

## The Impact of Mother Tongue Interference on Students' Performance in English Language in Bauchi State

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**Abstract :** This paper examines the impact of Mother tongue interference on students' performance in English Language in Bauchi State. It is observed that the students of Bauchi district share the same problem with Hausa native speakers of Kano dialect which is the standard form. It is observed that there are some phonemes which are present in English but absent in Hausa so the Hausa speakers of Bauchi district also replace these sounds with similar ones present in Hausa. Students in Bauchi district fail English language because they transfer features of their mother tongue (MT) into English. The data is obtained through unobtrusive observation of the English speech of about fifty Hausa native speakers of Bauchi district which is similar to Kano dialect from Abubakar Tatari Ali Polytechnic, Bauchi since only those who have had some good background of secondary education are used because uneducated Nigeria English of whatever geographical location is more likely to be unintelligible as cockney or uneducated African-American English. For instance /ə:/ is absent in Hausa so the speakers find it difficult to distinguish between such pairs of words as /bə:d / and /bʌst/, /fa:st/ and /fə:st / hence /a:/ is generally used wherever /ə:/ is present regardless of the spelling, that is why words like 'work', 'first' and 'person' all have / a:/. In Hausa most speakers use /P/ in place of, or in alternation with /f/, e.g. 'few' is pronounced as 'pew', or 'pen', as 'fen', /b/ for /v/, /s/ for /z/ and /z/ for /ʒ/. Also the word vision/visn/ is pronounced as /vidzn/. Therefore, there is confusion in spellings and pronunciation of words. One solution out of the problem is having constant practice with a qualified consistent staff and making use of standard textbooks in the learning process.

**Keywords :** English, failure, mother tongue, interference, students

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