language, with the use of English being taught at various levels of the Nigerian educational system- Pre-Nursery schools, Nursery schools, Primary schools, Secondary schools and Tertiary institutions of learning. When all guiding and holding factors are scrutinized, the history and role of English language in Nigeria is something noteworthy.

**Origin of English Language in Nigeria**

According to Nigerianfinder.com, the Christian Missionaries who came from Great Britain introduced formal education to Nigeria, just before the middle of the 19th century. Prior to then, education was done informally, as children were taught tradition, culture, history, and the likes by their parents who were in turn taught by their own parents. After the introduction and acceptance of the formal system of education, the entirety of it was left in the hands of the missionaries and they began teaching children and adults who cared to learn the English Language. The invasion of the European colonial masters and slave trade activities along the West Coast of Africa in the 18th century is believed to have paved the way for their tradition, language, and culture, some of which is obvious till today. The earlier kinds of English language which were spoken were “Coastal English” and “Patua English” (Pidgin or broken English) which was a more adaptable English variant as a quick and easy means of communication.

The entry of the British who were English speaking people in 1841, to the Southern and South-Western parts of Nigeria, inevitably raised the question of a language to adopt for communication between the indigenous population and the guest; more so, the European guests felt that the ‘native’ languages were too “extensive and not of high quality…and never likely to become of any practical use to civilization”. In 1882, the English language which was already well spoken in Nigeria by the elites and children of the elites, was accepted and implemented as the main channel of instruction and was the generalized approved communication language in corporate environments (schools, post offices, corporate organizations, airports, federal and state parastatals, and so on). Consequently, the education ordinance and codes of 1882, 1896, 1918 and 1926 were enacted for English language to be as the “Official Language”. However, although the English language is the official language in Nigeria, it is not the primary language of most Nigerians. The primary language of the average Nigerian is their tribal and ethnic language. This language is known as the Mother Tongue.

Enugu State, where this research was carried out, is a state in South Eastern Nigeria and is home to the Igbo of South Eastern and few Idoma/ Igala people in Ette of Enugu state. Consequently, the first language of its peoples is naturally the Igbo language. Back in history, some places like Abeokuta, Lagos and Badagary and Bendel had a lot of English speakers and since the language was already popular among the elites, it was soon seen as a prestigious language- a language of success and power. Regrettably, around this late 19th and early 20th century period, attention to native languages dwindled and it was relegated to the background, also called vernacular. Students in schools were punished for speaking them and they were unacceptable in offices and general gatherings. It is possible therefore, that one may postulate that a general acceptance of the English language may lead to a decline or even loss of the local, indigenous languages. But this does not have to be. Language loss is not a necessary or inevitable outcome when children acquire second languages. Otherwise, the world would have no bilinguals. In many places around the world, bilingualism and even multilingualism are commonplace. In Nigeria, the English Language gives an individual access and an advantage to participate in the life of the society. Conversely, the inability of an adult to speak English Language efficiently is somewhat a handicap in the (social) ebb and flow of the society. Nigerian universities today are truly multicultural communities. Students in the typical in the typical university classroom community represent a wide variety of the tribes and cultures. Many bring with them to the school setting, a rich and varied background, most notably in their first languages. It is the role of the English language lecturer, while encouraging this cultural adversity in the students, to be an effective language and literacy teacher as well. To most effectively meet the educational needs of this diverse community of students, the English Language is used to interact in the school, both by teachers and learners; and appropriate teaching techniques and materials are used in the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) in order to keep and sustain interest.

That said, before going any further, it is necessary to highlight the importance and role of the English Language in Nigeria.

**Position of English Language in Nigeria**

Nigeria is a multicultural nation in West Africa with over three hundred tribes. According to Nigerianfinder.com, there are more than five hundred and twenty languages spoken in Nigeria, and only nine having gone extinct. Therefore, in this multiethnic and multicultural Nigeria, English Language bridges linguistic gap; it is the interconnecting language amongst Nigerians from different geopolitical zones and different ethnicities. English Language is a worldwide language, and it is the means of communication in over 30% of all countries in the world. Here in Nigeria, without a pass in English language, students cannot move from secondary level of education into the tertiary institutions and this is to ensure that students can at least communicate and express themselves in a multi-ethnical community. More so, an inability to communicate in English language would definitely make International trade and relations impossible. The roles of English Language in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized as it is an over-all important but underrated tool for national development. But since English is not Nigeria’s first language, it is a language learned by its speakers. A mother tongue is acquired and language acquisition is a subconscious process. Second languages, on the other hand, are learned and language learning is a very conscious process. The second language learning process in Nigeria is obviously flawed, if the spoken English of her University students is anything to judge by, hence, the reason for this research.

There can be a myriad of reasons and possibilities why Nigerian university students speak very little to almost no Standard English at all, in their casual, everyday communication. Daniel Jones in his *Outline of English Phonetics* (2009) reveals that, “we cannot expect our learners to speak English without first of all, hearing English. The language heard acts as a model for the spoken language to follow. No one can hope to be a successful linguist unless he has a good ear. If his ear is insensitive by nature, it may be made more sensitive by training; and if his ear is good by nature, it can be made still better by training.” Ergo, one of the possible reasons for the apathy in Nigerian students to speak English Language is poor listening.

**Poor Listening Skill**

Listening comprehension is a skill that tends to get neglected, not only in the university level, but altogether in all educational levels, or is practiced in inappropriate or inadequate ways. Despite some university lecturers’ own experience in learning English as a second language, very many of them seem to think that listening, and comprehending generally is fairly easy. This may be because, in most circumstances, the ‘act of comprehending’ causes much less anxiety and is not easily measurable. It is also much less public than speaking or writing, where our performance, mistakes and all is available for inspection. Sadly however, listening is the one skill that leads to an effective performance in the other skills. If a person does not properly listen or understand a language, they surely will not speak or write it properly as well. Unfortunately, it is much easier to cover up or be unaware of our errors of listening and/or comprehension. For the most part, we imagine to ourselves that we have understood the gist of what we heard and as long as we smile, nod occasionally and look generally attentive, no one else is likely to know how much or how little we have actually understood. This is an art that students have mastered all through their lives. It explains why many teachers over-estimate their students’ abilities in listening comprehension. The process of comprehension, being a part of learning is invisible; all we can observe is the evidence that it has or has not taken place. In many circumstances, such evidence is easy to fake. And in the classroom, it is particularly easy to copy it from others who have understood, or to work out what we are supposed to do from the general situation. Nevertheless, in the long run, evidence of learning having taken place, or a lack of it, will show, most often in performance. And this is what can be found in the quality and quantity of the Standard Spoken English used by Nigerian university students.

**Learners' Attitude towards their Own Errors**

Yet another possible reason for this lethargy could be the learner’s attitude towards their errors while speaking the language. Attitudes towards the errors made by language learners vary enormously and are of great interest and use in this research. These learners’ attitudes to their own mistakes will depend to a great extent on personality factors and on what they know to be the attitude of other people who matter (e.g. teachers, parents, examiners). Some university students seem to prize fluency more highly than accuracy and will carry on happily making countless errors provided they appear to be getting their meaning across. Other learners seem so worried about the possibility of making mistakes that they are extremely reluctant to produce anything at all in the second language, apart from a few one-word utterances or essential written work, which is produced with great caution and anxiety. More so, there are discrepancies in oral and written second language performance, differences between careful classroom speech and students’ casual conversation. Interestingly, it has also been observed that certain students display a firm grasp of the target language, i.e., English, yet seem unable to function in the language.

**Teacher's Attitude Towards Learners' Errors**

Furthermore, the teacher’s attitude to the errors of their learners/ students also plays a huge role in their use or disuse of Standard English. Knowledge of the difficulties in learning a second language and a consideration of the possible causes of error should lead a teacher of the English Language to develop an attitude which is sympathetic and helpful but non-permissive. Sympathetic and helpful, because if students know that their teacher has such an attitude, they should not be so worried about error avoidance that their fluency is unduly impaired. Non-permissive, because it is an important part of a teacher’s job to help students to eliminate errors, and they cannot eliminate errors which they do not know they are making.

**Inter-lingual Interference**

Yet another one of the causes of students’ errors in speaking English is inter-lingual (Mother Tongue- MT) interference. If a class has a language in common, it is common practice for its members to understand and perhaps even demand translations and Mother Tongue explanations. Studies have shown that they will tend to revert to using MT in oral practice when their teachers are not within earshot, especially if they are not highly motivated. According to Gerry Abbott in *The Teaching of English as an International Language (2014),* “these learners are probably subject to ‘Abbott’s Paradox’, which states that the more you try to motivate them by giving them stimulating oral tasks, the more eager they will be to communicate and therefore to use the natural vehicle of communication, their MT.” The techniques of translating and giving MT explanations are not normally practicable in multilingual classes, of course, though, they are feasible in bilingual education. One advantage of the multilingual class is that its members do attempt to communicate in English. One disadvantage, however, is that the ‘Paradox’ still operates, in that the students tend to lapse into a kind of ‘pidgin’.

**Sociolinguistics**

Also, there is the area of sociolinguistics- that is, the relationship of language to community. There is still little enough understood here that teachers often overlook it in their preparation for teaching, preferring to concentrate on second language acquisition, the “how” of language learning. Yet the facts about ‘how’ individual students learn languages do not explain ‘why’ they learn them. For after all, the central important question one might ask of a second language learner is why he learns a second language. If we knew students’ reasons for learning English, we could get a better grasp on how they learn, and ultimately, how this can be marred or amplified. To simplify assume, as has always been done in the past, that students come into the university, primed and ready to learn to speak Standard English because of its obvious virtue and utility is naive and so far, unproductive. Today, English is a world language due to the current economic dominance of the English-speaking nations in the world. It is because of that position of dominance that university students in Nigeria and the world over, are trained to have at least, an average proficiency in English Language use. Nevertheless, Fishman (2017) says in his magazine that although English is used globally, it is not liked globally. Proof of this can be found in the emergence, in recent years, of a movement to teach English for special purposes. This underlines the fact that several students learn English for pragmatic and not humanistic goals. Furthermore, bilingual education and use is developing at a time when the cultural backgrounds of large numbers of students of English as a second language are seen to be threatened by the domination of English. ESL teachers may not realize this, but many of their students feel that the domination of English represents oppression, a more subtle version of the marginalization and suppression previous generations of underdeveloped nations have suffered in the hands of English-speaking nations.

Of course, there are and probably always will be ESL university students who learn and speak Standard English for the love of learning and the love of the language. But this research is being carried out because the studies in recent years which attempted to describe students’ motivation for learning a second language have not uncovered much. Many have tried to find a correlation between attitudes toward language communities and motivations for learning and speaking a second language. The works of great linguists such as Wallace Lambert and Robert Gardner have shown, that, while there may well be such a correlation between attitudes, motivation and achieved language proficiency, the nature of an individual’s motivation to learn a language is still open to question.

Lambert and Gardner (2015) suggest that there are two main types of motivation- instrumental and integrative. In bicultural settings in which there are two communities of roughly equal social dominance, as in Enugu metropolis, (here, we have an Igbo-speaking community and a non-Igbo speaking community) university students with an integrative motivation to learn and speak Standard English as a second language, come nearer to integrating with the non-English speaking community and are thus, more successful than those with an instrumental, i.e., pragmatic reason for learning and use. But beside motivation, there are other affective factors which influence language learning and use. Another factor which affects English Language use is that most of these university students who have English as their second language often shift from one code to another while speaking. It is very rare that these students come into the university, totally unable to speak English.

In General Studies classes, however, students learn a variety of English accepted globally as ‘educated’. In many cases, the learning of this educated variety is one of the reasons that these students are in the university. But outside the class, the average student is not without resources in English: his life goes on; he works, shops, converses with friends, most of the time in English. But the variety of English he uses outside the class is often not the educated one. Rather, it is what some scholars call “survival English” and resembles what Schumann (2008) identifies as a *pidginized* form of English. The task of the teacher then, is to instruct students in an educated variety, usually called Standard English. What this involves is the learning of English as a second dialect or variety. However, and this is crucial, Schumann(2008) suggests that teachers ought not to reject the language variety these students bring to class, or act as if the “errors” they notice are unacceptable and bad. Rather, teachers need to know how to encourage these young adult students to acquire a new variety of English, and not necessarily to destroy what they already have.

It is also worthy of note that the shift from one language variety to another is certainly not unique to the ESL situation. In his studies in Indian Language varieties, Gumperz (2011) has demonstrated that shifting from one code to another, depending on the social situation, is a normal occurrence. Basil Bernstein’s work (2013) demonstrates the coexistence of different codes in different social class groups.

The next question we might ask ourselves is what to do in class to fabricate the learning of this ‘new’ variety, Standard English. This research work does not purport to be a list of suggestions of marvelous techniques which will result in the magical learning of English. In fact, this researcher sincerely believes that ultimate success in learning a language rests with the student, regardless of the method the teacher uses. What teachers can do though is learn techniques to facilitate learning. They might:

* Encourage students to develop a positive attitude about themselves and about the target language community.
* Work to reduce social and psychological distances between our students and the English speaking community.
* Engage our students’ whole personalities in integrating what they learn in class with how they live outside class.
* Counsel our students to accept the language and new personality they find developing in themselves as they learn English.

The above list may seem idealistic and impractical given the limitations of time, physical and economic conditions and the size of some of our classes. And yet, on reflection, one can see that movement in the direction of some of these ideas is possible.

**Theoretical Framework**

Theories are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena, and in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions. The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. According to Gabriel Abend (2008), theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research question under study exists. Here in this study, the educational theory that was used is the B.F. Skinner's Behaviorist Theory of 1930s to 1950s. Behaviorism, also known as behavioural psychology, is a theory of learning based on the idea that all behaviours are acquired through conditioning. Conditioning occurs through our interaction with the environment. Behaviorists believe that our responses to environmental stimuli whale our actions.

According to this school of thought, behaviour can be studied in a systematic and observable manner regardless of internal mental states. Basically, only observable behaviour should be considered- cognitions, emotions and moods are far too subjective. Skinner developed the theory of Operant Conditioning- the idea that behaviour is determined by its consequences, be the reinforcements or punishments, which make it more or less likely that the behaviour will occur again. Behaviourism, a learning theory, only focused on objectively observable behaviours and discounts any independent activities of the mind. Behaviour theorists define learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behaviour based on environmental conditions.

Having established that, before going anywhere further with this study, it is needful to point out that in any consideration of language acquisition at all, whether first or second, there is a need to look at the end result and analyse the notion, “knowing a language”. What does it mean when we say someone knows a language? Consider first, the definition provided by Charles Fries(2012), pertaining specifically to the learning of a second language;

A person has ‘learned’ a language when he has thus first, within a limited vocabulary, mastered the sound system (that is, when he can understand the stream of speech and achieve an understandable production of it) and has, second, made the structural devices (that is, the basic arrangements of utterances) matters of automatic habit.

Fries arrives at this position after showing the inadequacy of the notion that knowing a language means knowing its vocabulary. He points out that even a native speaker’s knowledge of the words in his language is limited by his experience. No one can ever finish learning all the words and their many meanings, as can be proved by just a few minutes’ study of a dictionary. On the other hand, he claims, we finish early with the business of mastering the sound system and “the fundamental matters of word-order and the patterns of form”. A child of four can recognize all the sounds of his language and produce recognizable variants of them and by the time he goes to school, has learned the basic grammar of his language. It is natural, then, that we tend to believe that second language learning is a matter of doing in another language, what we are conscious of doing in our own, namely learning words, rather than doing what we did unconsciously as young children when we mastered the phonology and grammar. Fries (2012) argues then that vocabulary need not be stressed in initial phase of language learning:

Accuracy of sound, of rhythm, of intonation, of structural forms, and of arrangement, within a limited range of expression, must come first and become automatic habit before the student is ready to devote his chief attention to expanding his vocabulary.

It is interesting to see what happens when Fries’ definition of knowing a language is translated into practical terms by preparing a test to see whether a student knows a language. Let us assume first that knowing a language consists only in knowing- that is, being able to recognize definitions or synonyms of- the words of the language. Obviously, we cannot test these students with every word in the dictionary before we decide whether they come up to the criterion. We would make use of some appropriate statistical technique to select a representative sample of words, find out what percentage our students know and compare their performance with that of a native speaker. The process is not simple, but it is feasible, for we would be dealing with a more or less finite number of items (the words of a language) from which we can choose a more or less representative sample: we need have a little hesitation in generalizing our results. The words “more or less” are used advisedly, for there is a real sense in which the lexicon of a language is an open set; new words and meanings are added and old ones dropped all the time. Still, at any given time, the words of a language are listable in a way that the sentences of a language cannot conceivably be.

It is important at this juncture that we make a clear distinction between two pairs of terms that are often confused, competence and performance and comprehension and production. Chomsky in (2010) has emphasized the distinction between competence and performance:

The speaker produces a signal with a certain intended meaning, the hearer receives a signal and attempts to determine what was said and what was intended. The performance of the speaker or hearer is a complex matter that involves many factors. One fundamental factor involved in the speaker-hearer’s performance is his knowledge of the grammar that determines an intrinsic connection of sound and meaning for each sentence. We refer to this knowledge (for the most part, obviously unconscious knowledge), as the speaker-hearer’s “competence”. Competence in this sense, is not to be confused with performance. Performance, that is, what the speaker-hearer actually does, is based not only on his knowledge of the language, but on many other factors such as memory restrictions, degree of attention, distractions, non-linguistic knowledge and beliefs, and so on. We may, if we like, think of the study of competence as the study of the potential performance of an idealized speaker-hearer who is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant factors.

The grammar of language, then, is a description of competence; it may be compared to the score of a musical work, to use an analogy first suggested by Ferdinand De Saussure. The score necessarily underlies any performance, but it does not account for all the features of any single performance.

A moment’s thought makes clear that linguistic performance may be either active or passive that both the speaker and the hearer are in fact, performing. The implication of this for language learning is extremely important, for it suggests that one may learn a language just as well by listening as by speaking. The implication for language testing is equally important, for it suggests that we can find out about “knowledge of a language”, which is the same as underling linguistic competence, equally well when we test passive and active skills.

This does not of course mean that an individual’s performance as a speaker is the same as his performance as a listener; such a claim would clearly be ridiculous, for it would be tantamount to saying that anyone who could read a Skakespeare play could also write it. All that it does claim is that the same linguistic competence, the same knowledge of rules, underlies both kinds of performance. Knowledge of rules is also the principal factor in the understanding of messages with reduced redundancy. George A. Miller and Stephen Isard (2008) have shown that the intelligibility of a sentence depends on its following of syntactic and semantic rules. Sentences which break semantic constraints (for example, colourless green ideas sleep furiously) prove even more difficult. This effect became even clearer when these linguists studied the resistance of sentences to masking by added noise; grammatical sentences proved to be far more resistant than ungrammatical ones. Thus, they showed that the “knowledge of the language” providing the listener with help in handling sentences with reduced redundancy was a knowledge of rules, of the grammar of the language.

We have looked so far at the question of assessing linguistic competence, an individual’s knowledge of a language; but as has been noted already, and this is not enough for practical or educational purposes: “We are interested not just in the fact that someone knows a language, but that he knows how to use it well. Educational linguistics is concerned, therefore, not just with linguistic competence, but with what is termed communicative competence” (Hymes, 2010). The dimensions of communication have been set out by Dell Hymes following Roman Jakobson. Any speech event, Hymes (2010) suggests, is made up of seven components or factors- sender (addresser, speaker, and writer), receiver (addresse, listener, and reader), a message form, a channel, a code, a topic, a setting. Communicative competence involves each of these and the interactions between them. A member of a speech community needs to be able to function between them. A member of a speech community needs to be able to function both as sender and receiver and to select appropriate message forms, channels, and codes according to the receiver, topic and setting. Therefore, the full range of communicative competence involves not just the semantics, grammar and phonology of linguistic competence, but sets of rules, governing the appropriateness of various forms according to topic, setting and audience.

**Empirical Studies**

Olaoya Anthony (2015) in his research work entitled *Peerglossia: A Socio-linguistic Study of its effects on the English Language Proficiency of Nigerian Senior Secondary School Students in Kano State* was interested in finding out the causes of the appalling decline in the performance of senior secondary school students in English Language at the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE). He therefore, conducted a research on the relationship between socio-linguistic variables and students’ performance in English Language in some randomly selected secondary schools in Kano state in Northern Nigeria. The assumption is that peerglossia has an inhibitory effect on the language use of senior secondary school students. From the written tests and questionnaire administered to the students, it was found that parents’ socio-economic, political status and education background influenced students’ choice of peer group whose language use has harmful effects on students’ language proficiency. Some recommendations were made by the end of the paper on how to better manage ‘peerglossia’ and combat its glaring effects on the English Language proficiency of secondary school students. Some of these recommendations include; exposure and criticism of unacceptable aspects of peer group language to learners, the teaching of standard English Language in classrooms, parents’ discouraging of the learning of any language behaviour that is inimical to their wards’ educational advancement, equipping of secondary schools with adequate language teaching aids by the government, amongst others. Although the research was focused on secondary school students, a lot of the information gotten from the study is relevant and applicable to this present research and can be adopted in the renegotiation of student apathy to the use of standard spoken English in Nigerian universities.

Furthermore, Chitulu and Njemanze (2015) in their journal publication entitled *Poor English Pronunciation among Nigerian English as a Second Language (ESL) Students; the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Solution* delve into the poor English pronunciation of Nigerian students and the role of the ICT in curbing it. The researchers believe that ICT, a strong characteristic of the digital age, can come to the rescue. The paper x-rays the causes of poor English pronunciation problems associated with the issue, and the ability of the digital age approach to pronunciation problems, to be the final arbiter to give the desired results. The employment of ICT in linguistic sciences over the years has yielded interesting results. The paper also discusses the various digital age techniques used to combat poor English pronunciation among Nigerian students, and the wonderful input this can give to linguistic pedagogy in the area of spoken English. In conclusion, the paper also made some contributions on how ICT can help to solve the prevalent pronunciation problems of Nigerian university students and this includes; the use of downloadable screen readers, the use of interactive video disc and so on. While the focus of this research work is on the phonological problems of Nigerian students, it is beneficial to our current research because pronunciation and phonology is a core aspect of standard spoken English and suggestions made in this study can serve to help provide solutions to the nagging problem of this current research.

Babatunde (2012) in his research work entitled *A Framework for the Evaluation of English as a Second Language Programme in Nigeria*, attempts to provide a framework to facilitate and enforce the process of learning the English Language in Nigeria. The frameworks adapts the CIPP model of curriculum evaluation to provide a foundation for the specification of the total nature of perspectives and participation needed for the successful planning, implementation and assessment of the national ESL progamme. It is observed in the study that improper attention to the specified social, political, psychological, educational,, and linguistics realities makes them remain as constraints, rather than facilitators of an ideal ESL programme. A suggestion is then made that a broad-based decision facilitation ESL presentation framework, which is capable of capturing the total nature of insights and personnel involved with the English language curriculum process, be employed in Nigeria and other similar linguistic contexts. It is further suggested that the specification should be holistically perceived because their improper perception and utilization can render (and has always rendered) any language planning decision ineffective.

**Summary of the Literature Review**

This chapter tried to x-ray and establish certain relevant information such as, how English came to be in the West African nation of Nigeria, the role or position of English language in Nigeria today and some factors that affect the quality of English spoken by Nigerian university students. These factors range from poor listening skills to learners' attitude towards their own errors to teacher's attitude towards learners' errors to interliingual interference to sociolinguistics. Motivation (that which fuels our desires) for learning to speak a second language was also looked into. And it was found that there are two main types of motivation: instrumental and integrative. It was also seen that there are several variants of Spoken English and ESL speaker's often shift from one of these variants to another, given the situational context.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter focuses on the research design employed in carrying out the study, the area of the study, the population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, validity, reliability, method of data collection and analysis.

**Design of the Study**

The design adopted for this research is the descriptive survey. Just like the name suggests, a descriptive research is used to describe the characteristics of a population being studied. According to Baker (2008), it is the the type of non-experimental research that enables data to be collected using primary and secondary sources of information.

**Area of the study**

The study was conducted in Enugu State, with Godfrey Okoye University, Caritas University and University of Nigeria Enugu Campus acting as representatives of other universities in South Eastern, Nigeria.

**Population of the Study**

The population of the study consisted of 719,632 students of Godfrey Okoye University, Caritas University and University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus.

**Sample and Sampling Technique**

The simple random sampling technique was used for this study. The researcher sampled 100 respondents out of 719,632 population through the random sampling technique. The selection of respondents was done randomly in open spaces within the university.

**Instrument for Data Collection**

The instrument used for data collection in this research was the questionnaire. It was carefully designed by the researcher into four sections to reflect the four research questions posed earlier in the study. The instrument took the form of a four (4) point Likert rating scale. The gradation ranged from STRONGLY AGREE to AGREE to DISAGREE to STRONGLY DISAGREE.

**Validity of Instrument**

The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of statistics. A copy of the instrument and the purpose of the study were given to them, and the research questions guided them in critically examining and evaluating the comprehensiveness and aptness of the instrument. The suggestions and corrections gotten from them were applied to the instrument in its modification.

**Reliability of Instrument**

The questionnaire was tested and retested on the respondents. The results were brought together and found to be consistent and reliable.

**Method of Data Collection**

The questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher to the respondents. A brief introduction preceded the questionnaire, introducing the study to the respondents and informing them of its relevance and the need for their utmost objectivity and honesty. A total number of 100 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and the same number of copies was collected.

**Method of Data Analysis**

The collected data were assembled into tables and analyzed using simple mean.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**ANALYSIS OF DATA AND RESULTS**

This chapter presents a complete analysis of data collected in this research. The main objective of this study is to investigate the reasons why there exist among Nigerian university students, an apathy to use Standard English language while speaking.

**Research Question One**

What are the factors that led to the apathy towards the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates?

**Table one showing the response and mean score for each item in research question one.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **TOTAL** | **MEAN** | **DECISION** |
| 1 | We do not speak English language in my home | 25  100 | 50  150 | 15  30 | 5  5 | 100 | 2.85 | A |
| 2 | I was not taught good spoken English from nursery school. | 10  40 | 60  180 | 5  10 | 25  25 | 100 | 2.55 | A |
| 3 | My mother tongue interferes with my pronunciation. | 40  100 | 50  150 | 10  20 | 0  0 | 100 | 3.3 | A |
| 4 | I do not have sound English language teachers in my school. | 10  40 | 30  90 | 40  80 | 20  20 | 100 | 2.3 | R |
| 5 | My friends do not speak standard spoken English. | 35  140 | 35  105 | 15  30 | 15  15 | 100 | 3.25 | A |
|  | Grand Mean |  |  |  |  |  | 2.85 |  |

The researcher used questionnaire items which state that these students do not speak English Language in their homes and observed that the mean score is 2.85, which is accepted. These students were not taught good spoken English from nursery school and the mean score is observed to be 2.55, which is accepted. The mother tongues of these students interfere with their pronunciation and observed that the mean score is 3.3, which is accepted. These students do not have sound English Language teachers in their schools and observed that the mean score is 2.3, and is rejected because it is below the acceptable mean of 2.50. Their friends do not speak standard spoken English and observed that the mean is 3.25 and is accepted.

**Research Question Two**

What is the influence of English language teaching aids and materials on the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates?

**Table two showing the response and mean score for each item in research question two.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **TOTAL** | **MEAN** | **DECISION** |
| 1 | I do not make use of the language lab in my school. | 80  320 | 12  36 | 8  16 | 0  0 | 100 | 3.72 | A |
| 2 | I do not read the language books in the library. | 50  200 | 25  75 | 10  20 | 5  5 | 100 | 3.1 | A |
| 3 | My teacher does not use flash cards to teach English Language. | 20  80 | 45  135 | 18  36 | 17  17 | 100 | 2.68 | A |
| 4 | There are no English Language charts in my language lab. | 30  120 | 45  135 | 25  50 | 0  0 | 100 | 3.05 | A |
| 5 | My teacher does not write on the board to explain while teaching. | 55  220 | 30  90 | 5  10 | 10  10 | 100 | 3.3 | A |
|  | Grand Mean |  |  |  |  |  | 3.17 |  |

The items are these students do not make use of the language lab in their school and the researcher observed that the mean score is 3.72, which is accepted. These students do not read the language books in their libraries and it was observed that the mean score is 3.1 and it is accepted. The teachers of these students do not use flash cards in their teaching of English and a mean score of 2.68 is observed which is accepted. There are English language charts in these students’ language labs and a mean score of 3.05 is observed and is accepted. The teachers of these students do not write on the board to explain while teaching and a mean score of 3.3 is observed, which is accepted.

**Research Question Three**

How do teachers’ teaching methods affect the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates?

**Table three showing the response and mean score for each item in research question three.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **TOTAL** | **MEAN** | **DECISION** |
| 1 | My English language classes are not interesting. | 45  180 | 25  75 | 13  26 | 17  17 | 100 | 2.98 | A |
| 2 | My English language classes are not interactive. | 20  80 | 25  75 | 40  80 | 15  15 | 100 | 2.5 | A |
| 3 | My English lecturer uses only one method to teach. | 40  160 | 45  135 | 10  20 | 5  5 | 100 | 3.2 | A |
| 4 | We are not given take-home assignments in English classes. | 23  92 | 37  111 | 40  80 | 0  0 | 100 | 2.83 | A |
| 5 | My English lecturer does not encourage us when we do well. | 35  140 | 40  120 | 15  30 | 10  10 | 100 | 3.0 | A |
|  | Grand Mean |  |  |  |  |  | 2.906 |  |

The items are these students’ English language classes are not interesting and observation is a mean score of 2.98 and is accepted. These students’ English language classes are not interactive and a mean score of 2.5 is observed and accepted. These students’ English lecturer use only one method to teach and a mean score of 3.2 is observed and accepted. These students are not given take-home assignments in their English classes and a mean score of 2.83 is observed and accepted. These students’ English lecturers do not encourage them when they do well and the researcher observes a mean score of 3.0, which is accepted.

**Research Question Four**

What is the influence of cultural environment on the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian university students?

**Table four showing the response and mean score for each item in research question four.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEM** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **TOTAL** | **MEAN** | **DECISION** |
| 1 | Standard spoken English is not admired in my community. | 45  180 | 10  30 | 30  60 | 15  15 | 100 | 2.85 | A |
| 2 | Standard spoken English is not spoken in my community. | 30  120 | 20  60 | 25  50 | 25  25 | 100 | 2.55 | A |
| 3 | My peers mock me when I use standard spoken English. | 25  100 | 45  135 | 20  40 | 10  10 | 100 | 2.85 | A |
| 4 | My family does not encourage me to use standard spoken English. | 13  52 | 22  66 | 25  50 | 40  40 | 100 | 2.08 | R |
| 5 | Using standard spoken English is seen as arrogance and pride in my society. | 27  108 | 40  120 | 20  40 | 13  13 | 100 | 2.81 | A |
|  | Grand Mean |  |  |  |  |  | 2.628 |  |

The items are standard spoken English is not admired in the community of these students and the mean score of 2.85 is observed and accepted. Standard spoken English is not spoken in the community of these students and the mean score of 2.55 is observed and accepted. These students’ peers mock them when they use standard spoken English and a mean score of 2.85 is observed and accepted. The families of these students do not encourage them to use standard spoken English and a mean score of 2.08 is observed which is below the mean and is rejected. Using standard spoken English in these students’ societies is seen as arrogance and pride and the mean score of 2.81 is observed and accepted.

Based on the questions asked and the feedback received from a selected fraction of Nigerian university students in south eastern Nigeria, the researcher observed that there is definitely apathy in the use of standard spoken English language by the university students.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION, RECOMMENDATION, CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

In this chapter, the result of the study based on the data interpretations made in chapter four are examined and inference drawn from there. The chapter starts with discussion of findings of the study and ends with suggestions for further studies.

**Discussion of Findings**

In research question one, from the results of the findings which sought to discover the factors that have led to the growing apathy amongst Nigerian university students to use standard spoken English, a grand mean of 2.85 was culled from the respondents’ feedback. This grand mean is above the mean score or required mark of 2.5 and proves that the items listed under the question one are factors that led to the apathy, with exception of unavailability of sound English Language teachers in Universities. This item had a mean of 2.3, which is below the benchmark and this renders it rejected factor. It is noteworthy to establish that an unavailability of good English Language teachers in universities might actually be a problem and one of the reasons for the apathy amongst students to speak standard spoken English. However, what this mean shows is that unavailability of sound English teachers is not as strong a factor as the other factors listed.

From the result of the findings made on research question two, which sought to find out the influence of English Language teaching aids and materials on the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates. The researcher constructed questionnaire item that would answer the question. These items contained some teaching aids used in the pedagogy of English language in universities, their availability or unavailability in these schools and these students’ use or disuse of them. At the end of the research, a grand mean of 3.17 was gotten from total average of the items. 3.17 is far above the benchmark of 2.50 and is thus, accepted. What this means for this study is that the availability and use of language labs, good language textbooks, flashcards, language charts and chalkboards play a key role in the acceptance of standard spoken English by the learners. The materials, props and equipment employed in the teaching of anything hold enough charm to either endear or repel the learners from it, and standard spoken English definitely not left out. More so, a proper use of the appropriate teaching aids will not only eradicate the existing apathy, but even boost their proficiency in the language use.

In research question three which focuses on the influence of teaching methods on learners’ use of standard spoken English, a grand mean of 2.906 was obtained. The items of this research question included an evaluation of teaching methods used by teachers of English in the university, the availability of take-home assignments for the students and the place of reinforcement as a teaching technique. All of the items ranked above the benchmark of 2.5 and thus, were accepted as factors which lead to the formation of students’ emotions towards standard spoken English, which currently is pathetic. Since research question three shows that teaching methods can boost or reduce the existing apathy, effort shall be made to review the current methods in use, modify them or invent new and effective methods.

From the result of the findings made on research question four, which enquired on the influence of cultural environment in the use of standard spoken English by university students, it is clear that environment plays a huge part in people’s psyche and joins in the shaping of their feelings and emotions towards things and life as a whole. At the end of the research, a grand mean of 2.628 was obtained. This mean is above the 2.5, the required mean, making it an accepted data. It contains five items which include peer pressure, family influence, societal perception of standard spoken English and other two items. Item number four which sought to decipher how much family support and encouragement can lead to or reduce this apathy was rejected because it produced a mean score which fell below the benchmark. What this means for this work is that family support and encouragement while playing a role in shaping the emotions of learners towards standard spoken English, it is still not a major factor. This can be explained quite simply as a lot of university students or recent times care little about what their family says, preferring to get validation from their peers and popular culture. In all, however, the grand mean of 2.628 which ranks above the benchmark (narrowly) still makes it a viable and strong factor in the development of the growing apathy in university students to use standard spoken English.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of the study is to find out the salient and prominent reason why there is a general apathy amongst Nigerian university students in speaking Standard English language. Findings from the analysis showed that family background, academic background, mother tongue interference, unavailability of good English teachers, unavailability of language labs, lack of good English language textbooks are some of the subtle and pronounced factors that have led to the existing apathy. It was also observed that teaching methods can shape the dispositions or emotions of learners towards a subject. The findings gotten from this research shows that many university English Language classes are not interactive, learners are not given take-home assignments that will engage them beyond the classes, many English Language teachers adopt only one pedagogic method in their teaching and do not use reinforcement or motivation in their classes.

This reveals that investigation and reforms should be made to the teaching of English Language, from foundational levels to the university level.

**Implications of the Study**

The results of this finding have obvious implications to the teaching and learning of English Language to second language learners.

It is recognized that there is a need to ensure that sound English Language is taught in all schools at the beginning levels, especially in private schools. This is because a good number of the numerous private schools spread throughout south eastern Nigeria have quite shoddy quality of content, teachers, teaching materials and methodologies.

This study also recognizes that the apathy that exists can be better managed and curbed, even with the right plans and actions. It is also recognized that the immediate community of the learner, which comprises family, peers and psycho-social environment around them have a massive impact on their value system. This shows that there is a need for the average Nigerian to not look down on, criticize or reject standard spoken English as unnecessary or prideful, but instead to be open-minded to the national and global benefits of a proficiency in Standard English language use.

In addition, it is recognized that there is a need for a critical investigation in the quality of training received by English language student teachers as this in the long-run affects the disposition of their future learners towards the content they provide.

**Recommendations of the Study**

In line with the results of this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. The family and immediate community of university students in south eastern Nigeria should be accepting and supportive of the use of standard spoken English by these students. The emotional support gotten from care givers and nurturers goes a long way in determining the value these students attach to the proper use of the language.
2. Government should provide the needed funds public universities need to purchase the right teaching materials for the sound teaching of Standard English Language in their schools.
3. English Language teachers should put in conscious effort while teaching English as a second language, ensuring that they use various and effective teaching methods to deliver their lessons.
4. The young people of south eastern Nigeria should be educated on the vast world of opportunities that an adept proficiency in Standard English opens up to them.

**Limitations of the Study**

1. This study focuses only on the spoken English of university students. It leaves out other core aspects of a well rounded use of language such as written English, reading English and ‘hearing’ English.
2. This study sampled three out of the many universities within Enugu Metropolis.
3. Lack of sufficient time to carry out a more indepth research.

**Suggestions for Further Studies**

1. Future researchers should carry out this research on other parts of the nation.
2. Further research should be made on University students’ written English language, with an emphasis on the use of internet language on paper.
3. More research should be carried out on the English pronunciation of Nigerian university students and how to improve it.

**Summary of the Finding**

The purpose of this study was to look anew into the prevalent apathy amongst Nigerian university students in the south east to use standard spoken English language, discover factors which led to it and propose ways of putting a check on these factors.

The population of the study consisted of 719,632 students of three universities within Enugu Metropolis. The sample was drawn using simple random sampling technique; 40 students were drawn from one school, while 30 students each were drawn from the other two schools, making it a total of 100 as the sample size. Four structured research questions were used. Validation of the instrument was done through face and content validity. Validation was made by 2 experts in measurement and evaluation from Godfrey Okoye University in Enugu State. The questionnaires were administered to the students and collected by the researcher. The reliability of the instrument was 0.85 which means the instrument is positively reliable with the exhibited reliability index. It was tested using Spearman’s correlation coefficient. The data were analyzed using simple mean. Findings from the analysis showed that family background, academic background, mother tongue interference, lack of good teachers and inability of other young people to speak Standard English are some of the factors that led to the existing apathy in university students to use standard spoken English. It is also observed that the availability or lack availability of adequate teaching aids affects the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates. The findings also reveal that the choice of teaching methods adapted in the teaching of English Language in universities determines the degree to which the students use the standard version of English Language. It is also shown that the immediate cultural environment of young people shapes their value system and determines how well or badly they speak English language. Some solutions to this apathy were proffered as well, from the provision of funds for the acquisition of modern and appropriate English Language teaching aids and materials, to emotional and moral support from care-givers and support systems. It was also suggested that a deliberate effort be put into the training of English Language teachers, in order to ensure that they have the required mental ability to not just teach Standard English, but to teach it in a joyful and positive environment.

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**Appendix A**

**Questionnaire on Renegotiating Student Apathy to the use of Standard Spoken English Language in Universities in South Eastern Nigeria**

Good day sir/ma,

I am a student of Godfrey Okoye University, carrying out a research on the apathy of students to use standard spoken English in universities in South Eastern Nigeria.

The research is purely an academic exercise, and any information given by you will be treated confidentially and will only be for the purpose of this study.

Please, try to respond objectively and correctly to the items, as your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

**Eneh, Chinelo A.**

**Appendix B**

**Section A: Background Information**

1. Gender: Male Female

1. Age: Below 20 years

21-30 years

Above 30 years

1. Marital Status: Married

Single

Divorced

Separated

Widowed

1. Tertiary Institution: Godfrey Okoye University

Caritas University

Univeristy of Nigeria, Enugu Campus

**SECTION B: The Research Questions**

1. What are the factors that led to the apathy towards the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates?

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| **S/N** | **ITEM** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1. | We do not speak English Language in my home |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | I was not taught good spoken English from nursery school |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | My mother tongue interferes with my pronunciation |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | I do not have sound English Language teachers in my school |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | My friends do not speak standard spoken English |  |  |  |  |

1. What is the influence of English Language teaching aids and materials on the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates?

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| **S/N** | **ITEM** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1. | I do not make use of the language lab in my school |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | I do not read the language books in the library |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | My teachers do not use flash cards to teach English |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | There are no English Language charts in my language lab. |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | My teacher does not write on the board to explain while teaching |  |  |  |  |

1. How do teachers’ teaching methods affect the use of standard spoken English by Nigerian undergraduates?

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| **S/N** | **ITEM** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1. | My English language classes are not interesting |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | My English language classes are not interactive |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | My English lecturer uses only one method to teach |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | We are not given take-home assignments in my English classes |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | My English lecturer does not encourage us when we do well |  |  |  |  |

1. What is the influence of the cultural environment of Nigerian University students on their use of standard spoken English?

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| **S/N** | **ITEM** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1. | Standard spoken English is not admired in my community |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | My peers mock me when I use standard spoken English. |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | My family does not encourage me to use standard spoken English |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | Using standard spoken English is seen as arrogance and pride in my society. |  |  |  |  |

Thank you.