

**FIRST LANGUAGE INTERFERENCE IN THE USE OF ENGLISH QUESTION TAGS
AMONG NIGERIA CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION HAUSA STUDENTS IN
FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, ZARIA**

BY

**SHEHU USMAN IDRIS
P15AREN8068**

AUGUST, 2016

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, AHMADU BELLO
UNIVERSITY, ZARIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF MASTER DEGREE (MA) IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE,
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES, AHMADU BELLO
UNIVERSITY, ZARIA.**

AUGUST, 2016

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis on “First Language Interference in the Use of English Question Tags among Nigeria Certificate in Education Hausa Students in Federal College of Education, Zaria” was written by me in English and Literary Studies Department, Faculty of Arts; under the supervision of Dr. G. Y. Sadiq and Dr. I. Saminu. The information derived from related literature had been duly acknowledged in the text and list of references provided. The study was not previously presented for the award of another degree at any institution.

Shehu Usman Idris

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATION

This Thesis titled “First Language Interference in the Use of English Question Tags among Nigeria Certificate in Education Hausa Students in Federal College of Education, Zaria” **by** Shehu Usman Idris meets the regulations governing the award of Master Degree in English Language of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Allah (SWT), my parents, my beloved wife, Hajiya Suwaiba and my lovely children.

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Abbreviations and Symbols

- IndE stands for Indian English as used in this study.
- CanE stands for Canadian English as used in this study.
- BrE stands for British English as used in this study.
- ScoE stands for Scotland English as used in this study.
- AmE stands for American English as used in this study.
- QT as used in this write-up stands for question tag or disjunctive question whereas QTs stands for its plural form.
- L₁ stands for first language which is Hausa language, as used in this write-up.
- L₂ stands for the 2nd language in this study, English Language.
- SLA stands for second language acquisition.
- TL stands for target language.
- IL stands for interlanguage.
- FL stands for foreign language.
- NL stands for native language.
- LAD stands for language acquisition device.
- EA stands for error analysis.
- * This asterisk stands for error in the usage of an expression, especially showing error in the QTs as used in this context.
- This ↗ arrow stands for rising tune in speech i.e. the voice goes up.
- This ↘ arrow stands for falling tune in speech i.e. the voice goes down.

ABSTRACT

This study is on the First Language Interference in the use of English Question Tags among Nigeria Certificate in Education Hausa Students in Federal College of Education, Zaria. It aims at examining the problems in the use of the English question tags as employed by the Hausa learners of English as a second language, that is, the target population caused by the first language in the formation processes and use of the English question tags by looking at the form, structure and meaning of each. Illustrations of some of the problems identified are, overgeneralization, generalization, learners' induced rules, interference of the learner's mother language, learner's age, learner's psychological attitude and the insufficient language knowledge of English question tags. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Qualitative method of data collection and analysis were used. The tools for the collection of the data that were used in the study include test frame and assignment which the target population (sampled Hausa NCE 1-3) did (answered the questions on both the test and the assignment). The study reveals that the Hausa learners of English as a second language have a peculiar problem of overgeneralization, inducing their rules in forming and using English question tags. It also reveals that the greater the difference between the two languages the more negative the effects of the interference are likely to be. The study reveals that the usage of the English question tags is generally affected by the age of the Hausa learners of English as a second language and females often than not use English question tags more than their male counterparts. It further reveals that the youths majorly employ the use of the invariant question tags because it is fashionable coupled with its being handy to use than the canonical type. Finally, it shows that the usage of English question tags is influenced by the first language of the learners of English as the second language and recommends methods that could be put in place to ameliorate incessant cases of errors in using the question tags by the target population.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Preamble

This chapter consists of the general background of the study, statement of the research problem, aim and objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope and delimitation, and definition of operational terms and abbreviations.

1.1 Background to the Study

In the process of learning a second language by the second language learners, there is every possibility for the first language of the learners, which had already become part and parcel of their (the learners) communicative competence, to interfere with the second language which is being learnt. The interference could come at any level during the learning procedures; it could be at the level of phonology, semantic, syntactic or even all of them and at any learning stage. The learners are already engrossed by the exposition of the first language and may tend to apply the same rules in the formation and usages of the new language which is being learnt, English question tags in this case.

Generally speaking, question tag is seen as a short question tagged on to the end of a statement (declarative or imperative sentence). Some languages have an invariable question tag that can be added to almost any statement. For example: French uses, “*n'est-ce pas?*” as the added tag question meaning, (isn't it?) in English; Spanish uses, “*verdad?*” as the tag question, meaning, (*truly?*) in English. In IndE and some other varieties, “*isn't it?*” is used in this way (*You are going tomorrow, isn't it?*), while “*yes?*” and “*no?*” as the question tags are used for confirmation (“*You are coming, yes?*”, “*She is going there, no?*”). In many kinds of English, an enclitic tag, (an enclitic is a word pronounced with so little emphasis that it is shortened and

forms part of the preceding word, for example n't in can't). An enclitic tag is used for confirmation and other purposes example, “*eh?*” is a shibboleth of CanE and common in BrE (*You like that kind of thing, eh?*), and in some varieties of ScoE, “*eh no?*” is common (*You're coming as well, eh no?*—meaning “*aren't you?*”). Many AmE speakers use “*huh?*” or “*uh?*” (*You're coming, huh?*). Other common informal tags are “*right?*” And “*ok?*” (*He'll be there, right? I'll see you soon, OK?*). (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 26/8/15)

Furthermore, from what has been seen above, there is influence of a learner's first language in learning a second language; this influence is often called transfer or interference. “The influence of a learner's first language knowledge in the second language” is called transfer or interference, as stated by Lightbown and Spada, (2008, p.205). It is important to note, at this juncture that, the transfer or interference of the learners' first language could be classified as either being positive or negative one. Positive transfer refers to a situation when a structure or rule from the first language (L_1) aids in the production of correct utterance in the second language (L_2), and a negative transfer occurs when a structure or rule from the L_1 to the L_2 produces an incorrect or inappropriate utterance in the L_2 . Thus, the English question tags are not exceptional, that is to say, to some extent it may either be negatively or positively influenced or both by the first language of the target population, as will be seen in due course exhibited by the target population, Nigeria Certificate in Education Hausa learners of English as a second language at the Federal College of Education, Zaria which is the study area.

In the same development, an English question tag or English tag question (also known as tail question) is a grammatical structure in which a declarative statement or an imperative is turned into a question. Example, “*He is a teacher, isn't he?* Meaning, “*...isn't he a teacher?*” That is, question tag is a shortened/truncated version of the original statement. The statement,

“He is a teacher” is turned into a question by the *“tag”*, *“isn’t he?”* The term “question tag” is generally used by the British grammarians, while their American counterparts prefer “tag question”. (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 26/8/15)

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Question tags or tag questions will be shortened “QTs” for the plural form of the question tags and “QT” for its singular form. QTs are virtually found in every language. However, in some languages, they (QTs) have the same form, structure and meaning as in the English language for example, Hausa language, Yoruba language and Igbo language, while other languages have their own peculiar form, structure and meaning (other than that of the English language). For example, French uses, *“n’est-ce pas?”* meaning *“isn’t it?”* Spanish uses, *“verdad?”* as the tag question, meaning, (*truly?*) in English. (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 26/8/15)

Question tags are of different types, the most popular ones are the polarity types in which positive statements take negative tags and negative statements go with the positive tags. For example, *“He ought to go, oughtn’t he?”* *“She didn’t wash all the dirty clothes, did she?”*

Standard English throughout the world requires the question tag to correspond to the subject and verb of the preceding sentence. Such tags consist of a single-word verb (*be* or *have* as main verbs, an auxiliary, or a modal) plus a subject pronoun, as in, *“It’s a nice day today, isn’t it?”*, *“You have enough books, haven’t you?”* (especially BrE) and *“You have enough books, don’t you?”* (especially AmE), *“She went home last night, didn’t she?”*, and *“You could help if you wanted, couldn’t you?”* Question tags are normally negative after a positive statement, and vice versa. When spoken on the rising tone of *yes–no* questions, they may

genuinely be asking for information or be expressing surprise or uncertainty: “*You're not going to tell them, are you?*” However, tags are more usually spoken on the falling intonation of statements, to invite or expect agreement with the preceding statement: “*Lovely day we're having, aren't we?*”; “*It's been a mild winter, hasn't it?*” Question tags can also be used with imperatives: “*Wait a minute, will you?*”; “*Send us a postcard, won't you?*”; “*Let's go together, shall we?*” Another possibility is for the tag to agree with a subordinate clause: “*I don't think they'll come now, will they?*”; “*That's a nice mess you've got us into, haven't you?*” Occasionally, a positive statement is followed by a positive tag, with a rising intonation. This may simply signify an inference or even a request for clarification (*He'll be 21 next year, will he?*), but the structure often suggests sarcasm or suspicion: *So he's innocent, is he?*; *It fell off the back of a truck, did it?* (implication: *I doubt that very much*). (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 26/8/15)

Furthermore, in addition to the polarity types, some positive statements could bear positive tags while negative ones could as well carry the negative tags. For example, “*You will come with me, will you?*” and “*She wouldn't wash the clothes, wouldn't she?*” respectively.

In the light of the above, learners of any language are likely to have or face one problem or the other due to structural differences between their first language and the language they are learning. This is because of the assertion that no two languages are exactly the same. Languages may vary at all levels of linguistic analysis. Hence, English question tags might not be an exception. The Hausa learners of English as a second language, that is, the target population may face problem in understanding and using these kinds of question tags whose tags endings are rarely found in Hausa language. For example, “*You will come with me, will you?*” and “*She wouldn't wash the clothes, wouldn't she?*”

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The study aims at examining the problems in the use of English question tags used by the Hausa learners of English as a second language, that is, target population as posed by the first language in the formation and use of the English question tags by looking at the form, structure and meaning. The specific objectives of this study are:

- i. To identify the possible causes of the first language interference of the Hausa learners of English as a second language in use of English question tags.
- ii. To identify the types of language interference.
- iii. To examine why this problem exist.
- iv. To examine the effects of the first language interference in the use of English question tags of the Hausa learners of English as a second language.

1.4 Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following (research) questions:

- i. What are the possible causes of the first language interference of the Hausa learners of English as a second language in the use of English question tags?
- ii. What are the types of language interference?
- iii. Why does this problem exist?
- iv. What are the effects of the first language interference in the use of English question tags of the Hausa learners of English as a second language?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is set out to identify the extent of the interference of the first language in the use of the English question tags by the Hausa learners of English as a second language, the target

population, why the problem exists and the effects of the first language interference in the use of English question tags of the Hausa learners of English as a second language. Several linguists have written and expounded QTs from the perspectives of definition, rules governing their formation and giving some illustrations to uphold their stand. Among these scholars are (Forrest, 1977), (Ubahakwe & Sogbesan, 2001, p.82). These earlier studies are focused on definitions, rules governing the formation and illustrations of the QTs. For example,

Forrest (1977, p.65) discusses question tag by firstly, explaining what question tag is, “in conversation we sometimes ask a question not because we need information but confirmation of what we already know. We want the person addressed to agree with us. To do this we add a question tag to a statement.”

Examples:

You *like* history, *don't you?* (Affirmative statement---negative tag).

You *don't* like history, *do you?* (Negative statement---positive)

The tense of the tag corresponds to the tense of the statement:

You *will read* the text, *won't you?* (Simple future tense)

You *were reading* the text, *weren't you?* (Past Continuous tense)

You *didn't read* the text, *did you?* (Simple Past)

Nearly all the auxiliaries in statements repeat themselves in the tags:

He *shouldn't* harm the animals, *should* he?

She *must* sweep the room, *mustn't* she?

He *could* make it, *couldn't* he?

In exceptional cases, “need” and “dare” used affirmatively in the statement are not repeated in the tag:

We *need* to buy a new cell phone, *don't* we?

He *dared* to play with a snake, *didn't* he?

He *used* to drive an expensive car, *didn't* he?

An imperative can be made into less of a command and more of a request by the addition of an affirmative tag in the future tense.

Let us bury the hatchet, *shall* we?

Close the gate, *will* you?

Pass me the salt, *will* you?

Finally, note that since QT is majorly used in a conversation. The shortened conversational form of the negative (don't, won't, hadn't, etc) is required. Forrest however remains silent on some of the types of the QTs, such as the facilitative, challenging etc. He (Forest, 1977 p. 65) also remains silent on the issue of importance of the QTs. He has not discussed the interference of the mother tongue in the formation of the question tags. Despite the omission of the afore-mentioned areas, the work is still relevant to the present work in as much as it defines QTs discusses some types of the QTs and their ways of formation other than what have been discussed by some of the scholars.

Ubahakwe & Sogbesan, 2001, p.82 say, tag questions are very close to the 'yes-no' questions in that their answers start with *yes* or *no* tag questions are attached to statements and give indication of the type of answer expected. A positive statement is followed by a negative tag question and vice-versa. When a negative tag question follows a positive statement an affirmative (yes) answer is expected. E.g.

i. Question: *You have seen Emeka, haven't you?*

Expected answer: *Yes I have.*

Where the expectation is wrong, the answer will be *No, I haven't*.

ii. Question: *You didn't take part in the riot, did you?*

Expected answer: *No, I didn't*.

Where the expectation is wrong, the answer will be *Yes, I did*.

Other Questions

iii. *They haven't a right to go to court, don't they?*

iv. *He can give account of himself, can't he?*

v. *We are entitled to overnight allowance, aren't we?*

vi. *You don't have to invite the police, do you?*

vii. *She hasn't left town finally, has she?*

viii. *The armed robbers didn't kill anybody in that house, did they?*

They are of the view that a positive statement should be followed by a negative tag question and vice versa. They did not discuss the influence of the first language on the learning of the second language and have not touched other forms of question tags. In addition, their uses and processes of formation of the tag question were not explained.

This study intends to bridge the gap created by the earlier studies. In this regard, it tries to adopt another approach by Corder (1965); the approach is error analysis approach as will be discussed in due course. However, this study will hopefully open up new area or areas of interest to the linguists and serve as a reference material to the students of grammar and other related language studies by looking at the inter-relationship between first language and the target language in use of the English QTs.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation

This study is limited to identifying the extent to which the first language influences the performance of the learners of English as a second language in the use of English question tags, and describing some of the performance of the target population (Nigeria Certificate in Education Hausa students in Federal College of Education, Zaria) in their verbal and written communications. It also tries to explain some corrective measures in this direction. The analysis is based on the error analysis approach which identifies the errors made by the learners of English as a second language and tries to establish the role of the first language in the second language acquisition/learning.

1.7 Definition of Operational Terms and Abbreviations

This section attempts to define some words that may be misunderstood, which have been used in the course of this write-up. The essence of this is to avoid the misconceptions about some words in the course of reading this work:

- ❖ Target population as used in this write-up stands for Hausa students under study i.e. Nigeria Certificate in Education Hausa students at the Federal College of Education, Zaria.
- ❖ Frequency stands for the rate of occurrence of something as used in this context.
- ❖ Bilingualism is the ability to use two languages, not necessarily with equal proficiency by the bilingual(s).
- ❖ Superordinate clause stands for main, stem, principal or major clause.
- ❖ Target population stands for Hausa learners of English as second language as used in this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

First language interference is a commonplace feature found at any stage in the process of learning a second language but frequently at the early stage. This is because the learners of the second language are already accustomed with the tenets of the first language that had become part and parcel of their speech repertoire. Learning a second language may then be characterised by the learners induced rules to get phonological, grammatical and/or syntactical structure right. This chapter reviews the related literatures that were consulted for the study by distinguished authorities in their respective linguistic fields. They (the related reviewed literatures) are implicitly or explicitly important to this study.

2.2 Literature Review on Question Tags

2.2.1 Conceptual Review

2.2.1.1 First language

It is also called native language, father tongue/mother tongue, arterial language, or L1. It is the language or are the languages a person has been exposed to from birth or within the critical period, or that a person speaks the best and so is often the basis for sociolinguistic identity. In some countries, the terms native language or mother tongue refer to the language of one's ethnic group rather than one's first language (Wikipedia -The free Encyclopedia, 2013). Judith Makse Patrick, Mingcai Sui, Banenat Didam, & Theresa Stephen Gyang, (8/3/2016) concur with the

Wikipedia-the free Encyclopedia, they agree that mother-tongue is the first language acquired by a child and it is successfully used for communication at that level. It is not the language of a child's mother as wrongly defined by some people, mother in this context probably originated from the definition of *mother* as a source, or origin; as in mother-country or land. It is also described as a first language (also native language, mother-tongue, arterial language, or L₁) is the language a human being learns from birth. A person's first language is a basis for sociolinguistic identity. Language as a human institution presupposes communication. Individuals who are mute or deaf must learn how to speak by using sign language. One characteristic of language is finding names for objects and persons within the child's reach, so it is possible for a child to grasp, repeat and understand the word.

2.2.1.2 Language transfer

Ellis (1997) while making an input, he posits that "language transfer is the influence that the learner's L₁ exerts over the acquisition of a L₂" He thinks that interference can be understood as "errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue." And Kohn (1986, p. 22) sees it "As a learning process, transfer supports the learner's selection and remodelling of input structures as he progresses in the development of his interlanguage knowledge. As a production process, transfer is involved in the learner's retrieval of this knowledge and in his efforts to bridge linguistically those gaps in his knowledge which cannot be side-stepped by avoidance."

According to Berthold (1997) interference may be viewed as, the transference of elements of one language to another at various levels including phonological, grammatical, lexical and orthographical. He goes on to explain each of the levels thus, Phonological

interference is defined as stress, rhyme, intonation and sounds from the first language influencing the second. Grammatical interference is defined as the first language influencing the second in terms of word order, use of pronouns and determiners, tense and mood. Interference at a lexical level is seen while borrowing words from one language and converting them to sound more natural in another language. Orthographic interference is concerned with the spelling of one language altering another.

Onike (2009) posits that interference is a psycho-linguistic concept which is reality in language learning. Errors in second language learning are partly attributable to interference. Theorists of interference believe that acquisition of the first language usually affects performance in subsequent language acquired. Interference as a linguistic problem is common in communities where second languages (usually the lingua franca) must be learnt. In other words, interference is a term which refers to a situation whereby two different languages overlap. Interference is either positive or negative transfer of the linguistic knowledge of a language into performance in the other. Negative transfer pertains to difficulties in using the target language which are mainly attributed to mother-tongue interference. Positive transfer however implies the ease or facilitation in learning the L₂ resulting from similarities between the L₁ and L₂.

It is also known as L₁ interference, linguistic interference, or crosslinguistic influence. It refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from one language to another language. It is the transfer of linguistic features between languages in the speech repertoire of a bilingual or multilingual individual, whether from first to second, second to first or many other relationships. (Wikipedia-The free Encyclopedia, 2016)

The interference of the first language or mother tongue by the Hausa learners of English as a second language in learning the second language in their speech repertoire tends to show

replacement of the bilabial voiceless stop /p/ with labiodentals fricatives voiceless /f/ and vice versa, for example, ‘problem’, ‘pyramid’, ‘pot’, ‘paper’, ‘people’ and so on. They tend to pronounce /fɹɒbləm/, /fɹɪrəˈmɪd/, /fɒt/, /fepə/, /fiːpl/. They also tend to insert vowel between a syllable-final consonant and initial consonant of ‘an’ immediately following syllabic. For instance, /reziˈɡɪneɪn/ instead of /reziˈɡneɪn/ for the word ‘resignation’. In the same way, Hausa learners of English replace the interdental fricatives voiced and voiceless /θ/ and /ð/ alveolar voiced and voiceless with /s/ and /z/ when pronouncing words like, ‘thin’ ‘the’, ‘these’, ‘that’ as shown here, /sɪn/, /ze/, /zɪs/, /zət/ and they also prone to interchanging the bilabial voiced /b/ and the labiodentals /v/ in words like ‘ban’ and ‘boat’ which they pronounce as follows ‘van’ and ‘voat’, Judith M. P., et al, (8/3/2016).

2.2.1.3 Error analysis

It is a method used to document the errors that appear in learner language, in order to determine whether those errors are systematic, and (if possible) explain what caused them. Native speakers of the target language (TL) who listen to learner language probably find learners' errors very noticeable, although, as we shall see, accuracy is just one feature of learner language. While native speakers make unsystematic 'performance' errors (like slips of the tongue) from time to time, second language learners make more errors, and often ones that no native speaker ever makes. An error analysis should focus on errors that are systematic violations of patterns in the input to which the learners have been exposed. Such errors tell us something about the learner's interlanguage, or underlying knowledge of the rules of the language being learned (Corder, 1981, p. 10).

It is considered that language interference is the effect of language learner's first language on his/her production of the language he/she is learning. It means that the speaker's first language influences his/her second or foreign language. Interference can have effect on any aspects of language, it can be negative and positive depending on the features of both languages. The greater the difference between the two languages, the more negative effects of interference is expected to be.

2.2.1.4 Contrastive analysis

Contrastive Analysis was used extensively in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in the 1960s and early 1970s, as a method of explaining why some features of a target language were more difficult to acquire than others. According to the behaviourists theories prevailing at the time, language learning was a question of habit formation, and this could be reinforced or impeded by existing habits. Therefore, the difficulty in mastering certain structures in a second language (L₂) depended on the difference between the learners' mother language (L₁) and the language they were trying to learn. (Wikipedia - The Free Encyclopedia, 2016).

2.2.1.5 Question Tag

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (2000, pp.194-195) "the tag question consists of operator plus a pronoun, with or without a negative particle (10.29); the choice and tense of the operator are determined by the verb phrase in the superordinate clause". They are of the view that if the superordinate clause is positive, the tag would be negative and vice versa. And in some less common cases both superordinate clause and the tag following it could be positive. While (Algeo, 2006) holds that it (question tag) is a form of short question; it is usually attached to the

preceding statement in order to give a complete meaning. The tag question is an important and frequently used English sentences pattern. It is normally a short question. It is meaningless when it stands alone; that is to say, it will not make complete sense without the “*statement*”, “*anchor*”, “*stem*”, or the “*super ordinate clause*” preceding the “tags.”

A question tag is an integral part and is usually a combination of a statement and a short question that is attached to the end of the statement (be it positive or negative) to seek information or confirmation from an interlocutor as explained earlier. It seeks positive and/or negative responses from the interlocutors. Its response is usually short. It sometimes solicits for confirmation of facts, to check for information of what you already know is correct and you want to be sure of it; it could also be used to seek the attention of an interlocutor in a conversation, to invite an onlooker into a conversation and/or strategies for sustaining interest among the interlocutors.

Furthermore, the use of question tags in conversation also promotes the understanding of the various auxiliary verbs and other parts of speech alike. In a related development, the meaning of question tags is derivable from the manner the tags are pronounced at the end of a sentence (question tags as a whole). Bear (2013) states: If you raise your voice you are asking of the information you just stated is indeed correct. Using question tags in this manner helps to make sure that you are doing something correctly, or understand a situation accurately. At other times, you drop the voice at the question tag. When dropping the voice at the question tag, you indicate that you are confirming information.

In this same vein, the terms (question tags and tag questions) are often used interchangeably by different L₂ learners of English as a second language. However, as earlier mentioned “the term” “question tag” is generally preferred by British grammarians, while their

American counterparts prefer “tag question”. A tag question as a grammatical structure refers to a declarative statement or an imperative that is modified to become a question by adding an interrogative fragment. Apparently, this in turn contributes generally to proficiency in the English of the target population, Hausa learners of English as a second language.

Tottie & Hoffmann (2006, p. 283) agree with the view that, “a question tag is made up of a declarative statement with a tag attachment” and even go further to call the declarative statement, “*the anchor*” and mention that the subject in the anchor must be a full noun phrase, a pronoun, or “*there*”, but in the question, it must be either a personal pronoun, “*there*” or “*one*.” Question tags (tail question) represent statements with tags which are separated by a comma in each instance or could equally be seen as statements with tags at the end. Examples:

They will carry out the assignment, won't they? =

[They will carry out the assignment]= statement

[,] = a comma and

[won't they?]= a tag

You never listen to me, do you? = statement

[,] = a comma and

[do you?]= a tag

Note: words like “*hardly*”, “*scarcely*”, “*never*” make the statement negative, so the tag that should be added onto it will be positive especially in polar question tags, where the rule stipulates that, if the statement is positive, the “tag” should be negative when all other rules of formation have been observed.

2.2.2 Theoretical Review

Carroll (1964) relates that the circumstances of learning a second language are like those of a mother tongue. Sometimes there are interferences and occasionally responses from one language system which will intrude into speech in the other language Dulay & Burt, (1972). Interference results from the fact old habits (the first language) must be unlearned before new habits (the second language) can be mastered. Faerch & Kasper (1983) say, it appears that learning is most successful when the situations in which the two languages (L_1 and L_2) are learned, are kept as distinct as possible. To successfully learn L_2 , it requires the L_2 learner to often preclude the L_1 structures from the L_2 learning process, if the structures of the two languages are distinctly different. Dulay, H. C., Burt, M. K. & Kreshen, S. (1982) agree with Carroll (1964) where they see interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language.

Ellis (1997, p. 51) refers to interference as ‘transfer’, which he says is “the influence that the learner’s L_1 exerts over the acquisition of an L_2 .” He argues that transfer is governed by learners’ perceptions about what is transferable and by their stages of development in L_2 learning. In learning a target language, learners construct their own interim rules (Selinker, 1971, Seligar, 1988 & Ellis, 1997) with the use of their L_1 knowledge, but only when they believe it will help them in the learning task or when they have become sufficiently proficient in the L_2 for transfer to be possible. He further raises the need to distinguish between errors and mistakes and makes an important distinction between the two. He says that errors reflect gaps in the learner’s knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. Mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance; they occur because, in a particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows.

It appears to be much more difficult for an adult to learn a second language system that is as well learned as the first language. Typically, a person learns a second language partly in terms of the kinds of meanings already learned in the first language (Carroll, 1964; Albert & Obler, 1978 & Larson-Freeman & Long, 1991). Beebe (1988) suggests that in learning a second language, L₁ responses are grafted on to L₂ responses, and both are made to a common set of meaning responses. Other things being equal, the learner is less fluent in L₂, and the kinds of expressions he/she uses in L₂ bear telltale traces of the structure of L₁.

Beardsmore (1982) suggests that many of the difficulties a second language learner has with the phonology, vocabulary and grammar of L₂ are due to the interference of habits from L₁. The formal elements of L₁ are used within the context of L₂, resulting in errors in L₂, as the structures of the languages, L₁ and L₂ are different. The relationship between the two languages must then be considered. Albert & Obler (1978) claim that people show more lexical interference on similar items and may follow that languages with more similar structures (e.g. English and French) are more susceptible to mutual interference than languages with fewer similar features (e.g. English and Japanese). On the other hand, we might also expect more learning difficulties and thus more likelihood of performance interference at those points in L₂ which are more distant from L₁, as the learner would find it difficult to learn and understand a completely new and different usage. Hence, the learner would resort to L₁ structures for help (Selinker, 1979; Dulay et al, 1982; Blum-Kulka & Levenston, 1983; Faerch & Kasper, 1983, Bialystok, 1990 & Dordick, 1996).

Lott (1983, p. 256) concurs with Beardsmore (1982) as he defines interference as “errors in the learner’s use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue.” However, he was silent on the learning difficulties a learner of English as a second language may

likely encounter if there is much difference between the first language and the second language he is learning and vice versa.

Dechert (1983) observes that the further apart the two languages are structurally, the higher the instances of errors made in L₂ which bear traces of L₁ structures. In both cases the interference may result from a strategy on the part of the learner which assumes or predicts equivalence, both formally and functionally, of two items or rules sharing either function or form. More advanced learning of L₂ may involve a greater number of rules or marking features for distinguishing between the two languages. This then raises a pertinent question; does the L₂ text have to be syntactically correct for its meaning to be understood? Do the identified errors in the written text reduce language interference in learning a second language semantic and syntactic acceptability? The answer lies in several domains: the L₂ learner's purpose in learning the target language, the learner's L₂ proficiency level of the target language and the knowledge state of the learner in L₁ and L₂.

Bose (2005) posits that one of the reasons for learner errors is the interference of his mother tongue, which is described as the negative and positive transfer between the mother tongue and the target language. The negative transfer happens when the forms of the target language and those of the learner's mother tongue are different from each other whereas, the positive transfer between the mother tongue and the target language is similar. Lightbown & Spada, (2008, p.197) hold the view that a learners' first language greatly influences the process of second language acquisition, and that "learner's will have less difficulty acquiring target language patterns that are similar to those of the first language than those that are different".

Lightbown & Spada (2008, p. 205) further reaffirmed that, "the influence of a learner's

first language knowledge in the second language” is called transfer or interference” as claimed by Bose (2005) in her early studies.

In the light of this therefore, "as a learning process, transfer supports the learner's selection and remodeling of input structures as he progresses in the development of his interlanguage knowledge. As a production process, transfer is involved in the learner's retrieval of this knowledge and in his efforts to bridge linguistically those gaps in his knowledge which cannot be side-stepped by avoidance", (Kohn, 1986, p.22). Worthy of note, at this juncture, is the classification of the transfer into a positive transfer, when a structure or rule from the first language (L₁) aids in the production of correct utterance in the second language (L₂), and a negative transfer, when a structure or rule from the L₁ to the L₂ produces an incorrect or inappropriate utterance in the L₂. Thus, the use of English question tags is to some extent negatively influenced by the first language of the Hausa learners of English as a second language, who are also called Hausa Nigeria Certificate in Education Students at Federal College of Education, Zaria, the study area, as will be seen in the following illustrations:

“Zaka tafi gida gobe, Koba hakaba?” Meaning: *You will go home tomorrow, won't you?*

“Yau basanyi, koba hakaba?” Meaning: *It isn't cold today, isn't that/ so?*

Note: the negative transfer caused by the mother tongue influences has made the Hausa learners of English as a second language to overgeneralise the use of the rules of formation of the tags in Hausa, “*koba hakaba?*” in each of the above examples. The tag “*koba hakaba*” (“*isn't it so?*”, “*isn't that so?*”, “*isn't true?*”) is repeated in each instance. This probably seems to justify the use of the tag endings, “*isn't it?*” in its entire ramification (all the types of Question tags used by the Hausa learners of English as a second language, the target population as illustrated).

2.3 First Language Acquisition

First language is being termed by different names such as L_1 , native language, primary language and mother tongue (e.g. Hausa language in this study). Psychologists are of the view that child's brain is plain-like, and call it a "tabula rasa". Tabula rasa refers to the epistemological idea that individuals are born without built-in mental content and that therefore all knowledge comes from experience or perception. Proponents of tabula rasa generally disagree with the doctrine of innatism which holds that the mind is born already in possession of certain knowledge (Wikipedia-The Free Encyclopedia 2016). This language is assumed to be one which is acquired during early childhood- starting before the age of about 3 years. Acquisition of more than one language during early childhood leads to simultaneous multilingualism. Whereas sequential multilingualism means learning additional languages (L_2) after L_1 has already been established. That suggests, either having the ability to use the second language learnt as natural as possible like the first language acquired or that the acquisition must not be necessarily be using the second language acquired perfectly as the native speaker of the language would. Language helps shape thinking and thinking helps to shape language. The second language learner has the tasks to sort out new meanings from old, to distinguish thoughts and concepts in their first language that are similar in the second language, and to acquire a new system of conceptualization. Simultaneous bilingualism is less common than sequential bilingualism.

2.4 Second Language Acquisition

A second language is normally a person's second language or L_2 , is a language that is not the native language of the speaker, but that is used in the locale of that person. In addition, a second language may also be said to be any language learned in addition to one's native

language, especially in context of second language acquisition, (that is, learning a new foreign language (Wikipedia - The free Encyclopedia, 2016). In Nigeria, English language is learnt as a second or foreign language usually in formal setting, and however, English is also learnt in non formal settings as the case may be. It (English language) has gradually become an official language because of the diverse languages in existence in the country and the problem of pinning a particular language as the lingua franca.

In the same vein, though language acquisition usually refers to first languages acquisition, which deals with the studies of infants' acquisition of their native languages this occurs during languages development of a child. A second language acquisition could literally refer to learning a language after having acquired a first language. The term is also used to refer to the acquisition of a second language after a person has reached puberty. "There is a popular belief that children as L₂ learners are 'superior' to adults (Scovel, 2000), that is, the younger the learner, the quicker the learning process and the better the outcomes. Nevertheless, a closer examination of the ways in which age combines with other variables reveals a more complex picture, with both favourable and unfavourable age-related differences being associated with early and late starting L₂ learners (Johnstone, 2002).

While language acquisition remains unguarded and unstructured, language learning requires deliberate and conscious efforts of individual that have passed the adolescent stage. Wilkins (1974, p.26) posits that language learning takes place where the exposure is structured through language teaching. The learning of the second language comes up after a first language has been acquired. It takes place with some conscious effort and has attendant difficulty since the sound system of the L₁ has been mastered already.

Second Language Acquisition (often called second language learning or sequential language learning) occurs in both children and adult. It refers to the process by which a person acquires a “foreign language” (abbreviated as FL) that is, a language other than a person’s mother tongue. It could as well be simply the acquisition of additional language(s) after the first one.

The process of acquiring language takes place effortlessly; the acquirer does not need to attend a formal setting for acquisition to take place. But as a person interacts with the members of his family or society he/she stores what he/she heard in an inbuilt device in the person’s brain. The device is known as Language Acquisition Device (LAD) later in life, the person starts to talk without much effort.

In addition, it (the process of acquiring language) occurs without explicit teaching, in this instance, no teacher is needed like what is obtained in a formal/classroom setting. It is based on what they hear from within the entire environment (be it, immediate environment or otherwise). It may be said to occur unaware or naturally because of the presence of the LAD, worthy of note here, is that the process of acquiring language is identical across various languages. It is apparent that such processes are automatic procedural occurrence. Universal Grammar is a theory in linguistics that suggests the presence of properties that all possible natural human languages have. Some rules of grammar are hardwired into the brain and they manifest without being thought.

On the one hand, language learning could be seen as a conscious process by which humans study languages in a bid to communicate efficiently. Adults and children have the capacity to acquire a second language at any age. If an adult does not acquire a second language

successfully it is probably because of cognitive or affective factors not to the absence of innate capacities.

Unlike the native speaker of English language, the learner of English as a second language faces a lot of challenges in the usage of the question tags particularly due to the interference of the mother tongue or the differences therein in the application of the general rules governing the usage of the question tags; these in turn influence the mastery and use of the second language (L₂).

2.5 The Role of the First Language in Second Language Acquisition

As discussed above in 2.3 first language, mother tongue, native language or L₁ acquisition and 2.4 second language acquisition, when the Hausa learner of English as a second language finds himself / herself in a new language environment other than his/her L₁ environment, the learner stores whatever he/she heard (vocabularies in the new language environment). However, the learner in the course of assimilation may tend to associate with the knowledge of the first language he/she already acquired with the second language (L₂) he/she is learning. This may in turn affect his/her outputs in the use of the L₂ generally and in their use and comprehension of the question tags in particular as in this instance.

2.6 Bilingualism

This means using two languages, not necessarily with equal proficiency by the bilingual(s). The concept bilingualism could furthermore, be seen in the following perspectives where an individual acquires two languages in the two unlike ambiances and the words of the two languages are kept separate with each word having its own meaning. Bloomfield (1933)

strongly holds that it (bilingualism) should be taken as “the native like control of two languages.” In the recent time, (Mackey, 2000) sees it (bilingualism) as the alternative use of two or more languages by the same individual in his own focus. As a result of that, he is not seeing bilingualism as a phenomenon of languages but the characteristic of the use. Whereas in compound bilingualism, the two separate languages are acquired at the same time within the same context. This shows the combined representation of languages in the brain. For example if a child learns both English and Hausa languages at home, the child would know the different terms used in the two languages for the same thing (book). Thus, having common meaning for them and both words are stored in the same mental representation.

2.7 The Role of the knowledge of Vocabulary in Second Language Acquisition

The role of the knowledge of vocabulary in Second Language Acquisition is great since no sentence could have been formed without having the knowledge of the word and that generally implies no communication could have easily and effectively been established by the L₂ learner. The appropriate choice and application of the question tags heavily depend on the knowledge of the stored vocabulary in the second language. This kind of choice will promote proficiency in communication. According to Coady and Huckin (1997) word knowledge is an essential component of communicative competence, and it is important for production and comprehension in a second language. Word knowledge could be expressed as having the ability to manipulate alphabet and morphemes to form words and at the later part to form sentences.

In a related development, Qian (1999) states that, vocabulary knowledge is the size of the vocabulary and the depth of vocabulary, which includes knowledge of pronunciation, spelling, multiple meanings, the contexts in which the word can be used, the frequency with

which it is used, morphological and syntactical properties, and how the word combines with other words.

Consequently, the choice and use of the question tags are greatly marred by the poor knowledge of the vocabularies of the learner of English as a second language, especially in the use of the question tags, that is, the suitability of the question tags so chosen to convey the complete meaning. The present study aims at identifying the effects of the first language interference in the use of English question tags of the Hausa learners of English as a second language and why the problem exists.

One of the roles of the knowledge of vocabulary in second language acquisition is that it provides a future career prospects in bilingual profession since tenets of the L₁ had been transferred to L₂ enriching the vocabulary of the L₂.

The necessary and facilitating role L₁ has played in L₂ development are evidenced in many ways. As Corder (1992) puts it, L₁ in L₂ learning is "...predominantly heuristic and facilitatory" (p.25). Such assertion is based on the fact that L₁, "helps in the process of discovery and creation" (Corder, 1992, p.25) and the "important role to play in communicating meaning and content" (Nation, 2003, p.1).

As their literacy skills in the learning of the second language grow, their dependency on L₁ will decrease accordingly. This is because the learner of the second language could now discriminate by making the right choice of words and construction of good sentences as much as possible.

Vocabulary knowledge will promote proficiency in the formation procedures, usage and above all the comprehension of the question tags.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in this study gains insight from the systemic approach by M.A.K. Halliday (1976). He took Malinowski's view that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, i.e. by explaining natural adult language and language acquisition in terms of social functions; one can understand the evolutionary origins of language. Like Malinowski and Firth, Halliday saw language acquisition as an interplay between nature and nurture (Bloor & Bloor, 2004), suggesting that the language acquisition process of a child and the linguistic structures he/she masters reflect the functions required to serve his/her life. Learning a language was thus 'learning how to mean' (Halliday, 1975).

Unlike Chomsky, Halliday did not believe in a finite system of rules, and preferred a descriptive approach of examining sentences as being appropriate or inappropriate to the prescriptive approach of labelling them 'correct' or 'incorrect' (Eggins, 2004). In the tradition of Malinowski, Whorf and Firth, he believed language is moulded by culture, and the world is seen through the language we speak (Kress, 1976). Meanings are determined by the texts' relationship with the *context of culture* (genre) and the *context of situation* (register) (Eggins, 2004), and the study of sentences should, therefore, be inseparable from its social, cultural and situational contexts, and not done in isolation.

Hence, the use of authentic texts and corpus data has become the norm in the study of Systemic Functional Linguistics. SFG has been called an '*extravagant*' grammar (Bloor & Bloor, 2004) as it is a huge area that attempts a multi-dimensional description of how language is organised, and its linguistic viewpoints are best seen through the main issues underlying Halliday's three metafunctions of language Chiasuanchong (2011).

In line with above, contrastive analysis and error analysis have been generally recognized as branches of Applied Linguistic Science as such they complement each other. This study will fully examine the three outstanding error approaches they are, the contrastive analysis, error analysis and interlanguage theory. Corder (1978) upholds that interlanguage can be seen as a restructuring or a recreating continuum and therefore, evaluates their role in second language acquisition. The choice of these theoretical models was borne out of their potentialities of accounting for the data that have been collected by the researcher.

Error Analysis is an approach of linguistic analysis that centres on the errors learners commit when speaking. Corder (1974) sees error analysis as “an expressive analysis.” This majorly deals with spoken rather than written English. It comprises a comparison between the errors made in the target language and that target language itself. Error analysis emphasizes the significance of learners’ errors in second language. It is worthy of note at this juncture that interference from the learner’s mother tongue is not only reason for committing errors in his target language. Lado (1957) claims that for the students whose target language is second or foreign language, those elements of the target language that are similar to his/her native language will be simple for him/her and those elements that are different will be difficult.

In recent years as cited, Khansir (2012) agrees with Corder (1974), where he sees error analysis as studies of second language acquisition which have tended to focus on learners errors since they allow for prediction of the difficulties involved in acquiring a second language. In this way, teachers can be made aware of the difficult areas to be encountered by their students and devote special care and emphasis on them. Error Analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the target language and that target language itself. Error analysis emphasizes the significance of

learners' errors in second language. It is important to note here that interference from the learners' mother tongue is not only reason for committing errors in his target language. Richards (1971) classified errors observed in the acquisition of English as a second language as follows:

- a) Overgeneralization, covering instances where the learners create a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structure of the target language;
- b) Ignorance of rule restriction, occurring as a result of failure to observe the restrictions or existing structures;
- c) Incomplete application of rules, arising when the learners fail to fully develop a certain structure required to produce acceptable sentences and lastly,
- d) False concepts hypothesized, deriving from faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language.

Gorbet (1979) looking at the occurrence of errors in different perspective, he claims that some errors can be attributed to weaknesses or failure of memory. He added that the theory of error analysis proposes that in order to learn a language, a person creates a system of "rules" from the language data to which he is exposed to and this system enables him to use it. According to Sharma (1980) "Error analysis can thus provide a strong support to remedial teaching", he added that during the teaching program, it can reveal both the successes and the failures of the program. Dulay et al (1982) mentioned that the term "error" refers to a systematic deviation from a selected norm or set of norms. Error analysis is useful in second language learning because this will reveal to us- teachers, syllabus designers and textbooks writers the problematic areas. It can be used to design remedial exercises and focus more attention on the trouble spots. Corder (1974, p.125) stated that "The study of errors is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. In this respect it resembles methodologically the study of the

acquisition of the mother tongue. It provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indications as to the learning process.” Richards et al (1992) mentioned the study of errors are used in order to (1) identify strategies which learners use in language teaching, (2) identify the causes of learners „errors, and finally (3) obtain information on common difficulties in language learning as an aid to teaching or in development of teaching materials (cited in Khansir 2008).

Analysis of second language learners’ errors can help identify learners’ linguistic difficulties and needs at a particular stage of language learning. In general, Error analysis has several implications for the handling of learners’ errors in the classroom as follows:

1. Devising remedial measures
2. Preparing a sequence of target language items in class rooms and text books with the difficult items coming after the easier, ones
3. Making suggestions about the nature or strategies of second language learning employed by both first and second language learners.

Contrastive Analysis is yet another linguistic approach/theory which is concerned much with the investigation on learner errors in the field of second language acquisition, in which two languages were systematically compared during the 40’s and 50’s and is still being applicable. In the present study this (systematic comparison of the two languages) will be put to test.

The theory of interlanguage was propounded by Larry Selinker in 1972 and is viewed as a separate linguistic system clearly different from both the learner’s first language (L₁), and the target language (TL) being learned but linked to both L₁ and TL by interlingual identifications in the interlanguage as a result of the inability to use the QTs correctly that were employed in

communication by the target population. They contain a lot of anomalies in the structures (specifically the addition of tags on the main clauses).

The theory of interlanguage tries to determine whether there was a continuum in the internal grammar of learning additional languages, and through research, whether learners acquired L₂ in much of the same fashion as L₁. The reasons for the choice of this model were:

-to see whether it (interlanguage) is systematic in nature, that is to say, the learner forms his own rules and structures, which may or may not be the proper rules of the L₂ being learned. In case it does not agree with norms, it then tries to see the resultant effect.

-to see whether it (interlanguage) is dynamic in nature since the rules created by the learner is not static, they are prone to change with time. If they change, it attempts to see what they result into.

- in addition, to see whether it (interlanguage) is variable in the sense that, there are a lot of factors involved in language and rule acquisition by different persons: the nature of output (instruction, TV, etc.) the environment (the classroom, the instructor, etc.), and of course (foreign language, second language, etc).

Finally, to see the process of its formation; the errors alluded to the wrong usage of the tags right from the onset (stage at which it is assumed that the L₂ learner of English could correctly use the QTs), how they could be corrected and later on proficient in the use of the QTs because of certain reasons. He now adopts new usage to suit his needs not minding whether the rules conform with the standard usage in communication thus, leads to the development of the interlanguage.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

This chapter comprises broadly the various methods and materials that were used to obtain and analyse the data necessary to answer the research questions.

3.1 Location of the Research

The research was carried out at Federal College of Education, Zaria among the NCE 1-3 Hausa students. The college comprises one campus with six schools (faculties as known in the universities): Education, Languages, Arts/Social Science, Undergraduate Studies, Science, and Vocational and Technical Education as at the time of this write up. The choice was borne out of some reasons; the researcher happens to be a staff member of the college and teaches English Language and Communication Skills to NCE 1-3 students. The researcher has observed instances of wrong application of the QTs by the above mentioned sets of students and has embarked on corrective measures by firstly, identifying the extent to which the first language (L₁), Hausa has interfered with the learning, understanding and the efficient use of the second language. Secondly, to see how this perennial problem could be tackled through description, and providing corrective measures.

3.2 Instrumentation, Sources and Forms of Data

The sources of data for the present study were both the primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included: a simple random sample, it is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by

chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process, and each subset of k individuals has the same probability of being chosen for the sample as any other subset of k individuals. The process and the technique are known as simple random sampling (Wikipedia-The Free Encyclopedia).

A simple random sample of 100 Hausa students at each level of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) 1, 2 and 3 making a total of 300 Hausa students since it is tasking to handle the whole NCE Hausa students in the college. The researcher employed this method in order to gather information that is relevant to the study having in mind that every element, in this case, Hausa student has an equal chance of being selected. This means that no element of the population will be omitted deliberately except by chance as stated above.

In the process of selection of a sample, it is completely out of human control and left to chance factor. The samples so chosen usually represent the whole population that is under research and whatsoever finding is reached is assumed that it affects all others that were not tested.

While in all 169 were males and 131 females across NCE 1-3 Hausa students of the Federal College of Education, Zaria, and the target population. While the secondary sources comprise, previous researches that were done by some scholars on the related study, the internet sources (downloaded materials), others are relevant printed and electronic media such as the newspaper and radio programmes respectively and relevant text books that discussed QTs (from my personal library, the school library and the public libraries) were consulted.

The present study uses the following tools in order to enhance the precision and dependability of the data which is meant for its (the study's) development. The tools that were used include test frame and assignment which the target population did (answered the questions

on both the test and the assignment). The questions designed by the researcher for the test and assignment were majorly close ended in nature, the responses were provided with a set of alternatives, the respondents were allowed to choose their answers from the given alternatives. They were done in order to test the level of influence of the first language and that of their (the target population's) proficiency in the use of the QTs. All the methods stated above for data collection were adopted because of their capacity to provide both quantity and quality of data needed in order to achieve the purpose of the research.

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

This section describes the methods by which the data were collected. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study because it gives a picture of a situation or population. The qualitative method of data collection and analysis were used. This method of data collection was espoused because the study required the exact data wanted in order to address the research questions. The researcher sampled 300 Hausa Nigeria Certificate in Education 1, 2 and 3 students. They were given tests and assignments to answer all the questions. A substantial amount of the primary data (their various responses on the question tags) were pulled together directly from the target population Hausa learners of English as second language as earlier mentioned.

3.4 Methods of Data Analysis

The method used for the data analysis in the study was error analysis. There are different methodologies of Error Analysis such as that of Corder (1965), Shridhar (1976), Etherton (1975)

and Adogwa (1992). Shridhar (1976) in his analysis he provides a more systematic framework which begins with:

1. Collection of data (pro-composition)
2. Identification of error (labelling)
3. Classification into error types (for example, error of concord, etc)
4. Statement of relation and frequency of error types
5. Identification of the areas of difficulties in the target language, and
6. Theraphy (remedial drills).

According to Etherton (1975, p.75) “No two specialists would agree on the exact way of classifying some errors and it is a waste of time to search for an ideal method.” Adogwa (1992, p. 24) discusses the Traditional Error Analysis by classifying the errors into categories such as errors of agreement, omission, etc at this juncture, it is apparent that, the method consists of six steps: collection of data, identification of errors, classification error types, statement of relative frequency of errors, identification of the areas of difficulties in the target language... The study adopts the analytic procedure that was put forward by Corder (1965) because it is felt that the problems will adequately be addressed. In his analysis, he calls the error analysis as the “fault analysis” and sees it (the fault analysis) as the study of L₂ learners’ language which involves four interdependent stages, explicitly:

- i. Recognition,
- ii. Description and
- iii. Explanation
- iv. Correction.

3.5.1 Recognition

This is the first stage of the analysis, it has to do with the process of recognizing and establishing what the error is after comparing the original utterances with their plausible reconstruction and authoritative reconstruction and identifying the differences, the problem of the misuse of the QTs that had been in existence with the population out of share ignorance or negligence. Corder (1974) stipulates that, all learner's utterances may be overtly erroneous that is, ostensibly well structured but not giving the intended meaning by the learner. For example,

**You will eat, isn't it?*

You will eat, won't you?

**They aren't working in the farm, isn't it?*

They aren't working in the farm, are they?

3.5.2 Description

This stage deals with the explanation on the nature of the problems which were identified, and believed to be in existence. It (the stage) dealt with a process that shows the learner in what way he/she has failed to realize the intended message. The description of errors is largely a comparative process, the data being the original erroneous utterance and the reconstructed utterance. The most appropriate theoretical framework relates semantic structure of a sentence to its surface structure by a set of explicit rules. In order to support this claim, Olasehinde (2002, p.116) recommends the use of a particular grammar model with which to serve as a framework:

A grammar, for example T G (Traditional Grammar) which has to do with relating the semantic structure of a sentence to its surface structure by a set of explicit rule is the (most) appropriate

theoretical model for the description of errors since we wish, in the process of correction, to be able to show the learner in what way and at what stage he has failed to realize the intended message. He needs to see how he has deviated from the realization rules of the target language i.e. what rules he has broken, substituted or disregarded.

From what has been said so far, there is the need to combine both error analysis and contrastive analysis in order to adequately answer the research questions. The combination of the error analysis and the contrastive analysis will be able to bring out the nature and the intensity of the errors.

3.5.3 Explanation

This gives further details on the causes of the errors that were identified and to work out a more effective way of tackling the identified problems. It was concerned with why and how the identified errors come to exist. The explanation on the errors tries to establish why a learner has flouts the rules of the TL. One of the ways of accounting for errors is by transfer of the L₁ habits to the L₂ learner. Olasehinde (2002, p. 118) experimental work on impact of the mother tongue interference on L₂ learning shows that even in adult learners, where the MT system is at peak, only a minority of errors is attributable to MT interference.

3.5.4 Correction

This provided learners with the very much needed information that makes them review or reject the wrong rules they are earlier strung to. It also showed the errors that call for correction so that the learners could recognize the deviant forms and structures in both spoken and written areas. In addition, to be watchful in using the QTs and thereby, making smooth and effective

communication. All the above stages are concerned with the analysis of data as explained earlier on. The data were tackled one by one ascertaining whether the tags attached to the statements conformed to the rules governing the formation of the QTs, that is, whether the choice of the auxiliary verb in the tag questions agreed with the modality, tense and aspect of the main sentence.

Similarly, the study is interested in the causes of the language errors in using the QTs by the L₂ learners, the types of errors made, how they could be remedied, and finally, their impact on the systematic development of the Nigerian English (NE). The language errors made by the target population and L₂ learners in QTs were however, analysed one by one with a view to identifying and rectifying the problems and to seeing how they logically transformed into NE. This was possible by injecting some “modified syntactic features” of the QTs that were commonly used by the target population and other L₂ learners as a result of their inability to use the correct and acceptable English QTs.

The EA method was used in this study because it is a method that offers extensive good reasons for errors through the interference from the NL: interlingual and intralingual development. Interlingual errors as Abdullahi (2014, p.95) puts it, “these refer to errors in L₂ that emanate from the source language. Put simply, elements of first language (Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba, etc) are transferred to English in the aspect of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics.” Examples, “**I am hearing the aroma of the food,*” from the Hausa expression, “*Naji kamshin abincin*”. Meaning: “I perceived the aroma of the food.” “Intralingual errors, on the other hand are those which reflect the operation of learning strategies that are universal (Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2009)” cited in Abdullahi (2014, pp.96-97). In other words, it (intralingual error) discusses the linguistic errors that originated within the language itself due to ignorance of

applied rules, transfer and over generalisation of the grammatical rules, etc. More so some errors appeared to be orderly across all learners, that is to say, the errors appeared to take the same dimension with all the learners and it is identical across all the learners.

3.6 Framework of Data Presentation and Analysis

The data in this research were presented in the form of written sentences that showed the various usages of the QTs. These sentences were analysed by looking at the constituents in each of the statements and their corresponding tags. The corrected usages were given (which were done by the researcher) alongside the wrong ones made by the L₂ learners for appropriate interpretation and discussion of the findings. The assignment and test instrument comprised QTs of varying types: informational, confirmatory, attitudinal, facilitative, challenging, others were polarity, positive-positive, negative-negative, etc. More so, some QTs were given in the present, present continuous, past, future, past participle, past continuous tenses, etc. The multiple choice questions were used with several distracters given as options. A total of 30 objective questions were employed for the test and 25 objective questions for the assignment. In addition to that, some of these distracters were given in both Standard English and Non Standard English (NSE) in order to capture their true responses (that is to say, the manner they use the English QTs).

3.7 Ethical Issues in the Research Work

The researcher informed the target population the purpose of conducting the written tests and at the time of giving the assignments too. The students were not forced to give favourable answer but they did that volitionally. All these techniques (the written tests and assignments) of obtaining data were put to use in order to get the correct data needed for the research that would

adequately answer the research questions. Similarly, the sources of the data used in the study were fully acknowledged accordingly. Identities of the target population were withheld because it was not the intension of the researcher to expose the respondents. The information used was from a reliable source and rightfully obtained. The researcher collected the data and used it judiciously in order to get the needed outcome.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Preamble

This chapter is chiefly divided into two, the first part presents the data that were collected and the second one discusses the analysis of the data.

4.1 Introduction

In this section the data collected comprised written tests and assignments on QTs conducted by the researcher who administered on the sampled NCE 1, 2 and 3 students of the Federal College of Education, Zaria. In analysing the data, that is, the QTs, the Corder (1974) model of error analysis was used as discussed above in sub-section 3.5, showing the various stages of the analysis which are: recognition of the errors, description of the errors, explanation of the errors and correction of the errors.

4.2 Data Analysis

A total of 300 copies of the test questions and another 300 assignment questions were produced and given out to the same set of students to answer. Each student was given the assignment as soon as he / she was through with the test questions. A random sample of 100 students at each level of NCE 1, 2 and 3 were drawn for the task. While in all 169 were males and 131 females across NCE 1-3 Hausa students of the Federal College of Education, Zaria, and the target population. There is an interpretation of the result and its discussion built upon the classifications of the error types and their causes. It was unveiled that the mother tongue plays a vital role in acquisition and use of the second language by the Hausa Nigeria Certificate in

Education students at Federal College of Education, Zaria. There was the transfer of some of the L₁ grammatical properties such as tenses, phonology, semantic, syntax, etc to the second language.

4.2.1. Extract one

These data were collected by the researcher through the administration of written tests and assignment alike on the use of question tags on the target population. The results of these tests and assignments showed varying outcome mostly rooted to the mother tongue interference at all stages of language development by the L₂ learners. The problems ranged from positive transfer, when a structure or rule from the first language (L₁) aided in the production of correct utterance in the second language (L₂), and a negative transfer, when a structure or rule from the L₁ to the L₂ produces an incorrect or inappropriate utterance in the L₂. Thus, the use of English question tags is to some extent negatively influenced by the first language of the target population, as will be seen in the following illustrations by a Hausa learner of English as a second language. Overgeneralization was identified too as one of the major problems encountered by Hausa Nigeria Certificate in Education students at Federal College of Education, Zaria in using English question tags in both their spoken and written engagements. For example:

4.2.1.1 The Canonical English Question Tags

Canonical Tag Questions are important hedging devices in the English language and are used very often by native speakers. Almost all languages have tag questions; however, Canonical Tag Questions are unique to the English language Bublitz (1979), and mastering them requires a high level of proficiency in English Holmes (1982). In the formation of the canonical tag

questions rules are strictly adhere to in order to have the right tag endings unlike those of the invariant question tags. The invariant tags needed only the use of the some phrases such as, “right?” “ok?” ,etc at the end of the “anchors” ,“main clause” or the statement.

i. ERRORS IN THE USE OF THE PRIMARY AUXILIARIES SERVING AS MAIN VERBS CAUSED BY OVERGENERALISATION

1. Recognition: *We have an arranged (fixed) evening class today, *‘‘isn’t it’’?*
2. Description: *We have an arranged (fixed) evening class today, *‘‘isn’t it?’’*
3. Explanation: *The tag added to the super ordinate clause does not conform to the rule, primary auxiliary verb in the super ordinate. ‘‘isn’t it?’’ This was influenced by the extension of the L₁ grammatical properties and over generalisation.*
4. Correction: *We have an arranged (fixed) evening class today, haven’t we?*
5. Hausa version: *‘‘Yau da yamma muna da darasi da aka sanya, koba hakaba?’’* the use of the tag *‘‘kobahakaba?’’* lead to the overgeneralization of the tag *‘‘isn’t it?’’* in the English version.

ii. ERRORS CAUSED BY SOCIETAL INFLUENCE

6. Recognition: *You will attend tonight’s party, /*she/hei/?*
7. Description: *You will attend tonight’s party, /*she/hei/?*
8. Explanation: *The super ordinate clause has the modal auxiliary verb ‘‘will’’ in it but the tag, has ‘‘she/hei/?’’ This does not conform to the rule in which the verb in the tag should have been a replica of that in the super ordinate clause. This was influenced by the extension of the L₁ by the peer group and other factors.*

9. *Correction: You will attend tonight's party, won't you?*
10. *Hausa version: "Zaka halarci liyafar daren yau, ko?"* the uses of the tag "ko?" lead to use of "/*she/ʃei/?" in the English version.

iii. ERRORS CAUSED BY THE EXTENSION OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE POLAR QUESTION.

11. *Recognition: Jamila ought to go home, *or not?*
12. *Description: Jamila ought to go home, *or not?*
13. *Explanation: There is problem with the use of the modal auxiliary verb, the QT added did not agree with the modal verb in the superordinate. This was caused by the extension of knowledge of the polar question.*
14. *Correction: Jamila ought to go home, oughtn't her?*
15. *Hausa version: "Ya kamata Jamila tatafi gida, koba hakaba?"* the use of the tag "koba hakaba?" lead to the extension of the tag "or not?" in the English version.

iv. ERRORS IN THE USE OF THE PRIMARY AUXILIARIES

16. *Recognition: She washes all the clothes, *don't she?*
17. *Description: She washes all the clothes, *don't she?*
18. *Explanation: The tag added to the main clause does not conform to the rules. The word "washes" in (4. i and ii above), ERRORS IN THE USE OF PRONOUNS is in the 3rd person singular form while in the tag, "don't" is negative form of "do" in either the 1st or 2nd person singular. The knowledge of the positive and negative words informed the usage as exhibited.*

19. *Correction: She washes all the clothes, doesn't she? = She does wash the clothes, doesn't she?*
20. *Hausa version: "Tana wanke dukan kayansawa, ko bahaka bane?" the use of the tag "kobahaka bane?" lead to the use of *don't she?" coupled with the poor knowledge of the pronouns in the 3rd person singular form in the English version.*
21. *Recognition: Musa might score the highest mark in the test, *can she?*
22. *Description: Musa mightn't score the highest mark in the test, * can she?*
23. *Explanation: The superordinate clause contains the modal auxiliary verb mightn't but the tag added to it does not the same modal verb thus, making it incompatible.*
24. *Correction: Musa mightn't score the highest mark in the test, might he?*
25. *Hausa version: "Musa zai iya cin maki mafi yawa a wannan gwajin, koko?" the use of the tag "koko?" lead to the errors in the use of the primary auxiliary verb "can he?" in the English version.*
26. *Recognition: Either he or she is entitled to the stipend, *aren't you? (Plural)*
27. *Description: Either he or she is entitled to the stipend, *aren't you? (Plural)*
28. *Explanation: The tag took the plural form of the word "is" which is "are" on the assumption that the phrase, "either he or she" denotes plurality not singularity. This however does not conform to the rule in which the pronoun number in the added tag should agree with that of the main clause.*
29. *Correction: Either he or she is entitled to the stipend, isn't it?*
30. *Hausa version: "Shi ko ke yakamata a baiwa kudin watan, koba hakaba?" the use of the tag "kobahakaba?" lead to the errors in the use of the pronoun number coupled with the distributive pronoun "aren't you?" in the English version.*

v. **ERRORS IN THE USE OF TENSES**

31. *Recognition: They weren't defeated by their opponents, *are they?*
32. *Description: They weren't defeated by their opponents, *are they?*
33. *Explanation: The superordinate clause contains "weren't", the past tense of "are" while the tag contains, "are." There is no conformity with the modal verb in superordinate clause and the tag.*
34. *Correction: They weren't defeated by their opponents, were they?*
35. *Hausa version: "Abokan gasarsu basuyi nasara akansu ba, koba hakaba?" the use of the tag "kobahakaba?" lead to the errors in the use of the present tense form, "are they?" in the English version instead of the past form "weren't they?"*

vi. **TENSES ERRORS**

36. *Recognition: The students came late, *don't they?*
37. *Description: The students came late, *don't they?*
38. *Explanation: The superordinate clause has the past form of "come" that is, "came" in it but the tag does not, that is, it had the present tense form of didn't they?, "don't they?"*
39. *Correction: The students came late, didn't they?*
40. *Hausa version: "Daliban sun zo a makare, kobahakaba?" the use of the tag "kobahakaba?" lead to the errors in the use of the present tense form, "don't they?" in the English version instead of the past form "didn't they?"*

4.2.2. *Extract two*

The data were collected from the assignment that was given to them to that effect. The results of the assignment showed varying outcome mostly rooted to the mother tongue interference in the target population responses.

vii. **ERRORS IN THE USE OF TENSES**

41. *Recognition: He reads all night, *isn't it?*
42. *Description: He reads all night, *isn't it?*
43. *Explanation: The verb in the main clause is in the third person singular and present tense but the verb in the tag though it is in the present tense; it does not conform to that of the main clause.*
44. *Correction: He reads all night, doesn't he?*
45. *Hausa version: "Yana karatu da daddare, ko bahaka ba?" the use of the tag "kobahakaba?" lead to the errors in the use of the present tense form, "isn't it?" in the English version instead of the past form "doesn't he?"*
46. *Recognition: It was raining when they left, *isn't it?*
47. *Description: It was raining when they left, *isn't it?*
48. *Explanation: The verb tense, "was raining" is past continuous tense while in the tag it is present continuous tense. There is no conformity with the tense.*
49. *Correction: It was raining when they left, wasn't it?*
50. *Hausa version: "Ana ruwan sama ayayin da suka tafi, koko?" the use of the tag "koko?" lead to the errors in the use of the past continuous tense form, "isn't it?" in the English version instead of the past form "wasn't it?"*

viii. **ERROR IN OVERGENERALISATION OF THE PHRASE “ISN’T IT”**

The L₂ learners use the phrase “*isn’t it*” in virtually every tag ending not taking into cognisance the constituents of the superordinate clause. The QT consists of the operator plus a pronoun, with or without a negative particle; the choice and tense of the operator are determined by the verb phrase in the superordinate clause.

51. *Recognition: John and Jane were friends, *isn’t it?*
52. *Description: John and Jane were friends, *isn’t it?*
53. *Explanation: The pronoun number in the superordinate clause, the main verb “were” is plural, in this instance; it does not commensurate to the pronoun number in the QT.*
54. *Correction: John and Jane were friends, weren’t they?*
55. *Hausa version: “John da Jane sunyiabauta, kobahakaba?” the use of the tag “kobahakaba?” lead to the errors in the use of the over generalisation of the phrase, “isn’t it?” in the English version instead of the past form, “weren’t they?”*

56. *Recognition: These pencils are long, *isn’t it?*
57. *Description: These pencils are long, *isn’t it?*
58. *Explanation: The verb in the main clause is showing plurality while that of the tag is showing singularity.*
59. *Correction: These pencils are long, aren’t they?*
60. *Hausa version: “Wadannan fensura suna da tsayi, koba hakaba?” the use of the tag “koba hakaba?” lead to the errors in establishing the grammatical relationship between the main clause and tag added to it, “isn’t it?” in the English version instead of the plural form, “aren’t they?”*

61. *Recognition: We are getting the answers right, *isn't it?*
62. *Description: We are getting the answers right, *isn't it?*
63. *Explanation: The tag added to the superordinate clause does not conform to the rules in the auxiliary verb, pronoun number and the tense should be a replica of those in the main clause.*
64. *Correction: We are getting the answers right, aren't we?*
65. *Hausa version: "Muna samun amsoshin daidai, koba hakaba?" the use of the tag "kobahakaba?" lead to the mixed up in the use of the pronoun number and the tense in the tag which should all be replicated as they are in the main clauses, "isn't it?" in the English version instead of the plural form, "aren't we?"*
66. *Recognition: The incoming students will be accommodated in the new hostel, isn't it?*
67. *Description: The incoming students will be accommodated in the new hostel, isn't it?*
68. *Explanation: The tag added onto the superordinate clause does not conform to the rules in that it is not reflecting the modal verb and the pronoun in the main clause.*
69. *Correction: The incoming students would be accommodated in the new hostel, wouldn't they?*
70. *Hausa version: "Za, a saukar da sababbin dalibai a sababbin dakin kwanan dalibai, koba hakaba?" the use of the tag "kobahakaba?" lead to the mixed up in the use of the correct tag, "wouldn't they?" but "isn't it?" was rather used.*

ix. ERRORS IN THE WRONG APPLICATION OF PRIMARY AUXILIARIES DO, DID, HAVE, HAS

71. *Recognition: We do eat beef meat, *doesn't we?*
72. *Description: We do eat beef meat, *doesn't we?*

73. *Explanation: The choice of the primary auxiliary in the tag was informed by the subject (the pronoun number) “we”. The wrong assumption “does” was regarded as plural primary auxiliary.*
74. *Correction: We do eat beef meat, don't we?*
75. *Hausa version: “Munakancinamansanuwa, kobahakaba?” the use of the tag “kobahakaba?” lead to the incorrect use of the tag, “ doesn't we?” couple with the plurality of the subject, “we”.*
76. *Recognition: She doesn't like onions, *do she?*
77. *Description: She doesn't like onions, *do she?*
78. *Explanation: The tag, “do she” does not conform to the rules in the primary auxiliary verb and the pronoun should be a replica of those in the superordinate clause. What informed the learner to employ that was the extension or the transfer of the 1st and 2nd person's singular pronoun, “I do”, “You do” “He / She / It does”. But thought it should be “do” all through and not “does”.*
79. *Correction: She doesn't like onions, does she?*
80. *Hausa version: “Bata son/bukataralbasa, kobahakaba?”the use of the tag, “kobahakaba?” lead to the incorrect use of the tag “do she?” because of the transfer of the first language which does not specify the different use of the tag, “kobahakaba?” either in the 1st, 2nd or 3rd person singular pronouns.*
81. *Recognition: You haven't answered the entire questions, * did you?*
82. *Description: You haven't answered the entire questions, *did you?*

83. *Explanation: The verb in the main clause is in the third person singular and present tense form but the verb in the tag though it is in the present tense; it does not conform to that of the main clause.*

84. *Correction: You haven't answered the entire questions, have you?*

85. *Hausa version: "Baka/baki/bakuamsadukantambayoyiba, koko?" the use of the tag, "koko?" lead to the wrong application of primary auxiliaries "do". "Did" as in "did you?" is the past form though it does not conform to rule for forming QTs as earlier discussed.*

86. *Recognition: He has gone back to school, *haven't he?*

87. *Description: He has gone back to school, *haven't he?*

88. *Explanation: The verb in the superordinate clause is in the third person singular and present tense form but the verb in the tag even though it is in the present tense; it does not conform to that of the superordinate clause.*

89. *Correction: He has gone back to school, hasn't he?*

90. *Hausa version: "Yakomamakaranta, kobahakaba?" the use of the tag, "kobahakaba?" lead to the wrong application of primary auxiliaries "do". "Did you?" is the past form though it does not conform to rule for forming QTs as earlier discussed in 19 (iii), explanation.*

91. *Recognition: You would have been watching today's movies at 11.00 pm, *wouldn't have you been?*

92. *Description: You would have been watching today's movies at 11.00 pm, *wouldn't have you been?*

93. *Explanation: The tag does not conform to the grammatical arrangement for forming the tag in which the subject and the operator swap positions, that is to say, “You” and “would” respectively to become “Would you”.*

94. *Correction: You would have been watching today’s movies at 11.00 pm, wouldn’t you have been?*

95. *Hausa version: “Dayanzu kana kallonfim dinyauda karfegomashadayana dare,koko?” the use of the tag, “koko?” lead to the wrong application of the tag “wouldn’t have you been?” and it does not conform to the rule for forming QTs as earlier discussed.*

96. *Recognition: He coaches the players excellently, *ko?*

*Description: He coaches the players excellently, *ko?*

Explanation: The L₂ uses English in the main clause; the main verb is in the third person singular pronoun and Hausa word is used in the tag, “ko”. This word is used to confirm / ascertain an earlier assertion made by the speaker or to invite someone into a conversation. The learner adopted code switch from English to Hausa (“Enghausa”, using both English and Hausa).

97. *Correction: He coaches the players excellently, doesn’t he?*

98. *Hausa version: “Yana koyardayanwasa da kyau, ko?” the use of the tag, “ko?” does not conform to the rule for forming QTs as earlier discussed. The learner uses Hausa tag to serve as the QT. This is just a matter of code switching in speaking. The use of the “ko?” is caused as result of the L₁ transfer.*

The Invariant Question Tags

The invariant tag questions unlike the canonical tag questions do not take into cognizance the normal rules for forming tag questions. In the canonical tag questions the verb and person (noun or pronoun numbers) in the main clause (either being positive or negative) are repeated in the tag and making the tag positive or negative where necessary. One thing that is shown to be prominent about tag questions is its polarity. Polarity means oppositeness, that is to say, if the main clause of a question tag is positive (i.e., the subject is positively modified), the tag should be negative, and vice versa. See illustrations 4.2.1.1 nos. 1-98 above for the polarity types.

Some early grammarians rule out non-polarized tags in tag questions as ungrammatical (see Hintikka, 1982 for discussion). However, as Downing & Locke (2006: 187) point out, a second type of tag is actually a non-polarized one, that is, if the main clause is positive, the tag is also positive, and vice versa. They point out that this type occurs mostly in the positive form, and that the whole sentence is often preceded by a discourse marker like “Oh” and “So”, to indicate that the speaker is inferring or drawing a conclusion from context; in this case, the effect is often emotive as in “*Oh, you are the new secretary then, are you?*”, with either an agreeable surprise or perjury depending on the implication. In some cases they (question tags) end with “right”, “she”, “sha”, etc.

In fact, as Huddleston & Pullum (2005: 150) point out,

. . . reversed polarity tags have to be distinguished from those with constant polarity. These [i.e., constant polarity tags] don't ask for confirmation [and indeed, they do not allow the possibility of other views], but suggest an attitude such as surprise, disbelief, disapproval or the like: an author might say So they've read my book, have they? Amazing!'

They also point out that for many speakers, constant polarity tags aren't used with negative clauses: "So they haven't read my book, haven't they?" This type of sentence will be rejected by many speakers of Standard English. For those speakers, if a negative tag is acceptable on a clause, the clause must be positive.

The use of the invariant tag questions was discovered to be more recurrent in their (the target population) oral communications because of its simplicity. The invariant tag questions seemed to be less problematic in their (the invariant tag questions) usages. Below are some of the examples:

99. *None of you can play the game, right?*
100. *Hausa version: Babu daya daga cikinku da zai iya buga wannan wasa, ko?*
101. *She should used all the detergent to wash the children's school uniform, okay?*
102. *Hausa version: Tayiamfani da dukansabulun ta wankekayanmakarantanyara, ko?*
103. *You heard what the lecturer said a while ago, eh?*
104. *Hausa version: Kajidukanabindamalaminyaceyandakikadayawuce, ko?*
105. *Mary hadn't thrown away the broken plates, *sha /ʃ ^ /?*
106. *Hausa version: Da Marybatajefar da fasassunkwanukaba, ko?*

The use of the tags, "right?", "okay?", "eh?", and "sha /ʃ ^ /" could simply be represented in Hausa by either "ko?", "koko?", and "kobahakaba?". This is more or less straight forward translation/direct transfer of the L₁ to L₂. It (the invariant QT) does not follow the canonical QTs formation rules.

QUESTION TAGS INFLUENCED BY THE RISING AND FALLING INTONATIONS

On meaning and intonation in speech, Swan (2006) says we can show the exact meaning of the QTs by the type of intonation that accompanies them. If the tag is a real question and we really want to know something and are not sure of the answer we use rising intonation: the voice goes up.

107. *The discussion is at four o'clock, ↗isn't it?*

And if the tag is a real question and we are sure of the answer we use a falling intonation: the voice goes down.

108. *It's a beautiful day, ↘ isn't it?*

In writing he Swan, (2006) adds that the exact meaning of tag is normally clear from the context.

ERRORS IN THE USE OF THE DISTRIBUTIVE PRONOUN ALONG WITH THE CANONICAL QUESTION TAGS

109. *Recognition: Either of the two pencils is yours, *aren't they?*

110. *Description: Either of the two pencils is yours, *aren't they?*

111. *Explanation: The user because of the presence two pencils in the sentence above, 22.*

112. *Recognition felt it was plural and simply took it for plural. That was what informed the L₂ learner to use "aren't they?" to end the tag.*

113. *Correction: Either of the two pencils is yours, isn't it?*

114. *Hausa version: "Daya daga cikin fensura nan nakane, koko?"*

115. *Recognition: Neither of the twin brothers is going with us, *aren't they?*

116. *Description: Neither of the twin brothers is going with us, *aren't they?*

117. *Explanation: The learner because of the presence of the word “twin” brothers in the sentence 115 above, under, Recognition felt it was plural and simply took it for plural. That was what informed the L₂ learner to use “aren’t they?” to end the tag.*
118. *Correction: Neither of the twin brothers is going with us, isn’t it?*
119. *Hausa version: “Babu daya daga cikin yanbiyun da zai bimu, koba hakaba?”*
120. *Recognition: Each hospital ward and room is painted differently, *aren’t they?*
121. *Description: Each hospital ward and room is painted differently, *aren’t they?*
122. *Explanation: The learner because of the presence of the coordinating conjunction, and in the sentence 24 above, under, Recognition felt it was plural and simply took it for plural. That was what informed the L₂ learner to use, “aren’t they?” to end the tag.*
123. *Correction: Each hospital ward and room is painted differently, isn’t it?*
124. *Hausa version: Kowane dakin kwanan marasa lafiya da daki anyi mishi penti launi daban, ko ba haka ba?*
125. *Recognition: Each of the aspirants is given the party’s manifesto, *aren’t they?*
126. *Description: Each of the aspirants is given the party’s manifesto, *aren’t they?*
127. *Explanation: The presence of the plural noun aspirants in the stem in sentence 25 above, under, Recognition and description the L₂ learner concluded it was simply plural, in spite of the presence of “Each”. He/she drew the conclusion to use “aren’t they?” to end the tag.*
128. *Correction: Each of the aspirants is given the party’s manifesto, isn’t it?*
129. *Hausa version: Kowane daga cikin yan takara na patinmu an bashi manifesto, koba haka ba?*
130. *Recognition: Every one of the contestants was rewarded, *weren’t they?*
131. *Description: Every one of the contestants was rewarded, *weren’t they?*

132. *Explanation: The learner thought because of the presence of the plural noun contestants in the sentence 26 above, under, Recognition and description felt it was simply plural as such he/she used “weren’t they?” to end the tag.*

134. *Correction: Every one of the contestants was rewarded, isn’t it?*

135. *Hausa version: Ko wane daya daga cikin yan takara an bashi kyauta, koba haka ba?*

The English question tags alongside the Hausa versions as discussed above in this section have systematically shown that the first language which was earlier acquired by the L₂ learners play significant roles in the formation and use of the QTs by them (second language learners). The canonical QTs posed some difficulties in their usages while the invariant QTs are less problematic in expressing one’s feelings, ideas and desires.

4.3 Discussion

The present study was able to find that question tags were often used to elicit information, to tempt someone into a conversation, for confirmation of facts, to seek someone’s opinion on an issue.

Question tags are misused by the Hausa learners of English as a second language because they (the learners) do not adhere to rules governing the formation of the question tags as result of the first language transfer of elements to the second language.

Learners of English as a second language induce their own rules in order to make the use of the question tags easy for them and to be able to communicate with other people around them.

There seem to be incessant use of a particular phrase at the end of each statement, not minding what constitutes the main clause of the canonical question tags. In other words there is overgeneralization of the phrase, “isn’t it?” at the end of any main clause to form the question

tags. This is however influenced by the mother tongue of the Hausa learners of English as a second language.

The variability of second language acquisition is increased by a number of cognitive, affective, cultural, and contextual variables that sometimes are not applicable to a first language learning context.

Similarly, the results of the study found out that question tag was one of the important English sentence patterns of speech; it plays a significant role in man's communication and the use of the QTs was generally and greatly affected by the first language or mother tongue of the learners and the context of use among other factors because speakers apply knowledge from their native language. And this occurs in any situation when someone does not have a native like command of a language, as when translating into a second language, there will be language interference (Linguistic Interference, Cross-Linguistic Interference or Transfer).

In addition, the study found out why the target population, Hausa learners of English as a second language use the question tags. It was glaring that the reasons for the use of the QTs varies from person to person, that is to say, it is not only when one wishes to seek confirmation, affirmation, invitation to a discussion, but also to show disappointment on the interlocutor's lukewarm attitude or disgust on something. It also manipulates the interlocutors to accept positions and burdens they would otherwise not accept.

Moreover, to the immediate past assertion, it was apparent that the speaker's level of anger was exhibited through the manner (intonation) the tag was used by him/her (speaker), that is to say, when the pitch of the voice goes up or down, it sends a particular message accordingly.

The greater the differences between the two languages, the more the negative effects of interference are likely to be. Interference occurs in any situation especially where someone has an imperfect command of a second language.

Similarly, interference from the first language does not imply that interference is the most important factor in adult second language acquisition. Adults learning a second language manifest some of the same errors found in children learning their first language.

Furthermore, the study reveals that the QTs are also used to show the level of emphasis on a particular point the speaker is trying to pass across to his/her interlocutor(s).

On the issues of First Language Acquisition, the study reveals that there are a series of implications for second language learning which are competence and performance. It shows that adults can make choices between two alternative forms and they are sometimes aware of grammar in a second language but they are not able to verbalize rules and paradigms consciously in their native language.

More so, in the course of the study it was evidently understood that the invariant tag questions such as, *“You can drive the car despite its condition, right?”*, *“The family are supposed to be home by now, yeah?”* and *“They must take their bathe early enough, okay?”*, etc were frequently used in speech by the youths while the elderly ones preferred the use of the canonical tag question.

The results of the study revealed that non-native speakers encounter some difficulties in using the Canonical Tag Questions appropriately not because of the syntactic complexity of these kinds of questions, but because of their pragmatic requirements.

Moreover, QTs were found to be mostly used by the female’s learners than their male’s counterparts, this came to light during the analysis of the data for this study perhaps because the

female learners have fascinating language learning ability. Conversely, the way they (females) are regarded as weaker gender could have been an attributive factor because they (females) sometime have to lay emphasis on what they say to make impact on the listeners and as such employ the question tags for example, “*You are coming with us, aren't you?*”

4.4 Implications to the study

The study of interferences of the first language in the acquisition and use of the second language is important and relevant. It was observed that some Hausa students had problems with the English question tags in both their written and spoken aspects of the English grammar. The most frequent errors found in this study were overgeneralisation of the phrase “*isn't it?*” added onto the tags, inducement of formulated rules by the target population and the preference of the invariant question tags by the youths. These problems were informed as a result of interference of the first language in the use of the second language, avoidance of rules and ease of usage of the question tags as the case may be.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Preamble

This chapter consists of summary of findings, and conclusion of the study that was carried out by the researcher. The chapter discusses the significance of the QTs, how and why QTs were used by the population, the research also provides recommendations/suggestions for further studies and conclusion.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The research which was carried out on the “First Language Interference in The Use Of English Question Tags among Hausa Nigeria Certificate in Education Students in Federal College Of Education, Zaria”. The analyses of the data showed that question tags were used conscientiously to elicit information, tempt someone into a conversation, confirmation, to seek someone’s opinion on some issues, and also to show disappointment on the interlocutor’s lukewarm attitude or disgust on something. It also manipulates the interlocutors to accept positions and burdens they would otherwise not accept. It found out that there is transfer of some linguistic features between the two languages in their speech repertoire. It showed that there is overgeneralisation of the phrase, “isn’t it?” in the use of the English question tags as discussed earlier.

In addition to the immediate past assertion, it was apparent that the speaker’s level of anger was exhibited through the manner the tag was used by him/her (speaker), that is to say, when the pitch of the voice goes up or down, it sends a particular message accordingly.

More so, interference in Adults: Adults approach the second language systematically; they attempt to formulate linguistic rules with the information they have: from the native language, the second language, teachers and classmates.

On the issues of First Language Acquisition, the study reveals that there are a series of implications for second language learning which are competence and performance. It showed that adults can make choices between two alternative forms and they are sometimes aware of grammar in a second language but they are not able to verbalize rules and paradigms consciously in their native language.

Additionally, in the course of the study it was evidently understood that the invariant tag questions such as, *“You can drive the car despite its condition, right?”*, *“The family are supposed to be home by now, yeah?”* and *“They must take their bathe early enough, okay?”* were frequently used in speech by the youths while the elderly ones preferred the use of the canonical tag question.

The results of the study revealed that non-native speakers encounter some difficulties in using the Canonical Tag Questions appropriately not because of the syntactic complexity of these kinds of questions, but because of their pragmatic requirements.

Moreover, QTs were found to be mostly used by the female learners than their male counterparts this came to light during the analysis of the data perhaps, the female learners have fascinating language learning ability. Conversely, the way they (females) are regarded as weaker gender could have been an attributive factor because they (females) sometime have to lay emphasis on what they say to make impact on the listeners and as such employ the question tags.

Finally, future studies may be geared towards in-depth research into why question tags were not given wider recognition in Nigerian Curriculum of Education.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, based on the findings, question tag is a very important English sentence pattern of speech among others; it performs a significant function in man's interaction with other people through saving man's energy from using too many words in trying to ask question.

Similarly, the misuse of the QTs by the L₂ learners and the general challenges faced by the L₂ learners in studying English Language had led to the systematic development of the inter language and in this way contributed to the development of Nigerian English alike. It (The study) considers that language interference is the effect of the learners' first language on one's production of the language one is learning. In other words, it (the study) means that the speaker's first language influences his second or foreign language. These studies have shown that both first and second language learners tend to follow a similar pattern of development that is majorly followed regardless of exceptions.

In the same vein, the use of the English QTs appears mostly with the age/maturity, gender, educational backgrounds of the users, their parents, peers group and social statuses of the users. The canonical QTs are typically used by the elderly and the young at heart L₂ learners while the invariant types of the QTs are used more often than not by the youth L₂ learners.

This trend by extension could be summed up that the misuse of L₂ especially QTs by the major ethnic groups in Nigeria may be caused by the interference of the mother tongue coupled with some other related factors such as experience gained, exposure in social interaction within the vast community and a host of others. This study has shown that both first and second language learners tend to follow a similar pattern of development that is majorly followed regardless of exceptions.

5.3 Recommendations / Suggestions for Further Studies

This research cannot claim that it has dealt with all the dimensions of interference of the first language in the use of English question tags among Nigeria Certificate in Education Hausa students at Federal College of Education, Zaria. Therefore, studies on first language interference on the use English question tags can continue especially for those Nigerian languages that are yet to be identified and classified. Furthermore, the research suggests the application of other linguistic tools in the investigation of English question tags. There could also be a cross- culture approach to English question tags, Igbo question tags Yoruba question tags could be studied in comparison with Hausa question tags, or any other Nigerian languages. Study on interference of the first language should continue in order to promote effective communication.

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Appendix

- i. Test questions.
- ii. Assignment questions

TEST QUESTIONS ADMINISTERED TO FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, ZARIA,
HAUSA NCE STUDENTS ON QUESTION TAG FOR M. A RESEARCH

Name: _____

Registration number: _____

Instruction: Choose from the given options the one that best completes the space provided.

She washes all the clothes _____

don't she? B. won't she? C. doesn't she? D. can't she?

They were defeated by their opponents, _____

Were they? B. are they? C. don't it? D. is it?

He doesn't eat between the meals, _____

do he? B. does he? C. don't he? D. he do?

Honey is sweet, _____

not so? B. isn't it? C. aren't they? D. it is?

John and Jane were friends, _____

Isn't it B. aren't they C. ok? D. weren't they?

The weather is hot, _____

abi? B. isn't? C. is so? D. is that?

I didn't read the text message, _____

Did I? B. do I? C. doesn't? D. does I?

These pencil are long, _____

aren't them? B. are they? C. aren't they D. aren't these

we don't eat pork, _____

doesn't we? B. didn't we? C. do we? D. did we?

She doesn't like mangoes, _____
do she? B. does she? C. do her? D. didn't she?

You haven't answered the entire questions, _____
did you? B. would you? C. have you? D. has he?

He has gone back to the school, _____
Haven't he? B. hasn't has C. did't he? D. hasn't him?

I Congratulated you on your success, _____
Haven't i? B. didn't I C. wouldn't I D. don't I ?

You didn't attend my wedding, _____
did you? B. have you C. D. did they?

Binta and Hauwa are friend since childhood, _____
Isn't it? B. didn't them? C. didn't they? D. aren't they?

It hasn't not faded, _____
does it? B. isn't it? C. have it? D. has it?

I foresaw the problem , _____
haven't I? B. didn't I? C. don't I? D. has I ?

She is a student, _____
wasn't she? B. won't she "/>ei/?" C. isn't she? D. won't she?

Its raining, _____
abi? B. isn't it? C. wasn't it? D. won't it?

He reads all night, _____
isn't it? B. doesn't he? C. didn't him? D. isn't he?

You would have been watching today's movies at 11: 00 pm, _____

wouldn't you have? B. won't you have? C. haven't you been? D. wouldn't have you?

Lets go now, _____

Shouldn't us? B. wouldn't us? C. shall we? D. shan't we?

Maimuna ought to have been an alumnus of A B U, Zaria _____

oughtn't she? B. oughtn't her? C. ought she? D. ought her?

She knew how to cook very well, _____

Isn't it? B. didn't she? C. couldn't she D. wasn't she?

We need to take the early warning seriously, _____

isn't it? B. needn't C. couldn't she D. wasn't she

He must open the door, _____

mustn't he? B. isn't it? C. isn't he? D. wouldn't him?

We shall go next year, _____

shan't we? B. couldn't we? C. wouldn't we? D. aren't we?

They will have taken the lead, _____

Won't they? B. haven't they? C. don't they? D. will they?

The little girl had had the chance to trick the thieves, _____

Hadn't them? B. hadn't they? C. haven't they? D. isn't it?

The seminar had begun when we arrived, _____

hasn't it? B. didn't it? C. hadn't it? D. didn't it?

ANSWERS

C. doesn't he?

A. weren't they?

B. does he?

B. isn't it?

D. weren't they?

B. isn't it?

A. did I?

C. aren't they?

C. do we?

B. does she?

C. have you?

B. hasn't he?

B. didn't I?

A. did you?

D. are they?

D. has it?

B. didn't I?

C. isn't she?

B. isn't it?

B. doesn't he?

D. wouldn't you have been?

C. shall we?

A. oughtn't she?

B. didn't she?

B. needn't we?

A. mustn't he?

A. shan't we?

A. won't they?

B. hadn't she?

C. hadn't it?

ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS GIVEN TO FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,
ZARIA, HAUSA NCE STUDENTS ON QUESTION TAG FOR M. A RESEARCH

Instruction: Answer all the questions.

1. He loves her, _____?
2. She can read, _____?
3. They work hard for the exam, _____?
4. We bought a nice house, _____?

Match the statement to the correct tag endings:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| 5. You won't leave now, _____ | a. didn't she? |
| 6. He doesn't do any work, _____ | b. won't you? |
| 7. You will finish, _____ | c. has she? |
| 8. She had a great holiday, _____ | d. does he? |
| 9. He didn't enjoy, _____ | e. will you? |
| 10. She hasn't been well, _____ | f. did he? |

Add the correct question tags to the following statements:

11. The soldiers left at dawn, _____?
12. You've no idea at all what I'm talking about, _____?
13. You'd rather be staying at school, _____?
14. Don't tell anyone, _____?
15. There are some fresh fruits in the refrigerator, _____?
16. Take care, _____?

17. You shouldn't have made such a mistake, _____?
18. They could've told the fire fighters, _____?
19. She had really some bad luck, _____?
20. Nobody heard what you said, _____?
21. Switch on the light, _____?
22. I'm managing quite well, _____?
23. Somebody could see you, _____?
24. There was nothing wrong with the machine, _____?
25. I'm not late, _____?
26. This is really boring, _____?
27. Her mother's just had an operation, _____?
28. You must keep this to yourself, _____?
29. The road had been very bad, _____?
30. Nothing could save them now, _____?

ANSWERS

1. doesn't he?
2. Can't she?
3. Don't they?
4. didn't we?
5. Will you?
6. Does he?
7. Won't you?
8. Has she?
9. Did he?
10. Has he?
11. Did they?
12. Have you?
13. Will you?
14. Will you?
15. Are there?
16. Would you?
17. Should you?
18. Could they?
19. Hasn't she?
20. Had someone?
21. Will you?
22. Aren't I?
23. Couldn't anybody?
24. Was there?
25. Am I?
26. Isn't this?
27. Hasn't she?
28. Mustn't you?
29. Hasn't it?
30. Could there?