

## **LANGUAGE PROVISIONS OF NIGERIA'S NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION: DECLARATION WITHOUT IMPLEMENTATION**

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From 1977 since the first edition of the *National Policy on Education* (NPE) first appeared, there have been five further editions in 1981, 1998, 2004, 2007 and 2013. Each edition adds more sections or chapters or effects a re-arrangement of subjects in the curriculum at different levels of primary and secondary education. The most extensive so far is the 6th Edition of 2013, which virtually modifies the basis and scope of the previous versions of the Policy. It is, of course, not unusual for policies to be modified after a period of their operation. By observation and evaluation of an existing policy, it is normal to come up with a revised policy. However, a close examination of the NPE will show that the frequency of the revisions of the Policy has little to do with experience during the operation of a previous Policy. In fact, several of the provisions have not even been implemented before new changes are introduced.

The main reason given for frequent changes in the NPE is that certain educational developments have taken place that necessitate the revision of a former policy. For example, the introduction of Basic Education of a duration of 9 years, which replaces the former primary and junior secondary education, led to the introduction of a new Section 3 in the 4th Edition of the Policy in 2004. While some of the additions are well motivated, others appear to be the doing of some bureaucrats who would like to reflect the prevailing agenda of the current head of government. For example, one of the reasons for updating the 2007 Edition, as stated in the Foreword written by the then Minister of Education to the 2013 Edition, is the need to "accommodate...recent developments in the context of the Transformational Agenda". A document published by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2012, *4-Year Strategic Plan for the Development of the Education Sector 2011-2015*, also states that the revision of the same 2007 Edition is "informed by the need to reflect on Mr. President's Transformational Agenda with Education as a key priority area" (Section 1.1).

A notorious example of an ill-motivated amendment to the NPE is the one that concerns the introduction of French as a compulsory subject. During the military rule of General Sani Abacha (1993-1998) when Nigeria was isolated by the English-speaking Commonwealth and the United States of America, General Abacha turned to France for succour, and, in a desire to spite his assumed adversaries, he decided to elevate the status of French in the school system in Nigeria. The result was that a major revision was made to the curriculum in which French, which was merely an elective subject at both junior and senior secondary education as in the 1981 Edition of the NPE, became enshrined in the 1998 Edition as a compulsory subject at primary, junior secondary and senior secondary education. The motivation for this amendment to the Policy had nothing to do with any deficiency in the then existing NPE. (See Bamgbose 2001).

### **Policy Declaration without Implementation**

Declaration of policy without implementation has been identified as one of the characteristics of language planning in Africa and three forms of this particular characteristic have been further identified:

(a) Declaration of a policy which policy-makers are aware cannot be implemented

- (b) Built-in escape clauses to justify non-implementation
- (c) Avoidance of specifying implementation procedures (See Bamgbose 1991:116-120).

We shall shortly be examining the language provisions of the NPE in light of these forms of the characteristic of policy declaration without implementation.

By way of comparison, let us examine one or two of the non-language provisions of the NPE to underline the fact that declaration without implementation is a general feature not restricted to language. To cite just two examples, first, the provision of primary education: The NPE provides that "Primary Education shall be tuition-free, universal and compulsory" (Section 17(a) 1998, Section 19(a) 2004). Evidence that this is a mere paper declaration can be readily found in the statistics of out-of-school children and shortfall in school enrolment, which is one of the issues addressed in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Standards differ from State to State and there are several States in which primary education is neither universal nor compulsory. As to its being tuition free, this is only technically so, as fees are collected in different guises in quite a number of States, which, of course, will not be labelled "tuition". Second, the 2013 Edition of NPE Section 12 states that "Basic Education, to be provided by Government, shall be compulsory, free, universal and qualitative. It comprises: 1yr Pre-Primary, 6yrs of Primary and 3yrs of Junior Secondary Education". Anyone who knows about the school system in Nigeria must be aware that pre-primary education is generally offered in private fee-paying schools and not in any government-owned public schools. Hence, this is a policy declaration which the policy-makers know cannot be implemented.

### **Policy and Languages in NPE**

The languages that feature in the NPE are Mother tongue / Language of the Immediate Community, Major Language, English, French, and Arabic.

#### **(a) Mother Tongue (MT) / Language of the Immediate Community (LIC)**

The medium of instruction in pre-primary education is supposed to be MT or LIC (Some versions of the NPE also refer to the LIC as the Language of the Environment). Conscious of the fact that several mother tongues have no orthography and no reading materials, the Policy goes on to undertake that orthographies will be developed for many more languages and textbooks will be produced (NPE 1981, 1998, 2004, 2013). Two things are wrong with this language provision. First, since pre-primary education is run by private schools, this provision is empty and cannot be enforced. In actual fact, most pre-primary schools use English as a medium of instruction and those responsible for this declaration know that it cannot be enforced. Second, no implementation strategies have been worked out for developing orthographies and textbooks in languages that lack these resources. To this extent, this language provision remains a mere paper policy.

The medium of instruction in primary education is also supposed to be the MT or LIC for the first three years or the first four years of basic education (NPE 2013). Beyond the level when it ceases to be used as a medium of instruction, it will continue to be taught as a subject. It is only in the 1998 and 2004 Editions of NPE that only LIC is stipulated for the first three years as a medium of primary education. Could this be an admission that MT is no longer feasible, particularly as the language development activities that should make the use of MT feasible have not been undertaken? Since this practice is one that has been with us for a very long time, it is a failure of

planning and implementation that mother tongue education should be open to question decades after its entrenchment in the school system.

LIC is also stipulated as a subject in junior secondary education and a vocational elective subject in senior secondary education. But curiously, the caveat is also given that "it shall be taught as L1 where it has orthography and literature. Where it does not have, it shall be taught with emphasis on orality as L2" (NPE 2004, Section 24). Notice that LIC would have been used as compulsory medium of instruction in the lower classes of primary education, how then can the question of it having an orthography or literature still arise when it is taught as a subject at a higher level? How can a language native to its speakers be taught as L2? These escape clauses are built into the Policy to provide an alibi for non-implementation.

### **(b) Major Language (ML)**

From the inception of the NPE in 1977, it has been a cardinal principle of the Policy that each child should learn one of the three major Nigerian languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. All the various editions of the Policy, with the exception of the 2013 Edition, state this and the reason given for the provision is to facilitate national unity. Hence, ML is a core subject in junior and senior secondary education. However, the very purpose of learning one of the three major languages is vitiated by the following measures which show clearly that this language provision is mainly declaration without implementation:

(i) An escape clause is built into the teaching of major languages that they will be taught "subject to availability of teachers" (NPE 1981). It is well-known that there is a shortage of teachers of these languages and this is one of the reasons for establishing the National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) at Aba. But to say that a particular subject is to be taught only when teachers are available amounts to saying that it will not be taught at all. There aren't many teachers of physics. In spite of this, one can never imagine anyone saying that physics will only be taught, subject to availability of physics teachers.

(ii) Given the shortage of teachers and the time lag between training of new teachers and commencement of the language policy, the Implementation Committee for the NPE seriously suggested that personnel resident outside their States of origin such as Youth Corps members be employed to teach oral forms of their language, just as local artisans and craftsmen are employed to teach vocational courses (See Section 37 of *Guidelines for 6-3-3-4 Education System 1977-1987*). Obviously, this is a misconception of what L2 teaching of a language means. As indicated above, the idea of L2 teaching conveyed by the NPE is concentration on oral skills. This is, no doubt, grossly inadequate in the context of learning a major language and being examined in it.

(iii) Since ML is a core subject at junior and senior secondary education, it follows that to obtain a certificate at each level, candidates must pass in it. However, since on account of shortage of teachers, many schools may not be able to teach the subject at all or teach it effectively, the Ministry of Education has adopted the device of giving waivers so that candidates can obtain their certificates without passing in the subject (Bamgbose 1994: 7). Again, this is a clever way of circumventing a major language provision in the NPE.

(iv) Perhaps as a result of the inability to implement the ML provision, the 2013 Edition of the NPE has completely abandoned the requirement that every child should learn one of the three major Nigerian languages. This provision which has featured in all previous editions of the NPE is totally missing in the 2013 Edition. Besides, at both junior and secondary education, no specific mention is made of ML. Rather, in junior secondary education, provision is made for "One Nigerian Language" which, presumably could be any language, and in senior secondary education, any student taking the Humanities option, can take "Any Nigerian Language that has curriculum" (with "curriculum" presumably meaning orthography and literature). If a policy that has been in existence for over three decades can be so lightly abandoned, it shows that the policy has not really seriously been entrenched owing to partial or even non-implementation.

### **(c) English**

The English language is obviously the most dominant language in Nigeria's language policy in education. Because of the legacy of colonial language policy and the continuing role of English as the country's official language, it is the one language that is found at virtually all levels of education. Although in theory, English is supposed to be taught as a subject in the first three years of primary education and as a medium of instruction thereafter until tertiary education, in practice, English looms much larger because in pre-primary education where the medium of instruction is supposed to be MT or LIC, most pre-primary schools pay only lip service to the prescribed policy and start teaching English in such schools. This is what most parents, who send their children to such schools and pay handsomely for doing so, expect. This violation of the policy finds support in the *Guidelines* mentioned above which states in Section 7 that English may be used as a medium in the so-called multinational pre-primary schools. Even in primary education where LIC has long been prescribed as a medium in the lower classes, Section 20 (d) of NPE 2013 now states categorically that this requirement is only for "monolingual communities". The fact that children easily learn a language of a community which is not their mother tongue is ignored in this calculation.

The traditional limitation of LIC as a medium in the lower classes of primary education yielding to English as a medium in the fourth year has been variously challenged in theory and practice and it has been the subject of observation and experimentation in a number of countries. The main argument about lack of readiness at the time transition takes place has been made again and again in the literature. Here in Nigeria, the now world famous Six-Year Primary Project run at the then University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) Ile-Ife, has demonstrated clearly that having LIC for the entire duration of primary education and teaching English as a subject yields better results than the traditional practice. Why various editions of the NPE have not taken any cognizance of this outcome and to recommend it, even as an experimental alternative to the current provisions is something one cannot understand. The massive failure recorded year-in year-out in the Secondary School Certificate and General Certificate Examinations is a pointer to the need to review a policy that leads to poor mastery of English and consequently poor performance in the subject as well as other subjects taught in English.

### **(d) French**

In the 1981 Edition of NPE, French was only an elective at both junior and senior secondary education. One could finish secondary education without learning any French at all. In fact, several students who went on to distinguish themselves in French started learning French at university level. However, following General Abacha's romance with French, the 1998 Edition gave French

a new status not only in the school system but also in the nation, for it states: "For smooth interaction with our neighbours, it is desirable for every Nigerian to speak French. Accordingly, French shall be the second official language in Nigeria and it shall be compulsory in schools" (Section 10).

Whoever is responsible for this language policy statement is obviously ignorant of the sociolinguistic role of language in a community and the nation. How can every Nigerian speak French? What are the avenues open to them to acquire the language? Obviously, this is a language declaration which is not capable of being implemented. Also, to say that French is an official language is to elevate it to a status second only to English. As an official language, it must be a language of record, that is, all official communication must be in English as well as in French. That this has not happened at all is evidence of the emptiness of this so-called policy statement.

Translated into school curriculum, French is expected to be introduced and taught as a subject in the last three years of primary education. It is also a core subject in junior and senior secondary education (NPE 1998). It does not require much effort to see that this is merely a propaganda language provision. At a time when there is a dearth of teachers of French in secondary schools (even when French is an elective), how can one hope to have enough teachers to teach French as a compulsory subject not only in secondary schools but also in primary schools? I have never heard of any public primary school in Nigeria in which French is taught as a subject. Those responsible for making this policy know that it cannot be implemented. It is one prime example of declaration without implementation. Perhaps the realization that this so-called policy is an impossible one is what has informed subsequent editions of the NPE. For example, from the 2004 Edition onwards, French has been removed from the core subjects in senior secondary education and relegated to the group of electives, even though the fiction that it can be taught in primary education is still maintained.

The story of French in our school system clearly shows the need to consult experts in designing language policy provisions. If the advice of language experts had been sought, this egregious error would not have been committed. Unfortunately, once an error is made, the chances are that it will be perpetuated, not just from one version of the NPE to another but also between one administration and another. This is the case with a news item which appeared recently in which the Minister of State for Education, Professor Anthony Anwukah, is reported to have declared that "Students from primary to tertiary institutions will henceforth learn [the] French language compulsorily..." The Minister appealed to the French Ambassador to assist Nigeria with teachers of French and the latter pointedly suggested that the Internet might be an alternative source of instruction if there were no sufficient teachers. The Minister then announced the establishment of French clinics in 104 Federal Government Colleges (*The Nation*, Sunday, January 31, p.7). Notice that the Minister's statement is at variance with the current NPE which makes French an elective in senior secondary education only for those intending to study in the field of Humanities. At tertiary level, unless a student is studying French as a major or taking it as an elective, he or she is not obliged to take any lesson in French. Is this going to change?

#### **(e) Arabic**

Arabic as a subject has always been an elective at junior and senior secondary education. It is perhaps the only language subject that has remained stable in the curriculum. Even when the 2013 Edition moves Arabic up to the list of 10 subjects in the curriculum, no change is effected as

"optional" is put in parentheses after it. It must be noted that until the metamorphosis of French, both Arabic and French were in the same category of electives.

### **Implications of Policy Declaration without Implementation**

Since policy formulation as an aspect of language planning is to ensure certain outcomes, it follows that making declaration without implementation is virtually ensuring that the expected outcomes cannot be attained. This has been the bane of most of the language policy provisions in the NPE. We want our children to be proficient in their mother tongue or LIC yet we have not made adequate provisions to achieve this. We want children to learn one of the major Nigerian languages yet we have not made provision for teachers to teach these languages. We want French to be taught as a subject in primary schools, yet we have no plan to train and supply teachers for this purpose. The result is retardation and non-attainment of expected outcomes.

Non-implementation of one policy makes it easy to declare another policy. This usually results in musical chairs in which languages are shuffled and re-shuffled. A classical example is the non-implementation of the language policy concerning the three major languages, which has made it possible to re-interpret it as just any language.

The rationale for setting up NINLAN in 1993 is precisely to implement the language provision of the NPE on the major languages. Given the severe shortage of teachers and the inability of university departments of languages to produce teachers in adequate numbers for the implementation of the policy, candidates to be admitted to the Institute for a 4-year B.A. degree programme are to study two major Nigerian languages with relevant courses in linguistics, education and general studies. Various combinations of L1 and L2 are designed to cater for students, depending on what languages they speak. Holders of NCE graduates in languages will start at 200 level, while a conversion course leading to a one-year Postgraduate Diploma will be available for graduates in Humanities who have no qualification in Nigerian languages. These programmes were largely stalled.

The non-implementation of the policy that gave rise to NINLAN is one of the causes of the impediment to the progress of the Institute. If the policy had been vigorously implemented, NINLAN would not have become a pawn in the power game at the different levels of government with different agencies trying to interfere with its mandate and the law setting it up. Instead of its abandonment of its envisaged core programme and diversion into acculturation and proficiency courses, it would today have become a formidable machine for the production of high-powered teachers of Nigerian languages, including, not just of the three major languages, but also of the main languages that have assumed a significant role at the State level.

### **Previous Implementation Proposals**

Lest I give the wrong impression that, in launching the NPE, the Federal Government did not pay any attention to implementation, I should quickly say here that from 1977 when the first NPE was first published, an Implementation Committee, with Professor Sanya Onabamiro as Chairman, was set up to work out how the policies formulated were to be implemented. The report of this Committee was published as *Blueprint 1978-79*. With the death of Professor Onabamiro, this Implementation Committee was reconstituted with Dr. J.A.O. Sofolahan as Chairman. A document

based on the cumulative recommendations of the Implementation Committee as approved by the National Council on Education 1977-87 was later published as *Guidelines*.

As may be expected, the Implementation Committee was largely dominated by educationists. It is therefore not surprising that language provisions received very little attention in terms of implementation. I have had course to refer above to some of the provisions in the *Guidelines*. In general, they betray lack of expertise in language, especially when they refer to native speakers of Nigerian languages being employed to teach oral forms of Nigerian languages outside their States of origin.

The two other implementation efforts which contrast sharply with the earlier ones are those organized by the National Language Centre 1977 and the Language Development Centre of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, 1991. The participants at both the Symposium and the Seminar were predominantly language experts. In fact, the then Minister of Education, Professor Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa, who had participated in the 1977 Symposium before he became a Minister, gave the opening address and actively engaged the experts in the debates and arguments brought up. Because the focus was on the language provisions of the NPE, detailed discussions and recommendations for implementation emerged from the proceedings unlike the minimal attention to language in the *Blueprint* and *Guidelines*.

Subsuming the recommendations of the Kaduna Symposium of 1977 published as *Language in Education in Nigeria 1980* under those of the Ota Seminar of 1991, the Proceedings of which were published as *Implementation Strategies for the Language Provisions of the National Policy on Education 1992*, the two sets can be summarized as in the general headings in the latter as Language policy [review], Language curriculum and material design, Training of teachers, Language research, Language teaching, and Evaluation *Implementation Strategies 1992* (p.39). Detailed recommendations and proposals were made under each heading but, as is usually the case, revisions of the NPE after 1992 do not appear to have taken the recommendations seriously. (This is in spite of the fact that those who could have taken action were aware of the recommendations. For instance, in my capacity as the then Chairman of the National Language Centre Working Committee, I passed on the recommendations from the Kaduna Symposium of 1977 to Professor Onabamiro, the first Chairman of the Implementation Committee. His successor as Chairman, Dr. Sofolahan, was also a participant at the Ota Seminar of 1991). Take, for example, the following specific recommendations:

- The language provisions of the NPE should be reviewed and restated in a clearer and more definite form to facilitate implementation
- Model MT/LIC pre-primary schools should be set up by states or local governments as a way of encouraging the use of MT/LIC as medium of instruction at this level of education
- Native speakers who are untrained as language teachers should only be used as teaching assistants and under no circumstances should they replace trained language teachers
- All aspects of the implementation of the language provisions of the NPE should be constantly monitored
- In all matters relating to language, it is strongly recommended that government should involve linguists and specialists in language.

If some of these recommendations had been acted upon, we would definitely have avoided such infelicitous policy somersault as that concerning the declaration of French as Nigeria's second language to be taught as a subject at all levels of education.

### Conclusion

Having reviewed the twists and turns of the implementation, or lack thereof, of the language provisions of the NPE since its inception in 1977, I have come to the irresistible conclusion that the time has come to undertake a complete overhaul of these language provisions. Many of them are simply decorative and need to be jettisoned. Besides, a situation in which a government functionary makes language policy pronouncements, which have not been subjected to a thorough examination as to feasibility, should be discouraged. In this regard, I propose that the NERDC be asked to organize a language-in-education summit comprising language experts and educationists, with a view to re-examining and revising the language provisions and working out feasible implementation procedures. This proposal may look odd in view of the fact that the NPE has been with us for almost forty years. The question we should ask ourselves is: Are the language provisions of the NPE working or are we merely fooling ourselves? This initiative by NINLAN of organizing a National Conference that focuses on the language provisions of the NPE is a laudable first step in what I see as a general overhaul of the language-in-education policy in Nigeria.

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## **ISSUES IN NIGERIA’S NATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY SINCE ITS FORMULATION AND ENACTMENT:**

**Prof. Kunle Adeniran**

### **Preamble: Ignorance of Language Policy**

At a seminar in 2004 in this same National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN), I introduced my overview of Nigeria’s language policy with the following observation “Some three decades ago not many people who should know were aware that Nigeria had in place a national language policy. Ubahakwe (1974) clearly expressed this view and then went on to make proposals for a national language policy in Nigerian education”. The obvious reference in that opening remark was the Nigerian intelligentsia, and could even include the hoi polloi. They are people who at different times in their life time could not help their awareness of government – enacted policies or even mere intimations of certain public policies because shortly after enactment the working of the details of particular policies begin to impinge on their lives for better or for worse. For instance, the elite are aware when say Town Planning regulations restrict or prohibit the erection of structures in certain locations that have been attractive to them, with much grumbling or open protestations, they would move away to build their houses in some other less attractive locations. Or worse, in the case of economic policies such as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the Ibrahim Babangida era, or worse still in the dire straits in which Nigeria is now, even when it has not been so formally declared as a new economic policy once government makes statements relating to fiscal discomfort in the country, families not only take notice of the pronouncements but begin to adopt or adapt to new financial coping strategies in order to survive the impending recession.

On the other hand the same elite and people in general if ever are hardly aware of any language policy. Their awareness of language itself as a tool which impacts on their daily life is often of a relatively fleeting nature; it is limited to occasions when someone else’s verbal usage if charitable (as in eulogies – praise poetry, cognomen) the speaker or singer is commended, or when his usage is offensive or insulting, the usage is condemned.

In both cases the awareness is impressionistic and can hardly but be. People’s consciousness of economic policies in contrast to their general ignorance of languages policy can easily be accounted for in terms of the nature of the constituent elements and operational indices in the formulation and measurement of particular kinds of policy. The constituent elements in economic policies are mostly tangible, palpable, and quantifiable. We can know how many metric tons of cocoa have been produced and exported, the selling price per ton and the total revenue that will be earned by the farmer and the government commodity board. So also can we know all that is involved in the production processes, the pricing regimes in the petroleum industry, the aggregate revenue from petroleum and other commodities and the implications of all these for economic policy formulation and its impact on the people.

### **Awareness of Language Policy**

By contrast knowledge of the constituent elements of language, its measurement and of consequent policy on it is completely lost on all except the well-known professionals – linguists especially, language educators, speech therapists, oral and written verbal artists and some few other individuals whose vocations occasionally make them to encounter some intricacies of language. The far greater

percentage of the peoples on earth, ‘the linguistically able’, until a dire need arises for it, hardly ever give thought to their God’s gracious endowment as homo loquens. But today the picture is changing. As one may deduce from occasional public interventions in the social media, apart from those earlier listed to have professional stake in language use and language policy, critical attention is now being paid to language, especially to the use of indigenous languages, and to language policy.

### **Nigeria’s National Language Policy**

What we refer to and now focus as Nigeria’s National Language Policy is relatively new. We are dealing with a policy formulated (1977) and severally revised (1981, 1988, and 2001) in our post-colonial era. It is right and easy to demonstrate that its precursor is in our colonial history. In what remains of this first paper is a brief historical background to the policy, placement of the policy in the sociolinguistic context (including aspects of its chequered implementation) and then attention drawn to some areas where emphases is needed for the policy to achieve the desired goal.

### **The term Policy**

As platform for further discussion I consider it useful to first cast a quick glance at the term policy; and a handy one to serve the present purpose (not a technically scientific one as in the usage of development exports) is to take the term policy as an agreed course of action. It has content which is to be explored and implemented and which hopefully would yield a desired goal or set of goals envisaged by its framers or the sponsors of its formulation. The formulation including its design is part of its history. A policy once enacted then becomes the hard stick for its evaluation in terms of its own set goal, and for judgement to be arrived at i.e. the extent to which it has or has not delivered the desired objectives, critical notice duly taken of the human and material factors in the context of implementation. We may now consider how Nigeria’s National Policy on Education fits into this theoretical mold.

### **Nigeria’s National Language Policy – a Symbolic Policy**

In relation to considerations of Nigeria’s national unity Suberu (1999: iv; 55) lists Nigeria’s national language policy alongside other public policies, namely, Re-organisational, Redistributive and Regulatory. He describes Nigeria’s national language policy as Symbolic. The subset of symbolic policies are “those public programme that are directly and explicitly designed to foster, inculcate or celebrate values, beliefs, sentiments or attitudes of national consciousness or loyalty”.

We accept the above as an adequate definition of symbolic policy but not entirely of language which is the focus in the present discussion for we know that language performs other functions apart from the symbolic. Its functions include the scientific and the technical, but still as policy how a country’s Educational Language Policy is able to perform the symbolic function will be best understood when we relate it to two other kinds of language policy in a country’s educational and overall development programme. Three other language related policies are:

a. **Official Language Policy**

This is a statement of the languages recognized by the government of a country for particular purpose.

b. **Educational Language Policy**

This is a statement of the languages recognized by the education authorities for use as media of instruction and subjects of study at the various levels of public and private education, and

c. **General Language Policy**

This can be said to be a reflection of government attitude in the form of recognizing or tolerating the languages used in mass communication, business, and contact with foreigners. (See Bamgbose 1990, Noss, 1971).

The (b) position of Educational Language Policy (and presumably in Bamgbose) is deliberate and strategic; it is meant to show it as central and nuclear to a nation's language policy. It is the generative policy the planning and execution of which would largely determine the features of the orientation and directions in the planning, implementation and eventual emergence of the nation's overall language policy. It assumes this status and is able to play the role because the formal school system uniquely provides the most suitable and conducive context for teaching not only language skills and for fostering the right attitudes toward language but for teaching new manipulative skills, values and other capabilities which the learners will require as they go through life. Whether a language is taught as a subject and even more when it is used as a medium of instruction, it has great multiplier effects: its use increases the competence of both the learners and teachers of the language. The payoff, over time, can be quite considerable.

**Brief Historical Background to Nigeria's National Language Policy**

We earlier described Nigeria's National Language Policy as new in order to reflect and stress the contemporariness of its provisions, but it has as precursor the British colonial language education policy the cardinal issues of which are now briefly narrated. For greater details see Bamgbose (1971), Banjo (1970), Spencer (1971), Tiffen (1968, Adeniran (1979).

**1.1 Language Education in the Colonial Period**

The European powers which had territories in Africa – The British, the French, the Portuguese jointly sponsored an investigation into the educational problems in the territories, including those which had to do with language teaching. Now usually referred to as the Phelps-Stokes Commission, the Commission published its report in 1922. The recommendations of the commission greatly influenced especially the British colonial education policy far more than they did the French.

They are that;

- a) The local language should be used in the lower elementary standards or grades.
- b) A lingua franca of African origin should be introduced in the middle classes of school if the area is occupied by large native groups speaking diverse languages, and
- c) The language of the European nation in control should be taught in the upper classes.

Based on these recommendations, the British Government Advisory Committee on Education in Africa produced, in 1927, a policy statement on language teaching. It emphasized the importance of the Mother Tongue in the education of the African child. In yet another policy statement the British Colonial office in 1943 issued a memorandum relating to the point of transition from the Mother Tongue to English as medium of instruction, the Mother Tongue was to be the medium in the first three years, in the fourth year English was to become the medium for teaching certain subjects, but later all subjects.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Colonial Language Policy**

We must briefly observe the elitist orientation of the colonial language policy just summarized. Notice, as stated above that the indigenous languages were used as media of instruction, in most cases, only in the first three years, thereafter, they were taught only as subjects. At the secondary school level, only a few of the indigenous languages were available as elective school subjects, and quite often even these were contemptuously ignored by both the teachers and pupils. The end-in-view of the policy was the efficient running of the colonial administration, not the sociocultural integration and authenticity of the colonized peoples within the nation, nor of their economic and technological development. The products of the educational system were to liaise between the administration and the peoples as interpreters, and as court and simple account clerks. To this end, given native-speaker competence and assuming performance versatility in their different mother tongues, all that the prospective Nigerian employee needed was basic competence in English. Therefore it was English all the way from the fourth or fifth year of primary schooling through the secondary and higher education.

Although the indigenous languages and English have maintained virtually the same regime in the primary school system in the new policy as in the old, a basis for describing the present policy as new is the testamentary overtone of the statement of its underlying philosophy and of the arrangements made for the implementation of its provisions. We also notice that while the colonial education policy focused on language mainly at the primary school level, the scope of the present policy as we shall see, is multilevel, it reaches down to pre-primary as well as up to the secondary school levels.

## **Sociolinguistic Context of the Educational Language Policy**

In the logic of this discussion, as earlier suggested, placing Nigeria's National Language Policy in Sociolinguistic context entails its evaluation in terms of the policy objectives. Detailed statements of those objectives for all the levels of education are available in all the revised versions of the policy, and will be summarized shortly. The catchword for the aspiration of the objectives is 'Development', simply interpreted to refer to the well-being and self actualization of the educated individual person, and the overall development of the society in which he lives. This end objective is readily agreed to, but not so readily agreed to and therefore highly controversial, is the medium of educating that individual to equip him and to integrate him and his ethnocultural compatriots into the larger nation or country comprising other subnationalities where they all can peacefully and profitably prosecute and transact their existence. The controversy is perennial in most multilingual and multicultural societies especially in Africa; equally its articulation has become a classic in sociolinguistic literature. (see Fishman (1968) and Bamgbose (1993). The argument generated will be briefly summarised and may be found instructive by anyone who is still undecided on which side of the divide to her cast his or vote on the language of instruction as the different levels of education, and in nation building.

## **1.3 The Nationism and Nationalism Contest**

Nigeria typifies the multilingual and multicultural states which, in their several and collective wisdom or lack of it, model their development after the West and measure the progress of their development efforts by Euro-American standards. The design of language policy in such societies, as Fishman (1968), (Bamgbose, 1993), have extensively remarked, is often vitiated by objectives pulls in two opposite and often culturally and ideologically contradictory directions. At one end is

a group of concerns for the demands of nationalism in the form of socio-cultural integration, the revival of autochthony and the pursuit of authenticity in the institutions and operations of the state. The linguistic tools most suitable for realizing these ends are the indigenous languages and their associated literatures. Most of the language are, however, at present ill-equipped and inadequate to quickly fulfill such roles as are set for them in nation-building in this supersonic age. In the Nigerian case, for example, of the close to 500 languages found to be spoken in the country, only the three pre-eminently major (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba) have been standardized and fairly sufficiently modernized and made adequate (that is, have appropriate terminology) for studying and teaching science, mathematics and social studies at the senior primary school level. Also only in these three languages are there available creative works and expository writings of merit to support the growth and dissemination of culture and in sufficient quantity to support political education and mass literacy. Some 20 to 25 others are just at the initial stages of standardization, terminology development and production of first primers and readers. In the well over 350 remaining, essential preliminary linguistic description and initial literacy activities, even graphization, have not started.

At the other end of the pull is the desire of the developing countries for modernity and efficiency in the operations of the emergent nation-states, all this is in addition to the need for these states to eliminate subnational loyalties within their borders. These are the demands of nationalism. The target is western-type modernity and efficiency in the form of visible economic growth (as defined by western yardsticks and parameters) and technological development made possible by equipment designed and fabricated in the west. It includes western-type bureaucratic organization and could even include convergence toward or congruence with western sociocultural forms (see Mazrui, 1974). The linguistic tools for quickly launching the developing societies into this western orbit are the development and readily available Western European language, especially English and French.

Above, in brief, is the dilemma faced by peoples in developing countries, and the web in which the design and implementation of their language policies are caught. The rest of this paper describes Nigeria's attempt to use an educational language policy and its prosecution as bases to resolve the kind of dilemma outlined and arrive at a workable and acceptable national language policy that will serve the objectives both of socio-cultural integration and authenticity (nationalism) and instrumental efficiency (nationalism). The presentation in part follows the logic adopted in the NPE, namely, statement of the general objectives of education at the different levels of the system (or selections from such objectives), statement of the language teaching and learning policy at each level, and statement of the strategy for the implementation of the policy. These are excerpted straight from the NPE. We then make observations on the scope, objectives and operational strategy of the policy for each level. Later we consider some more general but serious structural and attitudinal problems (private and official) which have been a hindrance to the effective implementation of the policy and the realization of its objectives.

## **2.0 PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION LEVEL**

This is the level of formal education for children aged 3 to 5 plus, prior to their entering the primary school.

### **2.1 Objectives**

Among the objectives of pre-primary education are:

- effecting a smooth transition from the home to the (primary) school;

- preparing the child for the primary level of education;
- inculcating social norms;
- inculcating in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the
- exploration of nature and the local environment;
- teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc., through play; and

2.2 teaching good habits, especially good health habits (Section 2:10).

### 2.3 Language/Instructional Medium Policy

Among other undertakings, NPE states that Government will "ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the Mother Tongue (MT) or the Language of the Immediate Community (LIC) ..." (Section 2:11 subparag. 3).

### 2.4 Implementation Strategy

In pursuit of the policy, NPE states that Government will

- a) develop the orthography for many more Nigerian languages, and
- b) produce textbooks in Nigerian languages ..." (Section 2:11 subparag 3a, b).

The policy enunciated above is known as the Mother Tongue Medium (MTM) policy in the most thorough-going sense of the term; that is, the use of the child's mother tongue (MT) or the language of his immediate community (LIC) for teaching him all the subjects on the curriculum, except English (see Bamgbose, 1977). LIC applies in a situation where the child's MT is a minority language, existing as a linguistic enclave around which a bigger language is predominantly spoken. The bigger language constitutes LIC and is used as medium of instruction as, for example, Hausa (LIC) predominates over the myriad of small languages in many parts of northern Nigeria or as Yoruba predominates over Egun in the Badagry area of Lagos State.

We notice the forthrightness of the statement of the MT/LIC medium policy. It shows foresight and gives the impression of a strong desire on the part of the issuing authority, the Government, to use the language resource to facilitate learning, and enhance social integration via the LIC medium thereby preparing the grounds for national unity; achieving all of this package by tackling the language question at the root, i.e., at the beginning of formal education. But when the approach to the implementation of the policy is seen in the socio-educational and sociolinguistic context, a description of the policy as window-dressing may not be totally unjustified; and government itself must be aware of its own weak position over the matter. Government intends to "regulate and control the operation of pre-primary education" (Section 2:11 subparag, 5) but it is the one level of education which remains entirely a private sector enterprise. No statutory resource (fund and personnel) allocation is made to it. Therefore high fees are charged on the pupils enrolled in it. The schools are expedient for the pupils who receive introductory tuition in them before enrolment at the primary level, and most convenient for their parents who could then go out to work leaving their children in the care of the teachers. These apart and more importantly is the tradition of English as medium of instruction in the pre-primary school. It has been a great attraction and remains a strong motivation for the parents who send their little kids into this level of education. While most of the parents can be said to be unaware of the cognitive problems which learning in a yet

unmastered second language cannot but create for their children, they are all acutely aware of and daily impressed by the advantages which, since the inception of the British colonial administration, the mastery of English has always conferred on the Nigerians who possess communicative skills in the language. Therefore, even at some degree of strain to their family budgets, parents pay the high fees charged. In turn, the pre-primary school proprietors do not only respect but endeavour to satisfy the curricular interest of the parents for their children, including the medium. The set-up thus constitutes a veritable context for conflict between MT/LIC and English as medium of instruction. Official policy prescribes MT/ LIC but the English medium, the desire of the parents and of their collaborating school proprietors, prevails.

### **3.0 PRIMARY EDUCATION LEVEL**

This is education for children aged between 6 and a little over 11 before entering the secondary school. We have just pointed out that the prosecution of educational language policy at the pre-primary level suffers the logistic handicap of government not being able to call and insist on the MT/LIC medium tune because it does not pay the piper. There is also a sense in which the government could perhaps be said to regard pre-primary education as elitist luxury when in its (government's) view, education, for the majority begins at the primary level. Government therefore assumes greater responsibility and provides the resources for running this level of education. Tuition is free and universal, i.e., available to all, and might even be made compulsory.

#### **3.1 Objectives**

These are

- the inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy, and the ability to communicate effectively;
- the laying of a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
- citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society;
- character and moral training and the development of sound attitudes;
- developing in the child the ability to adapt to his changing environment;
- giving the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable him to function effectively in the society within the limits of his capacity; and
- providing basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality.

#### **3.2 Language Medium Policy**

NPE states that "Government will see to it that the medium of instruction in the primary school is initially the mother-tongue (MT) or the language of the immediate community (LIC) and, at a later stage, English (EM)" (Section 3: 15 subparagraph. 4).

The import of the MT/LIC part of this policy is best appreciated in relation to the curriculum for primary education and the objective principle that should guide its delivery.

**Curriculum:** The curriculum prescribed includes "the inculcation of literacy and numeracy, the study of science, the study of the social norms and values of the local community and of the country as a whole through civics and social studies ..." (Section 3:15 subparag. 2) while, concerning the pedagogy "Government will ensure that the teaching methods employed in the primary school de-emphasize the memorization and regurgitation of facts, encourage practical, exploratory and experimental methods, ..." (Section 3:15 subparag. 3).

The policy as stated above provides affirmative linguistic and psycholinguistic answers in respect of most of the general objectives of education at the primary school level. For example, considering that primary education could as well be terminal for a good percentage of the pupils, the MT/LIC is the better medium to ensure "permanent literacy and numeracy, and the ability to communicate effectively". It is the language to lay a sound basis for exploratory, scientific and reflective thinking, for citizenship education, for developing practical and manipulative skills that will enable the child to function effectively in the society, etc. No other, and especially no exogenously derived second language can ensure these (see also Adeniran, 1992).

But we notice that the MT/LIC medium is only initial; it gives way to the English medium (EM) at a later stage. The medium transition year is left open, advisedly, to take account of and accommodate what differences there might be in the transition context between different locations, as for instance between the homogeneity/heterogeneity of classes, the development and availability of literacy and instructional materials, and even personnel. In some cases the change-over is effected at the fourth, in some others at the fifth year.

In terms of this policy the country is seen to have elected bilingualism/multilingualism as language policy, and chosen the primary school to lay its foundation. Of course, bilingualism is the realistic policy for Nigeria and is perhaps inevitable considering, overall, the linguistic density of the country and the competitive domineering status of, especially, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. There is also the necessity of a language for external communication, and for which English is the obvious choice. The question, however, is whether the enduring objectives of primary education as listed are not being compromised by an EM policy that is put in operation so early sometime within the first six years of formal education. We recall the fact earlier pointed out that most of the pupils might not have had the privilege of pre-primary schooling where they could have picked up some English.

EM or even the bilingual medium of instructions would even seem to be counter-instructive, seen against research findings on the role of language in cognition. Our reference is the Six Year Primary Project (SYPP), the now world-famous experiment in full MTM, carried out at the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University). In it, Yoruba was used as medium for all the subjects on the curriculum (except English) all the six years of primary schooling. English had specialist teaching as a second language (see Afolayan 1976, 1977; Bamgbose 1984). Independent evaluations of the experiment and follow-up studies of its products show the clear advantages of laying a solid foundation for a child's education in the language best known by the child. The experiment and its evaluations also show that recognising and teaching English as a second language in Nigeria have positive effects on the mastery of the language.

Similar to SYPP, though not on quite the same conceptual and/ or organizational scale, is the Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP) carried out by the Institute of Education of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In it, Hausa functioned as MIT or LIC. English also had specialist teaching. The products were reported to achieve literacy faster in both Hausa and English. They were able to use the two languages more effectively and grasp mathematical and scientific concepts faster, among some other advantages of the scheme (Omojuwa, 1977).

As at the revised version of NPE (1981), if not earlier, the formulators of the language policy were aware of the findings of the experiments reported above, and their positive implications for knowledge acquisition and general language planning. But perhaps so much was societal and institutional demands for English and (misplaced?) anxiety about its early mastery that, by design, the introduction of English could possibly not wait until the secondary school; thus English again gained ascendancy over MT/LIC in the primary education system. An overview of language pedagogy at the primary school level will then be seen to have grave consequences for the ordinary Nigerian child who did not have pre-primary education nor go into the secondary school system. Learning to read and write his mother tongue for only three or four years does not guarantee for him permanent literacy and numeracy, nor the ability to manipulate the language for the other laudable objectives of primary education. And of course far less is to be expected of English. The whole design is thus futile and regrettable.

#### **4.0 SECONDARY EDUCATION LEVEL**

Secondary school education lasts six years and is run in two parts; three years apiece in the Junior and Senior Secondary Schools - JSS and SSS.

#### **4.1 Objectives**

The broad objectives of secondary education are

- i) preparation for useful living in the society; and
- ii) preparation for higher education (Section 4:17).

More specifically, secondary education, among others, should - develop and project Nigerian culture, art and language as well as the world's cultural heritage;

- raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, and appreciate those values specified under our broad and national aims, and live as good citizens; and
- foster Nigerian unity with emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our adversity (Section 4: 18).

#### **4.2 Language Education Policy**

Language education is perceived as instrumental and explicitly proposed "to achieve" the objectives of education. The curriculum of secondary education comprises core, vocational and elective subjects. Among the core subjects at the JSS are English and two Nigerian languages. The policy states that "In selecting two Nigerian languages students should study the language of their own area (MT/LIC) in addition to any(one) of the three main Nigerian languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, subject to availability of teachers" (Section 4: 19 subparagraph 4). At the SSS, English and one Nigerian language are listed among the core subjects.

In addition to being fundamental, the other status of a core subject is that it is compulsory (in contrast to an elective); and here perhaps is the radical and most remarkable feature of the new policy, namely, that in pursuit of the objective of "developing and projecting Nigerian culture, art and language", Nigerian languages are for the first time listed as compulsory school subjects. In the colonial period and immediately after, Nigerian languages hardly got mentioned in the secondary school curriculum; certainly not as compulsory subjects. If then there is firm commitment to its design and content, and the wherewithal (men and material) for its implementation is guaranteed, this policy has all the capability to transform the country's social landscape in the form of integrated interethnic relations, using the second indigenous languages the pupils now have to study as leverage. The English language of course remains for the country's outreach to the wider world from which information and influences for technological development will come.

The expectations above however now seem to be mere possibilities as, between the JSS and SSS levels, the policy itself so radically modifies the indigenous language component in a way which makes the expectation of interethnic integration via indigenous language use forlorn. While English remains constant on the core list of both levels, one Nigerian language has been dropped off the SSS list. This has serious implications.

First is that unless a child is otherwise strongly motivated, the law of pursuing the line of least resistance suggests that at the SSS his choice predictably will be his MT/LIC. The child has thus had only three years of learning a second indigenous language where the facilities for doing so were available. In most schools all over the country the facilities are not always available. Even if they were, three years are hardly enough to attain the degree of proficiency required to facilitate smooth interethnic social relations and business transactions.

Second is that as we have reported elsewhere (Adeniran 1992), state implementation committees sometimes misread the policy to mean that the one compulsory language at the SSS must be a child's second language. Where there are no facilities for doing this, no indigenous language is taught whatsoever; not even the MT.

Third, and perhaps far more frustrating as Lawal (1989) has reported is that the (advisory) National Council On Education itself sometime in 1987 "suspended the compulsory teaching of Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba in secondary schools owing to shortage of teachers". It is of course unimaginable that any advisory council would for any reason decide to suspend the teaching of English. The prestige differential and perceived as well as functional value is different, and higher. The system therefore supplies teachers of English in considerable quantity even if some of the teachers are not always of the right caliber. And thus, contrary to the initial expectations of a balanced bilingual pedagogy at the secondary school level, English once again has gained salience over the indigenous languages.

## **5.0 TERTIARY EDUCATION LEVEL**

Tertiary education is offered in Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and the Universities. There is no language policy designed for this level. However, English, since its advent in Nigeria, has/been the medium of higher education; it therefore probably seemed superfluous to re-state the established practice as policy.

In Polytechnic institutions which offer courses in the liberal arts, in Colleges of Education and in most of the conventional universities (those not solely of Technology), English and the major Nigerian languages are taught as subjects. A difference is however noticeable; this is in the nature of larger enrolments in the English than the indigenous language programmes. It is partly a carry-over of low societal attitude towards the indigenous languages in education and also a result of the absence of an official policy to vigorously encourage the study of the languages at this level. Yet, learning the indigenous languages should have been perceived as clearly the means by which tertiary institutions and their students could fulfill the integrativist role envisaged for them in nation-building. NPE expects the "Universities to serve as effective instruments for cementing national unity" (Section 5: 37). Therefore, having noticed "widespread ignorance among Nigerian groups about each other and about themselves," NPE stipulates that universities should institute "a compulsory first-year course in social organization, customs, culture and history of our various peoples. The award of degrees will be made conditional upon the passing of the paper in this course" (Section 5:37 subparag v). We assume that some reference will be made to language in the culture component of the General Studies programme but a passing reference to an indigenous language is hardly one to "cement national unity". By contrast, running parallel with the sociology component is a compulsory course in the Use of English. There is a whole examination paper in it which must be passed. The need for general remedial English and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is understandable in the context of falling standards. It just has been the case that here again we have greater weight accorded the learning of English over the equally required indigenous languages. Somalia pursued its own national language programme better by requiring that Somali students in all the departments of the national university learn Somali sufficiently to be able to append to their first degree dissertations a full or summarized abstract in the national language (see Andrezejewski, 1980).

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

Upon the attainment of sovereignty and also confronted with pressure for modernization, a new education policy was designed for Nigeria. It was hoped that the implementation of the policy would help the country strike and establish an identity which will be characterized by authenticity as well as promote modern development. On the grounds that language does have a role in this endeavour (as content and medium of knowledge acquisition) we surveyed the language provisions of the NPE - their scope, provisions for policy implementation, and the fate of such provisions in the socio-educational and sociolinguistic context. For certain levels in the educational system we find no specific provisions made. In the cases where provisions are made, we find that the design does not always take account of all necessary factors. Overall the policy then appears to have been ineffective with reference to the objective of using language to meet the demands of nationalism and nationism. This concluding part briefly considers the causes of the ineffectiveness.

First is that the policy has some inherently disabling structural features at different levels. An example is the inappropriate location of the complements, MT/LIC and English both within a short six-year primary education system. Another is the disproportional curricular weighting in favour of English at all the levels.

Second is the unfavourable attitude towards the indigenous languages in education. At the level of the overwhelming majority of Nigerians there is scepticism about the role of the indigenous languages in education especially their doubtful capability. Sometimes the attitude to the languages are downright negative but quite favourable to the increased learning and use of English in spite of the pervasive inverse relationship between the high cost of promoting the language (English) and performance in it. The cognitive and nationalistic motives underlying the development and promotion of indigenous languages do not seem to impress most Nigerians much apart from the linguists and language educators. The tie between language and the nation is perceived by most Nigerians in fixed chauvinistic ethnolinguistic terms, hardly ever in wider Nigerian nationalism. In terms of this attitude, the idea of promoting the major Nigerian languages to the status of national lingua franca in place of English at a future date almost amounts to treason. Thus for instance one S.M.K. Taribo, contributing to the language controversy in the Sunday New Nigerian of February 19, 1989 says:

*The collectivization of majors and minors into a geographical Nigerianity is as much an accident of history as it is traceable to the enterprise of alien dreamers. If there is a dire need to supplant the English language as a lingua franca because it is foreign, there must exist the corresponding imperative to dissolve both Nigeria and the federation because they, too, were created and midwived by the same colonial masters.*

The point of isomorphism between the English language and the Nigerian nation is clearly made but also overheard is the minority fear of insecurity and his search for refuge in the English language.

Finally, there is also noticeable official ambivalence in the implementation of the language policy. Adequate resource allocation is not always made, and as reported earlier, even an important agency of government, apparently overwhelmed by both the high costs and some other implementation logistics, and decided to lower the core status of the major indigenous languages within the secondary school curriculum.

Some five years ago, official lukewarmness towards the language policy reached the disquieting degree at which it was being interpreted as indication that government was about to renege its commitment to the details of the original objectives if not the entire spirit of the policy. But recently the new leadership in the Federal Government Ministry of Education has infused new impetus into educational language policy implementation in the country. The former Language Development Centre (a division of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council) and the National Institute for Nigerian Languages were both inaugurated. They are agencies for language planning and language development - promoting indigenous language research and propagation, language curriculum development, language teaching, and for generally co-coordinating language-in-education activities. In the activities of these agencies lay the hopes of realizing the potential contributions the indigenous languages and English can make to Nigeria's national development.

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## **BEYOND THE LANGUAGE PROVISIONS OF THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY: LOOKING AHEAD**

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### **1.0 Background Issues**

Diversity seems to be a hallmark of the Nigerian scape. From ethnic nationalities, who speak diverse languages, to cultural diversities, geographical and topographic variation, religious, economic and educational diversities, Nigeria truly qualifies to be described as a multilingual and multicultural nation. As a multilingual nation, Ethnologue lists over 500 languages from diverse language families including Niger Congo (the largest), Nilo Saharan, and Afro Asiatic, as being spoken in Nigeria. The number of languages in Nigeria is not comparable to the level of language development in Nigeria. Many more Nigerian languages have never been documented or described. Orthographies are the preserve of a select handful of these many languages. With the endangerment of many of these languages, the future survival appears rather bleak. Obviously from the foregoing, Nigeria's indigenous languages rank low in terms of status which is a reflection of the prestige and function of these languages. This conclusion is predicated on the lack of standardisation, juridical status and level of vitality (Stewart 1968).

With that many number of languages in Nigeria, it would be reasonable to expect that there would be policies in place for the improvement of the lot of these languages. Unfortunately, at this point in our national development, we are yet to have a dedicated language policy with the goal of addressing the various language issues – ranging from the number of languages, language in education, language in governance, language use, language vitality, majority and minority language issues, endangered languages, etc. The operational framework on language matters in Nigeria is based on the language provisions of the National Policy on Education, which barely scratches the surface of language related issues in Nigeria.

### **2.0 The National Policy on Education – Philosophies**

For our purposes, we shall work within the ambit of the National Policy on Education (NPE) as stipulated in the 2004 version. Various stipulations are made in the 2004 NPE including the philosophy of Nigeria which states as follows:

- Live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice
- Promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding

National goals are also enunciated as part of the philosophy as follows:

- A free and democratic society,
- A just and egalitarian society,
- A united, strong and self-reliant nation,
- A great and dynamic economy

- A land full of bright opportunities for all citizens

The thrust of the NPE as stated in 10a and b include the following:

- The development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen;
- The full integration of the individual into the community; and
- The provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system.

### 2.1 Language Provisions of the NPE

Various language provisions have been made in the NPE to address different levels of education – pre-primary, primary, secondary, tertiary, non-formal education. We shall present these provisions as stated within the various categories.

It would be impossible to achieve the goals of NPE as stated in 10a and b without recourse to language, especially with regard to what language will be used in acquiring the various educational and life skills, beginning from the pre-primary, primary, secondary to the tertiary levels. Language provisions were therefore included in the NPE for that purpose. We will take a critical look at some of the language provisions in the NPE to see how they fare. The preamble acknowledges the crucial role of language in bonding and nurturing the society and so states *inter alia*:

- Government appreciates the importance of language as a means of **promoting social interaction** and **national cohesion** and **preserving cultures**. Thus, every child **shall learn** the language of the immediate environment. Furthermore, in the interest of national unity it is **expedient** that every child shall be required to learn one of the three Nigerian languages: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba.
- (b) For smooth interaction with our neighbours it is **desirable** for every Nigerian child to speak French. Accordingly, French shall be the second official language in Nigeria, and it shall be **compulsory** in primary and junior secondary schools but Non-Vocational Elective at the Senior Secondary School.

### 2.2 Early Childhood/Pre-Primary Education

In this category, which concerns the early and formative years of the Nigerian child, the following provisions are made:

- **Ensure** that the medium of instruction is principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community; and to this end will;
- **Develop** the orthography of many Nigerian languages and
- **Produce** textbooks in Nigerian languages

### 2.3 Basic Education

The language provisions for Basic Education are not overtly specified but given 16, those provisions that apply to primary, junior secondary and adult and non-formal education should also be applicable.

Primary Education (19 b)

Several languages are listed under ‘Language’:

- Language of the environment
- English
- French

- Arabic

Further provisions are made for the training of teachers who will teach the language courses, with specific mention of English and Nigerian Languages as well as the language that will serve as the medium of instruction as follows:

- 19 (c) Specialist teachers of particular subjects such as ... Language Arts (in relation to **English and Nigerian Languages**)
- 19 (e) The **medium of instruction** in the primary school shall be the **language of the environment** for the **first three years**. During this period, English shall be taught as a subject
- 19 (f) From the fourth year, **English** shall **progressively** be used as a medium of instruction and the **language of immediate environment** and **French** shall be taught as **subjects**.

## 2.4 Secondary Education

The secondary education is split into Junior and Secondary.

### 2.4.1 Junior Secondary Education (JSS)

The following language provisions have been made:

Group A – Core Subjects

- English
- French
- Language of environment to be taught as L1\*
- One major Nigerian Language other than that of the environment to be taught as L2\*

\*The language of environment shall be taught as L1 where it has orthography and literature. Where it does not have, it shall be taught with emphasis on orality as L2.

### 2.4.2 Senior Secondary Education (SSS)

Group A – Core Subjects

- English
- A major Nigerian Language
- Literature-in-English

## Observations

- There is a rider attached to the teaching of the L2 as the language of the environment – where the language has an orthography and literature, it is to be taught as an L1; but where the language has neither an orthography nor literature, emphasis is to be on ‘orality’.
- The English language is ranked higher than other languages; it occupies No. 1 position on the list
- The provisions are also silent on language of instruction at the Secondary School level
- Language/medium of instruction shall be the English language
- Silent on the medium of instruction for the Nigerian Languages to be taught – English or the Nigerian language

From our reading of the NPE language provisions, we can assume that the language of instruction is English. Moreover, in NPE 14c, it is the responsibility of the government to develop orthographies of Nigerian languages, to produce textbooks and to ensure that the medium of

instruction is principally the mother-tongue. How then does the government expect teaching and learning to occur when it has not provided the principal tool, which is the language orthography, to do the work? The development of Nigerian languages is not likely to be sustainable if we continue to prioritize foreign languages over Nigerian languages. In the following section, we shall analyse the language provisions of the NPE in addition to considering the possible consequences.

### 3.0 Analysis of the NPE Language Provisions

Part of (10a) "... in the interest of national unity it is expedient that every child shall be required to *learn* one of the three Nigerian languages: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba".

This phrasing seems to suggest a number of things. The first is the question of 'expediency', meaning that the provision will only be implemented when it is convenient for this to be done. It is not stated at whose convenience – the government, the learner, the teacher, etc.

Secondly, the provision appears to be learner focused – the responsibility devolves on the child, in spite of the preamble which screams, "**Government appreciates the importance of language as a means of promoting social interaction and national cohesion and preserving cultures.**"!

Observe however, that in (10b), the adjectives 'desirable' and 'compulsory' are used. French shall be compulsory both in Primary and Junior Secondary Schools. In fact, to underscore the point, 'compulsory' is highlighted in bold. However, with respect to the indigenous Nigerian languages, there is neither '**desirability**' nor '**compulsion**'. Furthermore, in 14c, the preamble states that:

*Government shall:*

- **Ensure** that the medium of instruction is principally the mother-tongue
- **Develop** the orthography of many more Nigerian languages
- **Produce** textbooks in Nigerian languages

The reality is that many schools, especially those in the urban areas don't 'principally' use the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction – it is English all the way! Moreover, just a handful of Nigerian languages have orthographies, some of which are produced by the language communities themselves. Thirdly, government is not producing textbooks in Nigerian languages! Textbooks in Nigerian languages are produced by individuals. And finally there is the very low status ascribed to Nigerian languages. Notice that even in terms of listing, the Nigerian languages generally are placed at the end after the foreign languages.

The provision is made in (19b and c) that for the following language subjects listed in the Primary School curriculum, Language of the environment, English, French and Arabic, specialist teachers are to be provided. The reality is that specialist teachers, even in English, are not always provided. Often, trained indigenous language teachers are conscripted to teach other subjects in the school because provision is usually not made for indigenous languages in the school timetable.

Although there is the provision in the NPE that the language of the environment shall be used as the medium of instruction in the first three years and thereafter the English language shall be **progressively** used as the medium of instruction. What we find is that English is used as the medium of instruction from the first year of primary education. There is no question of '**progression**' from the fourth year as prescribed in the NPE. It is the English language throughout.

### 3.1 The Secondary School Curriculum

The Junior Secondary School curriculum specifies the following core subjects:

- English
- French
- Mathematics
- Language of the environment to be taught as L1
- One major Nigerian language other than that of the environment to be taught as L2

It does appear that government has made language provisions without the *force de majeure* to implement them. For instance, even though there is provision for the language of the environment to be taught as L1, it is doomed to fail from the start because there is a rider that states that if there is no orthography then it should be taught ‘with emphasis on oracy as L2’. Without any plan to fill the gap in teacher training, there seems to be no future for the formal teaching and learning of indigenous languages.

The core subjects in the Senior Secondary School curriculum include:

English language  
Mathematics

#### A major Nigeria (sic) language of the environment

It seems that progressively the language of the environment seems to become redundant by the time the students get to the SSS level!

### 3.2 The Consequences

The phrasing in the NPE vis-à-vis Nigerian languages does not appear to encourage the promotion of Nigerian languages. The reality is that the higher the educational level, emphasis on studying Nigerian languages is progressively whittled away. At the tertiary level of higher education, no mention is made at all of the language of the environment.

Where the Federal Government has some responsibility to implement the language provisions in the NPE, there seems to be implementation fatigue. For instance, the following language provisions are expressly to be prepared by the Federal government:

- ensuring that medium of instruction is in the mother tongue
- developing orthographies of more Nigerian languages
- producing textbooks in Nigerian languages

These provisions are minimally implemented by the government with the consequence that there appears to be near zero relevance of Nigerian languages. Many more Nigerian languages are becoming endangered. Of the over 500 languages spoken in Nigeria, Ethnologue reports that 44 are dying while 27 are in trouble.

### 3.3 Endangerment Indicators

Ethnologue lists the following twelve as indicators for language endangerment:

- The speaker population

- The ethnic population; the number of those who connect their ethnic identity with the language (whether or not they speak the language)
- The stability of and trends in that population size
- Residency and migration patterns of speakers
- The use of second languages
- The use of the language by others as a second language
- Language attitudes within the community
- The age range of the speakers
- The domains of use of the language
- Official recognition of languages within the nation or region
- Means of transmission (whether children are learning the language at home or being taught the language in schools)
- Non-linguistic factors such as economic opportunity or the lack thereof

When we consider the Ethnologue endangerment indicators vis-à-vis indigenous Nigerian languages, it seems to show that many Nigerian languages are endangered since most fall within the above indicators. In pursuance of better economic opportunity, many speakers, especially the youths, have had to move from local communities where their languages are spoken to urban centres where these languages are not spoken, further reducing the likelihood of using the language. Nigeria is a multilingual nation with many people speaking a minimum of two languages, one of which is a second language. Many indigenous Nigerian languages have negative attitudes within the community, the speakers are usually older, many never receive regional nor national recognition, and many young people rarely get to learn the language at home or in the school, since these languages do not serve as a passport to attractive and enhanced economic opportunities. Languages must be empowered to remain alive before they can be used as media of instruction or taught as subjects in schools. It becomes imperative for our languages to be empowered to meet the various functions they must perform in various societies in order to be relevant. There is also the need to step up the visibility and status of Nigerian languages.

## 4.0 OPTIONS FOR NPE LANGUAGE PROVISIONS

### 4.1 Political Will

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the language provisions, a fundamental requirement is the political will that will ensure the survival of Nigerian languages. Political will from the level of the executive, legislative and judicial arms of the federal, state and local governments of Nigeria. If French has been prescribed as the second official language and taught as a compulsory subject, such endorsements should also be made for Nigerian languages by its own government. The government should through the supervision of the various Ministries of Education **ensure** that the medium of instruction is actually in the appropriate Nigerian languages. The government should take steps to ensure the **development** of the orthographies of many more Nigerian languages. The government itself should engage in the actual **production** of textbooks and not rely only on private individuals and NGOS/CBOs with lean resources to do this.

Moreover, government should have clear policies on the languages spoken in Nigeria in order to attract constitutional and budgetary allocations in the scheme of things.

## 4.2 Other Options beyond the NPE Language Provisions

On a practical level, another option to address the challenges facing indigenous Nigerian language matters is through the utilisation of ICT tools. We should not be solving challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with 19<sup>th</sup> Century tools. Crucially, there is a need to incorporate ICT tools and other innovations into the school curriculum with concomitant benefits. Younger people are more receptive to computer related learning and materials. ICT tools provide wider access and reach in addition to preservation of materials through text digitization. Our folktales, folksongs, myths and legends have more appeal if they are transformed into images and storylines in cartoon and animation genre. If we truly are serious in encouraging the young generation to adopt our indigenous languages and culture, then we must find a way to reach them through the tools that have appeal to them. See for instance this animated film: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WWuCHTf1\\_o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WWuCHTf1_o).

A further option to promoting and empowering indigenous Nigerian languages is through the inclusion of the study of these languages in the educational curriculum. The school or educational curriculum should be reviewed to embrace the introduction of current indigenous Nigerian language materials. For instance, in addition to the inclusion in the Primary and Secondary School Curriculum, there is no reason why the study of Nigerian languages should not be included as part of GST programmes in our tertiary institutions (F. Egbokhare, p.c. 07/03/2016). A Nigerian language policy should be able to address such issues.

Language documentation and collaborative research is another approach to empowering our indigenous languages. According to Ethnologue, Nigeria has over 500 languages. Owing to a number of factors which will not be discussed here, many of these languages are hardly known beyond the native speakers. Extensive and comprehensive documentation of indigenous languages will ensure that the languages are preserved and brought to more visibility. An added advantage will be that the communities will have a better regard for their languages and culture. Language documentation will entail collaboration with communities, governments at various levels, industry, academic disciplines, individuals, funding agencies, interdisciplinary collaboration. The Humanities could, for instance, collaborate with computer scientists and engineers to create innovative tools from and for our languages and culture for sustainability. An excellent example of language documentation and collaborative research can be drawn from the documentation of the dirge among the Uruan people of Nigeria, which had a team comprising the following:

- Community members
- Linguists
- A Musicologist
- Video/Camera operators
- Computer scientist
- Junior Faculty
- Graduate students
- others

All this is exclusive of the enormous benefits of collaboration, some of which include expertise and knowledge drawn from various disciplines, capacity building, experience and knowledge sharing.

These interventions provide the momentum to make the indigenous Nigerian languages more visible and more in the public space.

### 4.3 Language Documentation, Indigenous Language Resource Development and Cooperative Research

As a result of language documentation and collaborative research between the University of Uyo and other institutions, a number of products have been obtained including,

- Collaborative-data-sharing catalogue of Ibibio LD Products such as
  - Lexicographic Resource – *Nwed Usem Ibibio* (Ibibio language dictionary: Urua, Ekpenyong & Gibbon, 2012)
  - The WALA Initiative
- Speech Resource
  - LLSTI ([www.llsti.org](http://www.llsti.org))
  - Has led to the first parametric speech synthesis system in Ibibio (Ekpenyong, Urua, Watts, King and Yamagishi, 2014)
- Medefaidrin Project, a critically endangered religious language in Akwa Ibom State with about 20 active speakers remaining leading to the
  - Development of a Web-Talking Trilingual Dictionary (Medefaidrin-English-Ibibio)
  - Recent collaboration with Andrij Rovenchack to develop a font system for the Medefaidrin language (Rovenchack, Gibbon, Ekpenyong & Urua, 2016).
- The documentation of the dirge among the Uruan people of Nigeria
  - Video and audio files of Uruan dirge songs and performance
  - Musical scores based on the dirge from the University of Uyo Department of Music
  - Transcription of the dirge texts
  - Interdepartmental collaboration – Linguistics, Music and Computer Science

### 4.4 Empowerment

- Primary and Secondary Education
  - ❖ Ibibio has for the past few years been examined by the national examination bodies, NECO and WAEC.
  - ❖ More books for the schools have now been published in all areas – grammar, literature, culture, history, etc. and also used by teachers and students.
  - ❖ On February 21 of every year when the world marks the International Mother Language Day, essay competitions, quizzes, poetry, drama and cultural events are presented and prizes given to groups that excel.
  - ❖ This should sustain and empower the Ibibio language to explore more possibilities in expanding the frontiers of the language
  - ❖ Motivation for other languages to do the same for their own languages.

It is our belief that the National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) can and should support the activities that aim to raise the awareness in communities in order to extend the International Mother Language Day programme approved by UNESCO to be held annually on February 21 to many more indigenous Nigerian language communities.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The survival of Nigerian languages should not be left for the government only. It is a collective responsibility involving individuals, communities, governments at various strata, corporate organizations, nongovernmental organizations, educational institutions. More should be done to increase speakers' preference and interest in the Nigerian languages vis-à-vis the dominance of the English language which is a significant factor in the disempowerment of Nigerian languages.

Government should make policies that empower Nigerian languages even as it makes policies to strengthen the English and French languages. Given the prevalence of ICT, utilization of ICT tools should be deployed in making Nigerians more interesting to the younger generation who should be prepared to protect, preserve and sustain our indigenous languages.

Language documentation and collaborative research are trends that need to be explored to make our languages viable for the future. Therefore the need for cooperative work is well-motivated. Empowering our indigenous languages is a collective responsibility and all stakeholders should come together to proffer suggestions on the various alternatives of sustaining our languages.

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# THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR NIGERIAN LANGUAGES IN THE LANGUAGE PROVISIONS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION

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One of the major constraints on the implementation of the National Policy of Education is the shortage of teachers of Nigerian languages....

*It is in an attempt to provide a radical solution to this problem that the Federal Military Government has announced the establishment of a National Institute for Nigerian Languages and set up a working Committee...*

*The Report, 1992.*

## **ABSTRACT**

*Despite many years since the promulgation of the National Policy on Education and its indigenous language contingent, there appears to be no impetus for implementation. This paper looks at the motivation for the indigenous language issue, its status over time and the possible reason for such state. While knowledge-able people about the benefits of native languages are optimistic it would augur well for the country and thereby providing all necessary facilities including setting up a special university for the purpose, it appears some arm of government is not enthusiastic about the indigenous language prospect or the Institute related to it. The paper shows why the policy must be reactivated by providing evidence that students learn best when they take off from their known languages, and that a lot of developments hang on the national use of indigenous languages.*

## **0. INTRODUCTION**

The need for and advantages of education in the mother tongue are common knowledge now, and the advocacy for such from educated quarters has been in the air for as long as many of us can remember. From 1969, the debate on indigenous language start in education has been alive in Nigeria, culminating in the provision for its inclusion in our National Policy on Education (NPE 1977, revised severally). However, the stark reality is that between rhetoric and implementation, there's hardly any step forward. In spite of the five revisions of the Policy, there is no perceptible movement of the dial. This paper essays to look into the motivation for the indigenous language provision in the NPE, the efforts, the gains, the difficulties, and the way forward. As the life of the National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN), Aba, is woven into the NPE, its accomplishments are assessed in relation to the NPE in the whole scenario.

### **1.1 THE NATIONAL POLICY OF EDUCATION**

The changing policies of education in Nigeria aspire to meet specific socio-economic needs of the country, hence the frequent revisions. From the post-independence policy (1977) there has always been the need to live in unity and harmony as a democratic and sovereign nation. Vide the broad aspiration of the national planners<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes are from the 2013 edition.

- a. To live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice, and
- b. Promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding.

Narrowed to the Nigerian context, the blueprint further states that Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on the following set of beliefs:

- a. Education is an instrument for national development and social change;
- b. Education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria;
- c. Education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfillment and general development of the society.
- d. Education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, color, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges; and
- e. Education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, ***functional and relevant to the needs of the society***.

We have a lot more, but I narrow our consideration down to the individual:

This philosophy of Nigeria education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and the provision of equal opportunities for ***all citizens*** of the nation at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels *both inside and outside the formal school system.*<sup>2</sup>

The welfare of and concern for the individual are entrenched in our Constitution, and stated as

- a. a free and democratic society;
- b. a just and egalitarian society
- c. united, strong and self-reliant nation
- d. a great and dynamic economy; and
- e. a land full of bright opportunities for ***all citizens***.

These are lofty goals of Nigerian education but they could sometimes be down-to-earth, as:

- a. development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizens;
- b. total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world.

The strands of NPE are varied and several.

## **1.2 Indigenous Language Provisions**

Whichever way one looks at what 'education' is conceive as; ***a preparation for life or life itself***, no one understands anything that he cannot vocalize, that he cannot reduce to language (Vygotsky and psycholinguists would have a lot to tell us here). Language and thought processes are intricately linked together, the more tangible one being language. Thus, in order to achieve all the goals of education, and if that education is not limited to '***in English***', and further still if such education has to reach all---the one who goes on in life to be a researcher, the engineer, the novelist, the mason, the carpenter, the cattle rearer, the fisherman, all gamut of occupation---aspects of indigenous languages have to be addressed, and it is, albeit minimally:

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<sup>2</sup> It is not exactly clear how secondary and tertiary education function outside of the regular school system.

..... every child shall be taught in the mother tongue or language of the immediate community<sup>3</sup> for the first four years of basic education. In addition, it is expected that every child shall learn one Nigerian language.  
(NPE 2013:3)

It is however to be noted that while a little space and space devoted to language in the national policy, language actually has the whole education in its scope!

For the sake of clarity, the first four years of basic education would correspond to ages 6 through 10, the first year corresponding to the kindergarten kind of setting, a pre-school, while the remaining three years take the child through Primary 3 of the elementary school.

The big question is, what does it hurt any group of people to follow this little prescription, if it is going to guarantee better learning, better education that “maximizes the creative potentials and skills of individual for self-fulfillment and general development of the society”. Considered another way, does it slow anybody down to learn in his own language? These complementary questions need to be addressed.

While Basic Education does not end with the primary school, the use of the indigenous language as medium of instruction is prescribed to end midway into the child’s primary school from whence the English language takes over for the rest of his life. Only and only if, it is enforced, the child’s contact with his language (if he lives in the monolingual society), is as a subject in the school curriculum, no more than he encounters French or Arabic! Through the Junior Secondary School (JSS), that is, from 12 years of age through 15, he is stuck with English, and his interaction with his language, the pivot of his culture, is limited to about two hours a week on the school curriculum up till the end of his secondary education; that is about 17 or 18 years of age. Other nations live, sleep, dream in, and die in their languages, but our system unfortunately prescribes a negligible span of guided interaction with our languages, a span that is even being ignored!

It may be noted that this is not an oversight as the NPE specifically addresses it:

“The medium of instruction in the primary school shall be the language of immediate environment for the first three years of monolingual communities. During this period, English shall be taught as a subject.”(NPE 2013:8)<sup>4</sup>

To facilitate the success and impact of the mother tongue (L<sub>1</sub>), it seems, the “Government shall provide specialist teachers” for **all subjects**, including the Language Arts (in relation to the Nigerian languages, Arabic and French)<sup>5</sup>

What course of study started from post-4 years of primary education, continues for the rest of the child’s educational career in the secondary education where he is henceforth subjected to infrequent use of his mother tongue, being limited to that as a subject.

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<sup>3</sup> There seems to be a problem in the concepts ‘mother tongue’ and the ‘language of immediate community’, even in the 1960s and 1970s where there was massive rural-urban movement with the multiplicity of languages in Nigeria. I guess the language of immediate community may be different for many rural migrants, even today. I timidly ask what would be the language of immediate community in say, Lagos, Abuja today that would not leave out many children?

<sup>4</sup> Nothing is said of multilingual communities.

<sup>5</sup> Note the preponderance of French and Arabic.

### 1.3 Assessment and Concern of the Mother tongue Specification

A stab at the mother tongue prescription, for now, raises a lot of questions concerning the efficacy and proficiency attainable in the mother tongue. Barring exceptional cases, four early years of instruction and literacy in the mother tongue is inadequate for a mastery of the lore and wisdom of the land; perhaps the whole of the elementary school would have been more tolerable for that, while some foreign or dominant language is introduced as just a subject, possibly with emphasis built into it. That is what experiments that proclaim and guarantee success tell us: the Ife 6-year Primary Project ventured into it and came up with the good news. Similar experiments internationally report same, that students learn best and are better equipped for further education, (even in another language) if they started with their mother tongues.

The people; farmers, shepherds, fishermen, artistes who may need to drink deep and spend some time to perfect their style---all people who will need to contribute to various facets of our economy and other developments, would definitely need longer than four years to master the rubrics and intricacies of their languages. In addition, if the success in L<sub>1</sub> is in doubt, what would be the fate of the additional L<sub>2</sub>. The answer is blowing in the wind!

### 1.4 The Ife Six-year Primary Project.

The Department of Education at the University of Ife, now known as Obafemi Awolowo University, Ilé-Ifé<sup>6</sup>, was optimistic the indigenous language theory would work, and therefore set up a modified experimental basis for the tenet.

It may be noted that it is not just Nigeria that buys the verity of education in the mother tongue; it has become an axiom, almost a universal as of the time Nigeria decided to test it out and infuse it into our education system. Prior to the injection of this theory into our educational system in the 1970s, 'the UNESCO had been pioneering and promoting the use of indigenous languages for the past thirty five years' (Fafunwa et.al. 1989:10). The Colonial government, namely the British government, while beginning to assist schools in Nigeria by 1925 had stated that

...education should be adapted to local conditions in such a manner as would enable it to conserve all sound elements in local traditions and social organization.

The study of the educational use of the *vernacular* and the provision of textbooks in the vernacular are of primary importance

Fafunwa et. al. 1989:17

The literature is replete with this educational psychological tenet, mostly in developing countries. See Kosonen, (2013), Burton (2012)<sup>7</sup>, Bamgbose (1982, 1984), and Adebisi Afolayan (1982); all hailing the superiority of the indigenous language start in education. For instance, in a mini-experiment involving pictorial stimulus, the students coached in Yorùbá and tested in Yorùbá did transparently better than those who had their teaching in English, even when their interrogation was in Yorùbá (Fafunwa, et. al 1989 : 13).

<sup>6</sup> Although the experiment is Ife's, I know from personal contact that it drew great scholars from higher institutions around.

<sup>7</sup> Kosonen for Cambodia, Vietnam and Thai, while Burton reports comprehensively on Tagalog, and Filipino.

### Back to the Ife 6-Year Primary Project

In personal communication (classroom situation) and in text books, I've heard Fafunwa say that 'If the first twelve years is the most formative in a child's life, then mother tongue education for the child should be seen as an inalienable right and its denial be viewed as denial of the child's fundamental human rights.'<sup>8</sup> Without doubt, the Ife Primary Project was based on this principle, long nursed and advocated with importunity by the professor over many years. That is why the philosophy resounds in virtually all theoretical formulation of the language provisions in the NPE, except that the Ife Six-Year Primary Project has objection of some sort regarding the limited span of the use of indigenous language:

With the switching of the medium of instruction from the mother tongue after three years to English in the last three or four years of primary education, the average Nigerian child is usually neither proficient in his mother tongue nor in English, thus defeating one of the primary aims of Nigerian education which is permanent literacy.<sup>9</sup>

In essence, the Ife 6-Year Primary Project is a vindication of the claims that indigenous language medium of education provides superior learning (See Bamgbose, 1984).

Assuming the correctness of the mother tongue theory, (and it appears to be correct, following the report from a similar Thai experiment)<sup>10</sup>, how would this laudable project be executed; where would the instructors in indigenous languages come from? The source of the recruitment and material provisions has to be especially considered.

## 2 THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

Granted that the indigenous language provision as mapped out in the NPE is bound to have only limited success, there's still some rays of hope for those who survive the basic education level. They would continue to be in contact with their language, up to tertiary level. That is to say all may not be lost yet. But how much mileage does that give us? However, even the programme at the basic education level is still beset with problems; there's no indication where the teachers would come from for the explosive enrollment in schools, following the establishment of the Universal Primary Education (UPE, 1976). The educational engineers, as clearly seen in the Minister of Education, Aliu Babs Fafunwa, erstwhile initiator and Director of the Ife 6-Year Primary Programme now seeks a bigger canvass. The Ife 6-year Primary Project may have assembled renowned scholars from the neighborhood (Universities of Lagos, Ife and Ibadan), when we are dealing with a country of about 120 million people and a multilingual society with more than four hundred languages, then, a larger arena is required to service the reality show. The idea of National Institute for Nigerian Languages was born. In a report captioned "Report of the Committee on the

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<sup>8</sup> Babs Fafunwa was my teacher in 1970, and I worked for him as a graphic illustrator of the 6-Year Ife Primary Project textbooks in Summer 1971.

<sup>9</sup> To this it is to be added that no known developed nation stops the use of its indigenous languages at the primary level. It is a life-long association, for which Education psychology would find an explanation for why developing countries don't advance modern technology-wise. I wonder whether Korea, Iran, China, Israel use a foreign language in their scientific developments!

<sup>10</sup> "Based on learning results from the Pattani Malay MLE PILOR IN Thailand, Walter (2011) has shown that speakers of the Non-Dominant Language (NDL) studying in their L<sub>1</sub> perform better in all tested school subjects—including the Dominant Language (DL), Standard Thai--- than speakers of the NDL taught only in the DL

Establishment of the National Institute for Nigerian Languages”<sup>11</sup>, henceforth, the *Report*, dated 1992, the first words of the founding Committee read thus:

The Institute

One of the major constraints on the implementation of the National Policy of Education is the shortage of teachers of Nigerian languages. In spite of efforts by Colleges of Education and Universities to produce such teachers, the number available remains inadequate. *It is in an attempt to provide a radical solution to this problem that the Federal Military Government has announced the establishment of a National Institute for Nigerian Languages* and set up a working Committee with the specific task of examining the basic requirements that will enable the Institute to produce the appropriate manpower required in the area of the teaching of Nigerian languages.<sup>12</sup>

The tempo was fast from now on until some impediments came the way of the Institute. It may well be that it is a military fiat that created the Institute, but this was subjected to democratic law processes within a year, to become a legal establishment, and culminating in the *National Institute for Nigerian Languages Act* (Henceforth the *Act*).<sup>13</sup>

In both the *Report* and the *Act*, the aims, objectives, and operation of the Institute were well-spelt out: the status, function, structure, even possible changes were envisaged and dealt with, such that we could say “no stone was left unturned”.

Before we turn to anything else, it would be instructive to have a glance at the recommendation of the Committee.

### **Rationale for the Programme of the Institute**

In examining the task before it, the Committee considered the reasons for the failure of existing University Departments of languages to contribute substantially to production of the teachers of Nigerian languages. Basically, the limitation of places for courses in the humanities which has led to the introduction of limited admission quotas has meant that even where these departments can cope with a higher intake, they are effectively prevented from doing so.

The colleges of Education have been producing NCE teachers of Nigerian languages, but very few of them have programs of training L<sub>2</sub> teachers. Hence, most of the teachers produced can only concentrate on L<sub>1</sub> teaching in their own languages.

In the light of the problems identified above, the Committee concluded that the first task for the Institute should be to produce teachers of two major Nigerian languages (L<sub>1</sub>, and L<sub>2</sub>) in a *four-year degree programme*.<sup>14</sup> Because the Institute is a specialized one with a wider scope than a mere University Department, it will not be subject to the constraint of quotas in an Arts Faculty. Hence the Committee recommends an initial intake of 300 students per year so that the Institute can make

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<sup>11</sup> Typed from the original document procured from Administration, NINLAN. Copies are available from NINLAN, at a small administrative fee to be determined by the Executive Director.

<sup>12</sup> Emphasis mine.

<sup>13</sup> National Institute for Nigerian Languages Act (1993 Nö 117), 30<sup>th</sup> December, 1993.

<sup>14</sup> Emphasis, mine (OY.)

a substantial impact. Details of the suggested programmes recommended for the Institute are to be found in Section 5 of this Report.

### The Report 1992

Not to mind the repetition, let it be noted that the Institute was established

- i. to generate specialist L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> teachers in Nigerian languages,
- ii. to be a research center for Nigerian languages,
- iii. to bridge the gaps in the regular University programs,
- iv. to produce development stations for Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) holders in Nigerian languages who would otherwise have been stranded, with no university to advance their L<sub>2</sub> training,
- v. and to skip the huddle of the quota limitation in University admission.

The recommendation of the Committee is unambiguous, a summary of which goes thus:

The core programme of the Institute *should be the 4-year B.A. degree programme* in two Nigerian Languages which should run side by side with Vacation/In-Service training courses. These two should constitute Phase 1 of the Institute's Programmes. Other programs would be introduced in subsequent phases.<sup>15</sup>

The Committee headed by Professor Ayo Bamgbose is made up of renowned scholars, top educational administrators, Nigerian languages teachers, and some other non-academic stakeholders.

It is also noteworthy that the Minister of Education during this period was Professor Aliu Babs Fafunwa, the indefatigable advocate of mother tongue education and former Professor of Education at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and the University of Ife. Clearly, there's no blemish in the idea behind the establishment and the committee for this educational agenda. The thoroughness of the committee included direction on progressive intake over the years such that the explosion in the schools' enrollment would not eclipse the output of the graduates of NINLAN and its universities supplements; guarantee of job placements for the graduates (as incentive), take-off grants, sites, facilities, and recruitment of personnel, all are taken care of. Last, and by no means the least, the minimum syllabus and standard for enrollment, and graduation were suggested, lucidly and comprehensively. The course of study, and the load of same were comparable to regular University syllabus, except that we are now dealing with a specialized University (See the *Report*)<sup>16</sup>.

From the list of courses proffered by the Committee, it is clear that it meant business no less than obtains in regular Universities. There is emphasis on research while graduate studies are standing in line for subsequent phases. All these and a host of other services of NINLAN are comprehensively enunciated in the *Report*.

In looking at the role of NINLAN in relation to NPE, the conclusion of the report is instructive. It clearly makes NINLAN the hob and pivot of the language provisions of the NPE. The "conclusion" is item 10 of the *Report*.

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<sup>15</sup> My emphasis (OY)

<sup>16</sup> The Report was retyped by Ore Yusuf from an old manuscript, and is in the custody of NINLAN.

*“Conclusion*

The National Institute for Nigerian Languages is a unique feature of the educational planning strategies of the Federal Government. Its establishment should be seen as evidence of our Government’s commitment to laying a solid foundation for the realization of the educational and cultural policies of the country. The production of language specialists as teachers in the educational system cannot but have positive effects on the realization of the objectives of these policies. An early implementation of the recommendations in this report will accelerate the pace of development.”

This recommendation was accepted, even supplemented in the *Act*, now a common property on the web: ([http://www.placng.org/new/laws\\_of\\_nigeria3.php?sn=312](http://www.placng.org/new/laws_of_nigeria3.php?sn=312)).

### 3. THE CURRENT STATUS OF NINLAN AND THE LANGUAGE PROVISIONS

The National Institute for Nigerian Languages was created for a positive symbiotic relationship with the aspirations of Nigeria to develop its indigenous languages as well as raising the standard of our education, both at the formal and informal platforms, but as things stand now, the mutual reflection has ‘gone under’; both have been maimed for no reasons that can be pin-pointed! Anybody pondering over this precarious situation cannot but generate these and similar questions:

- a. What happened to the initial momentum
- b. What was the initial intake like, in population and level (diploma or degree)?
- c. How were the trainers of would-be teachers recruited in NINLAN?
- d. What was their quality (qualification, and status), even quantity, and relevance?
- e. What atrophied the original powerful mandate?
- f. How many of the products have been injected into the national education stream?

Any honest endeavor to go to the root of the success or failure of the national language program and the status of the Institute would of necessity, delve into the questions above, because so much had been sown<sup>17</sup>. I attempt to telescope my observation and conclusion in the remaining part of this section, while I leave a proper investigation to the initial body that set up this establishment. Indeed the successive administration should be answerable to the founders.

As at 2005, at a time students intake should have gone way beyond the initially prescribed 300, there were on ground these academic staff :

	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Lecturer</b>	<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Status</b>
i.	Yorùbá	1	PhD. Literature	Native
ii.	Hausa	1	PhD. ?	L <sub>2</sub>
iii.	Ìgbò	2	M.A, M. Ed.	Native
iv.	Education <sup>18</sup>	6	2 PhD, 4. M.Ed/MA.	N/A
v.	Linguistics	2	3 M.A <sup>19</sup>	N/A
vi.	French/Translation	3	M.A, M.Phill	L <sub>F</sub>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	4 PhD; 11 M.A (or equiv.)	

**Fig 1: Staff in the Institute.**

<sup>17</sup> There are conjectured answers, but as there are nothing tangle to hold on, we should not descend into the realm of rumors and innuendos.

<sup>18</sup> School of Education has an Ancillary arm that takes care of General Studies.

<sup>19</sup> One completed his PhD later in the year, one on study leave.

Then efforts started for the recruitment of more teaching staff, which in the meantime were procured mostly with occasional lecturers

- a. 4 high caliber linguistics teachers (1 M.A, 3 PhD), covering the broad spectrum of the discipline: phonetics, phonology, literature, morphology and syntax), the writer included. All could assist in natural languages, particularly Yorùbá, Hausa and Urhobo.
- b. 2 experienced Hausa lecturers (M.A.); one part-time and 1 visiting lecturer

With the population of students then, it appeared that the situation was being repaired and all aspects of the languages could be taught; language, literature, culture and pedagogy. The other aspect of the first phase was initiated; 14 post-graduate in-service conversion<sup>20</sup> students sponsored<sup>21</sup> from various states were enrolled, the pre-degree enrollment was looking up, and the degree program was being vigorously pursued. From the look of things, NINLAN was poised to fulfill its responsibility. I also saw staff and administration rededicated and responsive to the challenges. Not only teaching issues, but other matters were being attended to; acculturation and field research. During this period, NINLAN was going international. There was a link, even collaboration with the University of Wisconsin, Madison, African Languages Program, such that a team led by the Director, came for a 3-day workshop in 2006, there was contact made with Yale University Program in African Languages which had been seeking that we host the Institute programs on their web<sup>22</sup>. Contact, similar to partnership was made with the Millennium Goals with a promise of funding from them, University of Leipzig, Germany did agree and indeed started training our staff, and so on. There were other avenues being open when a visiting lecturer initiated a new chapter of language study here in form of language documentation. There were varied proposals on ground that some knowledgeable Nigerian did not miss. By no means a minor thing to be overlooked, NINLAN was commissioned to write Nigerian languages values on our national currency! Academic staff who could not immediately benefit from these resources on their own registered to upgrade their credentials and skills (five of such have attained their PhD degrees). It appeared there can only be progress from now on.

Then disaster, long secretly brewing, struck in 2007! NINLAN was put in the cocoon, for the next seven (or eight) years with the national agenda completely discarded without a qualm. The Institute, but not its mandate, was ceded to University of Nigeria with catastrophic consequences. Both the language provisions of the NPE and NINLAN tasks were shelved!

Thank God this would not be for ever!

#### **4. THE RENAISSANCE, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION**

Through the untiring efforts of individuals and corporate bodies who held tenaciously to the rule of law, the phoenix rose from the ashes again in 2014. Quickly, the wounds were being fomented and the scars dressed. The engine was running again with a new life; quality staff, plant and infrastructure.

While I apportion no blame, anywhere, but I believe that the old thorny issues were no issues at all had there not been some compromise along the way. For instance, where were diploma programs made the main product of the Institute, and when there were clear indications where the take-off

<sup>20</sup> 'Conversion' students may have taken any discipline in their first degrees; mathematics, social sciences, physical sciences, or non-Nigerian languages, indeed any subject.

<sup>21</sup> Some Northern States had booked placement for their staff for the next year in-service training.

<sup>22</sup> A program I was working on while I was at Yale.

admission of 300 students was to come from, namely the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), when there was impediment on the path, the administration should have cried out for assistance to appropriate quarters. The hush was not beneficial to anybody.

As it is clear that the task is enormous, and for us to catch up on the temporal loss, part of the future plans would be to have multiple NINLANs spread oversome geo-political zones. After all, there was once one University in Nigeria; now we have several. There were possibly a handful Schools of Arts and Science in the country, many more were created, and when these could not cope someselected regular secondary schools were designated A-level centers in form of Higher Schools Certificate institutions, which in turn gave way to “Prelim”, now the 100-Level courses in the Universities, and Colleges of Advance Studies and polytechnics. There were once only four National Certificate of Education institutions in Nigeria: Zaria, Owerri, Lagos and Ondo. All states now have at least one administered by government, and many have privately-manned NCE program in addition to the Federal Government owned. In the same way, old Government Colleges multiplied into several Federal Government Schools and Unity Schools. It follows that the extant NINLAN should be rebuiltacceleratedlyand many more established if the dream of the indigenous languages was to be realized. If not anything, there would be competition, and each geopolitical zone languages would be more adequately covered while required attention may be paid to languages threatened with extinction in several locales.

A few more hints are in order. The recommendation that NINLAN *produce graduate teachers* should be pursued vigorously, seeing that a diploma would not appeal to youths nor even be desirable at this period of our educational development. Even older NCE colleges and selected Polytechnicsare upgraded to Universities. In the light of all these, any “authority” averse to awarding degrees in NINLAN would need to reassess his stand, or risk being anachronistic.

In addition, if recruitment is pursued through JAMB, it follows logically that the best brains from our schools system would be admitted into NINLAN. Thusif we are hoping to subject our education to indigenous languages for positive national development, no second fiddle candidates are desirable.

What with this interesting piece from Ògúnlölá (2015) about teachers:

It is a national suicide for any nation either by accident or by design to allow its best brains to cure its sick, design and build its roads and bridges, formulate and administer its laws while its poorest brains teach its youths....

Akande (2002:15)

It may also be reiterated that NINLAN means more than just another university; the *ACT* sets it apart.

From the *Act*, it is evident that the primary objectives of NINLAN are:

- (i) the production of Nigerian language teachers
- (ii) be Centre for the Learning of Nigerian languages
- (iii) specialized Resource Centre for professional services, and
- (iv) a research centre for Nigerian Language studies.
- (v) Centre for advancement of literacy in indigenous languages.

Thus, if the NPE is to touch all (through Nigerian languages), and NINLAN is made a vehicle for the propagation of Nigerian languages, I sincerely advocate that NINLAN, this one being a pioneer, be transformed into the Mecca of Nigerian Languages like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is to Linguistics, or School of Oriental and African Studies, London, is to all British affiliates in the social sciences, the moon around which the stars dance.

## 5 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### 5.1 Technological and other Developments

For most of the time, we have dealt with literacy and educational advancement. Note that the issue of indigenous languages is tied to the advancement and economic development too. I have said it elsewhere that developed countries are those who use their own languages and heritage. There I put it jovially, that “Made in China”, “Made in Japan, Korea ...” were not actually made in English! Neither would Iran have thus advanced, if it had depended on English or some foreign language. Our advancement is tied to our languages!

Recently, Aziza (2015) corroborates this when she notices some correlation between languages and development and standard of living! Her finding shows that underdevelopment is endemic to Africa, particularly those countries that would not develop their language and culture in their education, whereas, Europe, Latin America (Brazil, Venezuela..), East Asia (Mainland China, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea...), and the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirate, Kuwait, Iran...) are all developed because they use their languages in all their daily endeavors.

### 5.2 Language and Culture

We are aware that many Nigerian languages are not used beyond their natural habitat. Without mincing words these languages are bound to die with their culture, before our very eyes if no step is taken to intervene now. Many of these languages are not committed to writing, nor are there orthographies designed for them. The old stupid badge of ignorance that “I cannot speak my language well” should be a thing of shame now. Without doubt, many cannot read nor write their languages, even when such languages have been committed to writing. Educated as the Ìgbò and Yorùbá are, there are teeming thousands of their elite who are guilty of this accusation. The toga of “foolish pride” as Jimmy Cliff would say is long overdue for shedding. We should wake up to the clarion call to reactivate our languages.

How sweet it would have been if Achebe, Soyinka, Chukwuemeka Ike, Pepper Clark, like Faleti, Isola, DuroLadipo, had written their works in our languages. I know Achebe has been translated into several European languages, but I am not aware of too many Nigerian languages versions. Achebe celebrates our culture in a white man’s tongue, but we can bring all these home in translation either before we lose those who are competent or before memories lose their meanings.

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## SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND THE LEARNING OF MOTHER TONGUE READING IN AKWA IBOM STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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### **Abstract**

*A well articulated curriculum is essential for the use and development of the mother-tongue in Nigeria, just as in other parts of the world. Unless the curriculum is well planned, designed and implemented, efforts at helping the learner to use the native language effectively are bound to be a failure. The present study is designed to find out to what extent elements of mother-tongue reading are implemented in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools. Relevant theories of language learning are applied to the study. Some of these are Krashen and Terrell's input hypothesis, acquisition learning hypothesis, monitor hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis. The study involves two schools, one public and one private among boys and girls. It employs three research questions and three null hypotheses. Issues on mother-tongue reading are discussed. Finally, suggestions and recommendations for effective implementation are made.*

### **Introduction**

Education is often seen as a process whereby learners are initiated into the culture and values of the society while mother-tongue education refers to one's ability to use the native language for teaching at formal and informal levels. It is a sine qua non for development in a wide range of contexts and for various purposes – social, economic, political, technical, and so on. As Singh has rightly observed, "Without the use of the mother-tongue, children's potentials are wasted resulting in educational failure and a lack of development (Singh, 2014:142)".

For the educational process to make the learner achieve meaningful development, there is the need to develop a well formulated, planned and implemented curriculum. Curriculum refers to "The knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, which include the learning standards ([http://edglossary.org/learning standards](http://edglossary.org/learning_standards)) or learning objectives ([http://edglossary.org/learning objectives](http://edglossary.org/learning_objectives)) they are expected to meet; the units and lessons their teachers teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course; and the tests, assessment (<http://edglossary.org/assessments>) and other methods used to evaluate student learning" (Abbott, S. 2014).

In the Nigerian context, the provisions of the National Policy on Education are of great importance. The policy states: "For the purposes of policy coordination and monitoring, the Federal Government instituted a Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, with the following objectives:

- (a) developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion; ...

- (e) ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, communicative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needed for the laying of a solid foundation for life-long learning” (National Policy on Education, 2008: 14–15).

For the purpose of mother-tongue reading, insights from theories of language learning can be applied to the teaching of reading as well as for the teaching of other skills – listening, speaking and writing. Chomsky (1965), for example, believes that children have an inborn capacity to learn any human language. Every child is born with what he calls ‘language acquisition device’ (LAD) which encodes the major principles of a language and its grammatical structures into the brain of the child. Through the use of the LAD, the child learns new vocabulary and applies the syntactic structures to form sentences. The LAD enables all children to become fluent users of their native language within five to six years. This applies to the four skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing. Another theory, Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (1977), states that people learn from one another through the principles of observation, imitation and modelling. In the classroom setting, these principles help learners to interact effectively with others.

The Natural Approach was produced by Krashen and Terrell (1983) who consider communication as the primary function of language which helps learners to develop communicative abilities. Some aspects of their hypotheses include the Input Hypothesis, Monitor Hypothesis and Affective Hypothesis. The Input Hypothesis for example, claims that humans acquire language in only one way, that is, by understanding messages or by receiving comprehensible input. People acquire language best by understanding input that is slightly beyond their current level of competence. According to Krashen and Terrell (1983 : 32) “An acquirer can “move” from a stage I (where I is the acquirer’s level of competence) to a stage I + 1 (where I + 1 is the stage immediately following I along some natural order) by understanding language containing I + 1”. The Monitor Hypothesis claims that we may call upon learned knowledge to correct ourselves when we communicate. The learned knowledge helps us to edit or monitor, so that we might make minor changes by publishing what the acquired system has produced. The Affective Hypothesis refers to feelings, needs, attitudes and emotional state in language learning. It is an adjustable filter which freely passes, or blocks input necessary for one to acquire language. It is desirable for one to have a low affective filter since it permits language to flow. Three kinds of affective or attitudinal variables are necessary: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. First, it is learners with high motivation that do better; second, learners who tend to be more successful are those with self – confidence; third, better acquirers are learners with low personal anxiety and low classroom anxiety.

The works of the authors cited above clearly show that language skills, including reading, are essential tools for language competence. The acquisition of general knowledge in terms of quality and quantity depends on efficient reading. Obanya (2002) has said: “Reading is essentially like thinking. Therefore, developing anybody’s reading skill is comparable to developing that person’s “intellectual powers.”

The present study is designed to find out to what extent students have a positive attitude to mother-tongue reading. Attitude is a predisposition or tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain person, objects, idea or situation.

### Research Questions:

1. What is the attitude of boys and girls to reading in Efik/Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools?
2. What is the attitude of students in Public and Private Schools to reading in Efik/Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools?
3. What type of Efik/Ibibio materials do public and private Secondary School Students in Akwa Ibom State read?

### Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools with respect to their attitude to in reading Efik/Ibibio.
2. There is no significant difference between students in public and private schools with respect to their attitude to reading in Efik/Ibibio
3. There is no significant difference between students in public and private secondary schools with respect to the types of Efik/Ibibio materials they read.

### Method

The researcher adopted a survey design for the study since it involved the collection and analysis of data on secondary school students' attitude to mother-tongue reading. The population comprised all students from public and private schools in Akwa Ibom State. Two intact classes were used for the study.

In all, 104 students consisting of 45 males and 59 females were used. The collection of data was done by means of a questionnaire titled Mother Tongue Reading Attitude Questionnaire (MTRAQ). The MTRAQ was developed by the researcher for the study. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt. The questionnaire has a reliability coefficient of 0.78 and was found suitable for the study. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire. On the basis of the questionnaire provided, the Likert scale was used. Numerical values were awarded as follows:

Strongly Agree (SA – 4), Agree (A – 3), Disagree (D – 2), Strongly Disagree (SD – 1). A mean score of 2.5 and above confirmed agreement while a score below 2.5 means “Disagree.” T-test was used in analyzing the hypotheses.

### Results

The findings of the study are presented below.

Research Question One: What is the attitude of boys and girls to reading in Efik/Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools?

**Table 1:** Attitude of Boys and Girls to Reading in Efik/Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools

**Table 1: RESEARCH QUESTION ONE**

		STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		MEAN			REMARKS
		BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS COL. 1	GIRLS COL. 2	BOYS & GIRLS COL. 3	

1	I love reading books	39	51	6	8	-	-	-	-	3.86	3.86	3.86	Agree
2	I read Efik/Ibibio books voluntarily and willingly	15	20	18	17	7	12	5	10	2.95	2.79	2.86	Agree
3	I prefer watching TV in English to watching it in Efik/Ibibio	22	40	8	12	9	6	6	1	3.02	3.54	3.31	Agree
4	I hardly read Efik/Ibibio books from cover to cover	10	11	16	20	10	9	9	19	2.60	2.38	2.48	Disagree
5	I am always happy when it is time to read Efik/Ibibio books in the class	30	40	6	8	4	6	5	5	3.55	3.40	3.38	Agree
6	I love reading Efik/Ibibio books for personal development	14	22	14	23	10	5	7	9	2.77	3.18	3.09	Agree
7	I love reading Efik/Ibibio story books and folktales	21	29	11	17	4	8	9	5	2.97	3.18	3.09	Agree
8	I love reading Efik/Ibibio Bible	10	17	18	12	6	21	11	9	2.60	2.62	2.61	Agree
9	I read Efik Bible fluently	8	6	8	13	18	18	11	22	2.28	2.05	2.15	Disagree
10	My friends love reading books in Efik/Ibibio	17	23	12	11	10	10	6	15	2.88	2.71	2.78	Agree
11	I read religious books in Efik/Ibibio a lot	7	7	11	5	15	25	12	22	2.88	1.94	2.09	Disagree
12	I read Efik/Ibibio textbooks in school during free time	7	5	7	11	21	32	10	11	2.24	2.16	2.20	Disagree
13	I hardly have time to read Efik/Ibibio books at home	10	22	12	7	17	16	6	14	2.57	2.62	2.60	Agree

14	Your parents buy you Efik/Ibibio textbooks	10	14	14	19	10	8	11	18	2.51	2.49	2.50	Agree
15	Your parents buy you Efik/Ibibio story books	11	16	11	9	11	14	12	20	2.46	2.35	2.40	Disagree
16	You buy Efik/Ibibio books yourself	2	3	5	2	13	20	25	34	1.64	1.55	1.59	Disagree
17	The teacher provides you with drawings, pictures, graphs for reading in Efik/Ibibio	15	16	6	7	5	11	19	25	2.37	2.23	2.29	Disagree
18	The teacher provides you with poems for reading in Efik/Ibibio	34	33	6	13	1	6	4	7	3.55	3.22	3.36	Agree
19	The teacher provides you with riddles and proverbs for reading in Efik/Ibibio	40	40	11	11	3	2	2	6	3.48	3.44	3.46	Agree

Col = Column

Table 1 reveals that boys and girls have a positive attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio books. The joint mean scores (Col. 3) for boys and girls clearly show a positive attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio books in items 2(2.86), 5(3.38), 6(3.09), 7(3.09), 8(2.61), 10(2.78), and 14(2.50).

Similarly, the reverse score of 2.48 in item 4 showed students' positive attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio books since they "Disagreed" with the statement: "I hardly read Efik/Ibibio books from cover to cover." In item 4(Col.3), both boys and girls have shown efforts to read and digest the materials presented to them.

In Col.3 of items 2,5,6 and 7, students have a positive attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio books since they read the texts 'voluntarily and willingly', are 'always happy' to 'read Efik/Ibibio books in the class,' 'love to read Efik/Ibibio story books and folktales' and 'love to read Efik/Ibibio books for personal development.'

However, there appears to be some problem in the students' ability to read Efik/Ibibio books. In Col.3, both boys and girls, in item 8(2.61), state that they love reading Efik/Ibibio Bible but in item 9(2.15), they indicate that they cannot read the Bible fluently. *Similarly*, in Col.3 of item 13, both boys and girls state that they 'hardly have time to read Efik/Ibibio books at home.' This betrays laziness in their reading behaviour with respect to reading Efik/Ibibio books. Though students' reading behaviour is generally similar among boys and girls, there is a much higher difference

among boys in item 11(Col.1, 2.88) than girls (Col. 2, 1.94), that is, boys read religious books a lot whereas this is not the case with girls. This may appear surprising because there are usually more girls in church than boys. However, attendance at church is not the same thing as willingness to read religious books. Thus, boys are more devoted to reading religious books than girls.

**Research Question Two:** What is the attitude of students in Public and Private Schools to Reading in Efik/Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools?

**Table 2:** Attitude of Students in Public and Private Schools to Reading in Efik/Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools.

**Table 2: RESEARCH QUESTION TWO**

		STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE	MEAN	REMARKS
		PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PUBLIC		
1	I love reading books	54	36	3	11	-	-	-		
2	I read Efik/Ibibio books voluntarily and willingly	32	3	8	27	8	11	9		
3	I prefer watching TV in English to watching it in Efik/Ibibio	38	24	9	11	6	9	4		
4	I hardly read Efik/Ibibio books from cover to cover	12	9	11	25	6	13	28		
5	I am always happy when it is time to read Efik/Ibibio books in the class	39	31	6	8	5	5	7		
6	I love reading Efik/Ibibio books for personal development	23	13	20	17	6	9	8		
7	I love reading Efik/Ibibio story books and folktales	32	18	13	15	5	7	7		
8	I love reading Efik/Ibibio Bible	18	9	13	17	15	12	11		
9	I read Efik Bible fluently	11	3	11	10	14	22	21		
10	My friends love reading books in Efik/Ibibio	30	10	6	17	8	12	13		
11	I read religious books in Efik/Ibibio a lot	12	2	6	10	21	19	18		
12	I read Efik/Ibibio textbooks in	6	6	9	9	29	24	13		

	school during free time													
13	I hardly have time to read Efik/Ibibio books at home	16	16	11	8	15	18	15	5	2.49	2.74	2.60	Agree	
14	Your parents buy you Efik/Ibibio textbooks	9	15	13	20	12	6	23	6	2.14	2.93	2.50	Agree	
15	Your parents buy you Efik/Ibibio story books	16	11	6	14	14	11	21	11	2.29	2.53	2.40	Disagree	
16	You buy Efik/Ibibio books yourself	3	2	4	3	17	16	33	26	1.59	1.59	1.59	Disagree	
17	The teacher provides you with drawings, pictures, graphs for reading in Efik/Ibibio	17	14	2	11	10	6	28	16	2.14	2.48	2.29	Disagree	
18	The teacher provides you with poems for reading in Efik/Ibibio	38	29	8	11	5	2	6	5	3.36	3.36	3.36	Agree	
19	The teacher provides you with riddles and proverbs for reading in Efik/Ibibio	35	34	11	11	5	-	6	2	3.31	3.63	3.46	Agree	

### Col = Column

Table 2 shows that students in both public and private schools have a positive attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio books as revealed in the joint mean scores for students in public and private schools in the following items in Col.3: items 2(2.86), 5(3.38), 6(2.89), 7(3.09), 8(2.61) and 10(2.78). Similarly, as observed earlier in Research Question One, the reverse mean score of 2.48 in item 4 among students in public and private schools indicates students' positive attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio books. They read the books from cover to cover. In Col.1, items 2, 5,6,7,8 and 10 show that the mean scores among students in public schools (3.10, 3.35, 3.01, 3.22, 2.66, and 2.92 respectively) are similar to those of students in private schools; the mean scores in Col.2 are 2.57, 3.42, 2.74, 2.93, 2.55 and 2.61 respectively. This shows that generally, there is positive attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio books among students in both public and private schools.

There is however, a slight difference between students in public and private schools with respect to the degree of zeal they have in reading Efik/Ibibio books. In item 13, students in public schools (Col.1 with a mean score of 2.49) show less enthusiasm to reading Efik/Ibibio books because they hardly read these books at home whereas students in private schools (with a mean score of 2.74) state that they read these books not only in the school but also at home. One also observes that parents in private schools make Col. 2 greater investment in buying Efik/Ibibio textbooks for their children (item 14, Col. 2, with mean score of 2.93) while those in public schools hardly do so (Col. 1, mean score of 2.14). These elements are likely to bring greater degree of success for students in private schools than those in public schools with respect to their ability to read Efik/Ibibio books.

**Research Question Three:** What type of Efik/Ibibio materials do public and private Secondary School students in Akwa Ibom State read?

**Table 3:** The Type of Materials Public and Private Secondary School Students in Akwa Ibom State Read.

**Table 3: RESEARCH QUESTION THREE**

		STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		MEAN			REMARKS
		PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PUBLIC Mat/ Pub Col.1	PRIVATE Mat/ Pub Col.2	PUBLIC & PRIVATE Mat/ Pub Col.3	
7	I love reading Efik/Ibibio story books and folktales	32	18	13	15	5	7	7	7	3.22	2.93	3.09	Agree
9	I read Efik Bible fluently	11	3	11	10	14	22	21	12	2.21	2.08	2.15	Disagree
17	The teacher provides you with drawings, pictures, graphs for reading in Efik/Ibibio	17	14	2	11	10	6	28	16	2.14	2.48	2.31	Disagree
18	The teacher provides you with poems for reading in Efik/Ibibio	38	29	8	11	5	2	6	5	3.36	3.36	3.36	Agree
19	The teacher provides you with riddles and proverbs for reading in Efik/Ibibio	35	34	11	11	5	-	6	2	3.31	3.63	3.47	Agree

Mat = Material

Col = Column

Table 3 shows that in item 7, both students in public schools (Col.1, 3.22) and private schools (Col.2, 2.93) agree that they love reading Efik/Ibibio story books and folktales while in item 9 both public school students (Col.1, 2.21) and private school students (Col.2, 2.08) state that they cannot read Efik Bible fluently. In item 18, students in both public and private schools agree (3.36) that their teacher provides them with poems for reading in Efik/Ibibio. Similarly, in item 10, students in public (Col.1, 3.31) and private (Col.2, 3.63) schools agree that their teacher provides them with riddles and proverbs for reading in Efik/Ibibio. However, with respect to the provision of drawings, pictures and graphs for reading in Efik/Ibibio, students in public schools (Col.1, 2.14) and private schools (Col.2, 2.48) disagree that the teacher gives them such materials for reading in Efik/Ibibio. Without the provision of these materials, it is difficult for learners to achieve excellence in reading.

### Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between boys and girls in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools with respect to their attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio.

**Table 4:** T-test Analysis of Difference between Boys and Girls with Respect to their Attitude to Reading in Efik/Ibibio.

	Groups of Students	No. of Students	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Calculated t – Value	d/f	Critical t - Value
1	Boys	45	52.71	7.809	0.72	102	1.98
2	Girls	59	51.72	6.091			
		104					

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value is 0.72 while the critical value is 1.98. Since the calculated value is less than the critical value, it means that there is no significant difference and the hypothesis is therefore accepted. Male and female students are similar in their mode of reading.

### Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between students in public and private schools with respect to their attitude to reading in Efik/Ibibio.

**Table 5:** T-test Analysis of Difference between Students in Public and Private Schools with Respect to their Attitude to Reading in Efik/Ibibio.

	Groups of Schools	No. of Students	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Calculated t – Value	d/f	Critical t - Value
1	Public	57	51.92	7.35	0.36	102	1.98
2	Private	47	52.42	6.30			
		104					

Table 5 shows that the calculated t-value is 0.36 while the critical value is 1.98. As the calculated value is less than the critical value, it means that there is no significant difference and the hypothesis is therefore accepted. This shows that students in public and private schools are similar with respect to their mode of reading.

### Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference between students in public and private secondary schools with respect to the types of Efik/Ibibio materials they read.

**Table 6:** T-test Analysis of Difference between Public and Private Secondary Schools Students with Respect to the Types of Materials they Read.

	Groups of Schools	No. of Students	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Calculated t – Value	d/f	Critical t - Value
1	Public	57	3.22	1.05	1.40	102	1.98
2	Private	47	2.94	1.07			
		104					

Table 6 indicates that the calculated t-value is 1.40 while the critical value is 1.98. Since the calculated value is less than the critical value, it means that there is no significant difference. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

### Discussion of Results

Efficiency in reading is achieved through the processes of skimming, scanning, preview, receptive and responsive reading (Ituen, 2004). This means that learners should carry out different types of reading in order to be good readers. This is why Dean (2001:15) places emphasis on “reading built on the combined use of three forms of pupil knowledge: (1) Semantic knowledge (what the text means/what kind of text) (2) Syntactic knowledge... (the ways the words work together/what sorts of words) which equates with grammatical knowledge; and (3) Grapho-phonological knowledge (decoding and calling on sounds to represent the letter symbols).” Mother-tongue reading is beneficial to learners because right from the early grades, it “enhances children’s ability to learn

better compared to the use of a second or foreign language” (UNESCO, 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2003 as cited by Rai, Rai, Phyak and Rai, 2011). Similarly, the Ife Six-Year Project has shown that children are quicker to learn to read and acquire other academic skills when taught in their mother-tongue than taught in a foreign language (Fafunwa, 1978).

In Table 1 of the present study, it was found that learners generally have a positive attitude to reading Efik/Ibibio books. Both boys and girls read the books voluntarily and willingly (2.86 in item 2, Col.3) and are happy when it is time to read Efik/Ibibio books in the class (3.38 in item 2, Col.3). With respect to coverage in reading the books, it is seen that both boys and girls read the books from cover to cover. Obanya (2002) identifies five levels of reading competence. The first is word/sentence recognition in which the learner associates words and sentences with sounds and acquires basic vocabulary. The second is reading along the lines whereby the learner acquires literal meaning. The third is reading between the lines, that is, reading for implied meaning. The fourth is reading across the lines which involve reading for a creative reaction to the reading material. The fifth is reading beyond the lines which is a totally lifelong self-directed pleasurable activity. Obanya has said that it is at the highest level (level 5) that reading becomes internalized as a habit, for continuous self improvement and for personal and social development.

In the present study, both boys and girls (in Col.3, item 6 with 3.09) stated that they “love reading Efik/Ibibio books for personal development.” It is important for teachers to encourage learners to reach the highest level of competence in mother-tongue reading. Unfortunately, in the present study, both the boys (item 13, boys with 2.62) and girls (with 2.60) agree that they “hardly have time to read Efik/Ibibio books at home.” Also, both boys and girls (item 9, boys 2.28 and girls 2.05) said that they cannot read Efik Bible fluently. It would appear, therefore, that many students have not achieved an adequate level of competence in reading Efik/Ibibio books. Some learners hardly read “between the lines” “across the lines” and “beyond the lines” (Obanya, 2002).

One element that is crucial for the attainment of excellence in mother-tongue reading is the provision and use of materials for reading. In Col.3, students in both public and private schools (3.36) agree that the teacher provides them with poems for reading in Efik/Ibibio. The problem, however, is that the teacher fails (item 17, 2.31) to provide learners with such materials as drawings, pictures and graphs for reading in Efik/Ibibio. Without the use of the needed materials, it is difficult for learners to achieve excellence in the reading of Efik/Ibibio. In the present study, parents in private school (2.93) provide the children with Efik/Ibibio textbooks, whereas parents in public school fail (Col.1, 2.14) to give their children the textbooks they require. This is why Arowolo (2008:133) has rightly stated that “many parents, out of ignorance, would not as much as hear of their children taking mother-tongue as a subject, not to talk of it as the language of instruction.” There is therefore, the need for leadership at different levels of government to encourage learners to read their mother-tongue with zeal.

### **Conclusion**

The teacher’s task becomes a delight when students show a positive attitude to the books they are asked to read. In the present study, both boys and girls in both public and private schools read Efik/Ibibio books voluntarily and willingly. They show delight with the Efik/Ibibio reading processes placed at their disposal by the teachers. There are, however, areas where adjustments should be made to ensure that learners achieve excellence in mother-tongue reading. This relates

particularly to the problem of provision and use of necessary materials. It was found that public and private school teachers did not pay much attention to the provision and use of reading materials. Similarly, parents in public school failed to provide their children with textbooks. Such a neglect has a deleterious effect on the children's development. Parents should, therefore, make strenuous efforts to encourage learners to become consistent mother-tongue readers.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. Teachers at the basic education level should be trained in the use of Efik/Ibibio for teaching. They should be given a new orientation for effective teaching of the basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
2. Experts should be commissioned to write science, technology and social science books in Efik/Ibibio for teachers and learners to use.
3. Government should mount a vigorous publicity to educate people on the need for children to use Efik/Ibibio books effectively. People should be reminded that effective use of the mother-tongue helps learners to comprehend new terms and processes in science and technology.
4. Efik/Ibibio reading competitions should be organized for effective Efik/Ibibio reading.
5. Seminars and workshops on Efik/Ibibio should be organized.
6. Functional libraries with rich stock of Efik/Ibibio books should be established.

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## EVALUATION OF LANGUAGE PROVISIONS: LEVEL OF AWARENESS AND IMPLEMENTATION BY BASIC EDUCATION TEACHERS

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### **Abstract**

*Language is conceptualized as a vehicle for thought and communication of the curriculum contents and schools are constitutionally entrusted to actualize the national policy on education and desired development. The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the language provisions of the National Policy on Education (NPE) and to examine the level of awareness and implementation of the policy by Basic Education teachers in Aba education zone. The study also attempted to explore the challenges of implementation of the policy. Descriptive survey design was employed and stratified random sampling technique was used to select 224 teachers from public, private, and mission schools. Mother Tongue Based Instruction Questionnaire (MTBIQ) was used for data collection. Twenty-item Likert type instrument was validated and Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of .96 was yielded. The study attempted to answer three research questions using descriptive statistics and test three null hypotheses using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The results indicated a significant difference in the level of awareness and implementation of the language provisions as stipulated in NPE by Basic Education teachers. Findings further revealed that multilingual nature of urban schools and lack of teaching materials in MT are some of the challenges of implementing MTBI. Based on the findings, recommendations were made that government, among others, should monitor the implementation of the language policy and provide teaching materials in Nigerian languages.*

**Keywords:** Language Provisions, Mother Tongue Based Instruction, Awareness, Implementation.

### **Introduction:**

Language, according to Hornby (2010), is the system of communication, speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country. Adejmolola (2010) stated that language, as instrument of communication, sustains social, cultural, economic, educational, industrial and technological development in any society or nation, especially in an ultra-multilingual nation. Emphasizing the role of language in education, Adejmolola stressed that it is a vehicle for thought and communication of curriculum contents. Language, indeed, is essential to the identity of groups and individuals; it constitutes a strategic factor of progress towards sustainable development and a harmonious relationship between the global and local context. Language is of utmost importance in achieving the educational goals as stated in the National Policy on Education (NPE) and schools are constitutionally entrusted to its actualization.

Over the years, there has been advocacy for use of Nigerian languages for education, government, mass media and so on (Aziza, 2015). As factors of social integration, Nigerian languages can be used as supports for literacy, learning, life skills and for achieving the Universal Basic Education (UBE) (Ateeque, 2010). Furthermore they can play effective role in the eradication of hunger and poverty and utilized as media of enlightenment on HIV/AIDS, and other diseases. The achievement of all these are intrinsically linked to the indigenous languages, the languages of the population concerned. The National Policy on Education (NPE) is a legal document that expresses the mind of the government on various education matters of the nation (Ojetunde, 2012). It contains the government statement on the planned course of action. The meaningfulness of the NPE includes a policy on language or languages that would serve as a medium of instruction in schools, in order to achieve the desired goal.

### **Language Provisions**

Language provisions, as stipulated in NPE for pre-primary education states that "... every child shall be taught in the mother tongue or language of the immediate community for the first four years of basic education; in addition, it is expected that every child shall learn one Nigerian Language." (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2013:2). Pre-primary education is education given in an education institution to children aged 3 to 5+ years, prior to their entering the primary school which will ensure a smooth transition from home to school; and prepare the child for primary level of education (FRN, 2013).

There is a particular recognition given to the goals and objectives of pre-primary education and to achieve the objectives, it was stated further in the NPE that "government will ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or language of the immediate community and to this end will:

- develop the orthography of many Nigerian languages and
- produce textbooks on Nigerian languages" [FRN, 2013:6].

Language provision of the NPE for primary education is very similar to that of pre-primary education and states that "the medium of instruction in primary schools shall be the language of the immediate environment for the first three years in mono-lingual communities; during this period, English shall be taught as a subject" [FRN, 2013:8]. Interpreting the policy statements, The Mother Tongue (MT) and the Language of the Immediate Community (LIC) are encouraged as language of instruction at the pre-primary and primary levels while English is taught as a subject only in Primaries 1 – 3. Collaborating with the policy statement, scholars such as Bamgbose (1979), Afolayan (1988) and Fafunwa (1982) cited in Ojetunde (2012) asserted that MT ought to be the medium of instruction of children at the early stages of their lives. Agreeing to this, Akindele and Adegbite (2005) contended that using the mother tongue at nursery school will complement children's acquisition of the language at home and this helps them to further learn their environments' socio-cultural norms.

It is noteworthy that the NPE in 1977, 1981, 1998, 2004 and 2008 respectively emphasized the use of MT as medium of instruction in pre-primary education and MT and/or LIC in primaries 1 – 3. A close observation of practices in our school indicates that the language provisions in the NPE over the years are far from implementation. This study therefore, evaluates the language provisions

in the NPE, the level of awareness among pre-primary and primaries 1 – 3 teachers and the challenges in implementation of MTBI.

### Theoretical Framework

Spolsky's (2011:1) theory of Language policy postulates that "the goal of a theory of language policy is to account for the choices made by individual speakers on the basis of rule-governed patterns recognized by the speech community or communities of which they are member". The three assumptions of the theory are as follows:

- language policy is a social phenomenon constructed in a variety of domains, including homes and schools;
- language policy portrays three separate but interrelated components: beliefs, practices, and management and
- the influence of internal and external forces on language choice may come from within or outside of the domain and may be language-related or not.

The components of language policy are as shown in Figure 1.

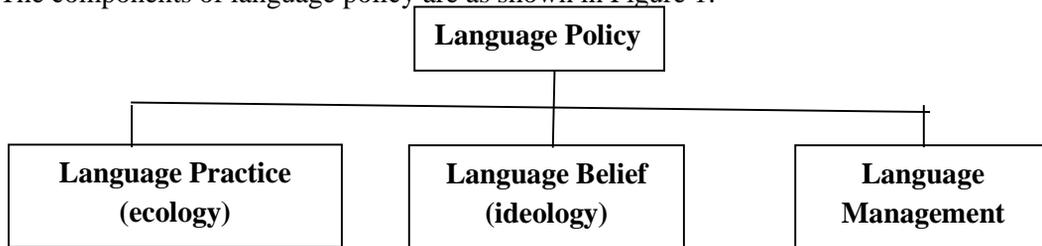


Figure 1. *The components of language policy*

[Source: Spolsky, 2011]

An overview of the components of the language policy reveals language belief, practice and management. Belief, also referred to as ideology, explains the values held by members of a speech community. The belief a group of people hold about language determines the practice, in other words, the choice made within a community. Language practices (ecology) have to do with language selections that people actually make. This is often described in terms of the sound, word, and grammatical choices made within a community as well as the societal rules about when and where different varieties of language should be used. These practices are shaped by the complex ecology of language, or in other words, the interaction between language and social environment (Spolsky, 2004). Language management deals with any effort made to influence the practices. Language practice also known as language planning emphasizes the direct intervention aimed at shaping the way in which a policy is enacted (Spolsky, 2004). Language managers include any person or entity that attempts to affect the language choice of other people whereas management in this context is commonly associated with individuals or documents possessing legal authority like the NPE.

The present study sought to evaluate language provisions in the NPE in line with teachers' practices in schools, that is, choice of language of instruction and the commitment of the government, the language manager, to influence the teachers on the choice of language instrument thereby monitoring the implementation of the language policy.

### **Mother Tongue Based Instruction (MTBI)**

Hornby (2010) defines mother tongue as the language that one first learns to speak as a child; one's native language. To Aziza (2015:6) mother tongue is "the language a child learns effortlessly from both at home with which the parents introduce him to the world and in which he learns to interact and socialize early in life". It is also the language of a child's home, society and culture; it gives the child an identity that he carries wherever he goes. The characteristics of MT as can be seen in the definition qualify it, as a great asset, as a medium of instruction in pre-primary and primaries 1– 3, as provided in the NPE.

There is a growing trend around the world to support MTBI in the early years of the child's education and studies have long subscribed to the utilization of MT as the language of instruction. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report on the use of vernacular as a medium of instruction stated as follows:

It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium (UNESCO, 1953:11).

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), appreciating the importance of MTBI, commented as follows:

There is ample research showing that students are quicker to learn to read and acquire other academic skills when first taught in the mother tongue. They also learn a second language more quickly than those initially taught to read in an unfamiliar language (UNICEF, 1999:41).

There is evidence in most empirical research on literacy outcome related to MTBI. Cummins (2000) in his study indicated that English or other second language literacy skills develop more easily and efficiently when they are based on a child's understanding of their first language. He therefore, concluded that education in MT serves the purpose of gaining literacy in additional language. This finding is in line with Mallozzi and Malloy (2007) who found that strong first language abilities advance cognitive development in children and allow them to more easily negotiate subject matter. Lending credence to these research findings, Burton (2013) in her study, which aimed at comparing teachers' and parents' knowledge, beliefs, and practices on Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the context of the Philippines national policy statements, revealed that teachers' and parents' were overwhelmingly satisfied with the increase in students' understanding while they express concern about future implications of learning in MT rather than in English. She concluded that the problem of acceptance and proper implementation of the policy revolve around the way in which language policy is managed by policy makers.

Demonstrating how MT provides a platform for proficiency in second language, a study carried out in Ife, Nigeria, indicated that students who learned in their MT for six years showed higher overall academic achievement gains than students who only learned in their first language for three years. The first group showed no difference in English proficiency from the second group despite

having had fewer years in English as the medium of instruction (Fafunwa, Macauley & Sokoya, 1989 cited in Burton, 2013). Other benefits of MTBI include improved academic skill and development of critical thinking skill (Brock-Utne, 2006; Walter & Dekkar, 2011) and increased access to education and strong classroom participation (Benson, 2000; Benson, 2004c).

In spite of the benefits of language in general and MT as the optional language medium policy for effective and meaningful education, Alexander (2003) contended that it is not always possible to use the mother tongue in schools and even when possible, some factors may impede its effective utilization. One of such impediments can be traced to the set of beliefs about language articulated by users as a justification of perceived language structure and utilization. Beliefs or ideologies are affected by a group's consensus of which language is appropriate for which speaker to use when addressing which listeners and for which purpose (Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000). The ideologies of stakeholders in education create natural resistance to MTBI. Teachers prefer to teach in English and most parents want their children to be instructed in English (Burton, 2013). Schroeder (2004) in his study found that community members are convinced of the importance of English language in education and believe that mastery in official language is essential for education and economic opportunity. They therefore, assume that the best way to develop such mastery is to teach in English language in school.

Ohiri – Aniche (2002a) identified problems impeding the implementation of MTBI as follows:

- multilingual states find it difficult to cater for numerous languages;
- in urban areas, classes contain a mixture of children from different ethno-linguist groups;
- apart from the three main Nigerian languages – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, most of the other Nigerian languages lack orthographies, textbooks, approved curriculum and trained teachers;
- there is generally a negative attitude to indigenous languages by parents, pupils, students and school authorities alike and
- indigenous languages suffer poor funding and lack overall support from the government.

Trudell (2007) explained that strong values for English are founded in the long term advantage perceived by parents, teachers and stakeholders. In line with Trudell, Iyamu and Ogiegbaen (2007) investigated into teachers and parents' perceptions of MT instruction and found that teachers and parents' resistance is a major constraint to implementation of MTBI. Based on this, they advocated for orientation of parents, teachers and in fact, the society at large on the policy and the potential outcomes. Stone (2012) asserts that MTB-MLE professional development approaches can improve teachers' attitudes towards the policy.

Policies like language policy are made in positions of authority but implementation is not guaranteed. Owing to the importance and benefits associated with MTBI, it will be rarely contested at pedagogical grounds but structural challenges can impede proper implementation of the programme (Burton, 2013). MTBI is ultimately ineffective when there is a lack of materials, poor teacher training and inadequate language development. Ambatchew (2010:208) argued that "unless a rich environment of books, posters, televisions and radio programs are created in the medium or media of instruction, the students are doomed for failure". This observation is evident in Nigeria in that National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) which has the mandate to develop

orthography in Nigerian languages and text books to support the MTBI at pre-basic and basic education level is yet to be adequately funded to live up to her mandate (Ateequ, 2010).

Another challenge that conditions the implementation of the language policy provisions is lack of awareness. Teachers are the implementers of the curriculum which is based on the NPE. One will observe that there is dilution of the policy statement as it flows from the policy makers to the teachers who are the implementers of the education policies. It has been observed that policies concerning education take some time before it reaches the classroom teacher, on whom the success of the change depends (Hayes, 2000). Teachers are particular stakeholders that are of interest in this study being responsible for the implementation or appropriation of national policy directives and because of their relationship between the children affected by the policy.

Teachers are described as central agents of implementation, when it comes to language policy (Silver & Skuja – Steel, 2005). This is because they reside at the classroom level where the implementation happens. Therefore, language policy may fail if the policy makers do not gain the necessary commitment from those who directly interact with and influence children (Lipsky 1980 cited in Burton, 2013). Fullan (2003) and Chapman (2009) in their separate studies suggested variables that can influence teachers' willingness to support reform like language policy, such as improved working condition, reasonable workload and continued support and training. This indicates that the role of the teacher in the success of language policy should be given much attention since their actions in the classroom are contextualized and adapted according to their own language ideologies (Johnson & Freeman, 2010). Lending credence to the foregoing, Creese (2010:34) commented that:

Individually and collectively teachers within their school communities will operate policy according to their local contexts, experiences and values even where there is strong element of statutory compliance. They will interact with policy not in one-to-one reading of what is required, but in an interactive frame which involves their own interpretation within their own localized communities.

Therefore assumptions that practice across contexts are uniform simply because of a single policy statement might be misleading.

### **Statement of Problem**

The language provisions of the NPE which over the years, stated that the medium of instruction in pre-primary up to primary 3 should be MT or LIC is yet to be actualized. Thus, the studies seek to investigate the Basic Education teachers' awareness of the language provisions and factors that impede its effective implementation relative to their schools' proprietorship.

### **Research Questions**

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the Basic Education teachers' levels of awareness of the language provisions of the NPE based on school proprietorship?
2. What is the level of implementation of language provisions of the NPE by Basic Education teachers based on school proprietorship?
3. What challenges impede the implementation of language provisions of the NPE as perceived by Basic Education teachers based on school proprietorship?

### Null Hypotheses

The null hypotheses that guided the study are:

1. The Basic Education teachers' awareness of the language provisions of the NPE do not differ significantly based on school proprietorship.
2. The level of implementation of language provisions of the NPE does differ significantly based on school proprietorship.
3. The Basic Education teachers' perception of the challenges that impede the implementations of the language provisions of the NPE do not differ significantly based on school proprietorship.

### Methodology

**Design:** The research design is a descriptive survey. It is a descriptive survey because the study described a sample of Basic Education teachers' level of awareness, level of implementation and perception of the challenges that impede implementation of language provisions of NPE.

**Participants:** The population comprises the entire Basic Education teachers in Aba Education Zone who teach pre-primary and primaries 1 to 3. The primary schools were stratified along proprietorship of schools. A total of 62, 125, and 37 teachers from public, private, and mission schools respectively were randomly selected from each stratum, giving a sample size of 224.

**Instrument:** The instrument was a structured Likert type questionnaire with items adapted from Burton (2013). It consists of closed ended items that targeted the Basic Education teachers' awareness of language provision of NPE, level of implementation of MTBI and challenges in implementation of MTBI. The first part of the questionnaire elicited information on demographic data while the second part was on a five-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Undecided (U) as response format. Respondents were required to tick their various options as regards MTBI as appropriate. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the instrument was .96. The value was adjudged suitable for use of the instrument for the study.

**Analysis:** The data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20). The data analysis comprised descriptive statistics used in answering the research questions and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for testing the hypothesis. The response for items of the questionnaire were weighted SA (4), A (3), D (2), SD (1) U (0). The boundaries of each response in the 5-point Likert scale were calculated by dividing the serial width (4) by the number of responses (5) and were found to be 0.8. (Topkaya, 2010) This value was used to interpret the mean values. Depending on this calculation the accepted boundaries for each response are presented below:

0 =	$0.0 + 0.8 = 0.8;$	0.0 – 0.8	Undecided
1 =	$0.8 + 0.8 = 1.6$	0.9 – 1.6	Strongly Disagree
2 =	$1.6 + 0.8 = \mathbf{2.4}$	1.7 – 2.4	Disagree
3 =	$2.4 + 0.8 = 3.2$	2.5 – 3.2	Agree
4 =	$3.2 + 0.8 = 4.0$	3.3 – 4.0	Strongly Agree

Therefore, based on the calculations, a mean score of 2.4 on the scale was considered the indication of moderate presence of the issue raised; a mean above 2.4 is a high mean and any mean score below 2.4 was taken as an indicator of low presence of the issue raised.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the Basic Education teachers' levels of awareness of the language provisions of NPE?

Table 1 *Percentage response on the basic teacher awareness of MTBI*

	Yes	No
Are you aware of the MTBI as stipulated in the NPE?	186 (83.0%)	38 (17.0%)

Table 1 revealed that 186 (83.0%) teachers were aware of MTBI and 38 (17.0%).

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of implementation of MTBI by Basic Education teachers?

Table 2: *Percentage response on teachers' use of MTBI*

	MT	English	MT/English
What language do you use for classroom instruction?	0 (0.0%)	49 (21.9%)	175 (78.1%)

Whereas no teacher uses MT only in instruction, 49 (21.9%) use English and 175 (78.1%) mix MT and English for pre-primary and primary education.

**Research Question 3:** What challenges impede the implementation of language provisions of the NPE by basic education teachers?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of challenges of implementation of MTBI

S/N	Statement	Sample size	Mean	Std. deviation	Decision
1	It is difficult to adopt MTBI because of the multilingual nature of urban school	32	3.44	1.11	Strongly Agree
2	I am prepared to adopt the policy of MTBI because it will make instruction a lot easier	32	2.53	1.48	Agree
3	Adopting MTBI will require a lot of extra work	32	2.56	1.13	Agree
4	The method I am using now is similar to MTBI	32	2.78	1.21	Agree
5	Basic education teachers are prepared in Colleges of education to teach using MT	32	2.09	1.38	Disagree
6	All teaching materials are written in English	32	2.72	1.02	Agree
7	There are no facilities for language learning	32	2.50	1.41	Agree
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>2.66</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 3 shows that the mean score of participants on the challenges of implementing MTBI ranges from 2.09 to 3.44. The result indicates that the mean responses to all the items are above 2.40 bench mark except for item number 5. The overall mean for the whole items is 2.66 and standard deviation of 1.26. This indicates that Basic Education teachers agree to the challenges of implementing MTBI as represented by the items except for item number 5.

**Hypothesis 1:** The Basic Education teachers' awareness of the language provisions of the NPE do not differ significantly based on school proprietorship.

Table 4 *ANOVA of teachers' awareness of language provisions based on school proprietorship*

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean square	F
Between group	2.528	2	1.264	9.625*
Within group	29.025	221	.131	
Total	31.554	223		

\*Significant at 0.05, F critical = 3.04

Table 4 revealed that the calculated F-ratio (9.625) is greater than the critical F-ratio (3.04) at degree of freedom of 2 & 221 and .05 alpha level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected showing the awareness of Basic Education teachers of the language provisions of the NPE differ significantly based on school proprietorship. The significance of F-ratio was further analyzed using Scheffe Post Hoc multiple comparison test to determine the pair-wise mean differences among the groups. The result is as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: *Scheffe Post Hoc Test for Hypothesis 1*

**Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable: Level of Awareness						
(I) Proprietorship	(J) Proprietorship	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Public (1)	2.00	-.22400*	.05629	.000	-.3627	-.0853
	3.00	-.27027*	.07529	.002	-.4558	-.0847
Private (2)	1.00	.22400*	.05629	.000	.0853	.3627
	3.00	-.04627	.06783	.793	-.2134	.1209
Mission (3)	1.00	.27027*	.07529	.002	.0847	.4558
	2.00	.04627	.06783	.793	-.1209	.2134

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5 shows that the mean difference public and private, public and mission, private and mission are .22400, .27027, and .04627 respectively. Given the relative mean score differences, the result suggests a significant mean difference between public and private schools and between public and mission schools. This implies that the level of awareness of MTBI is greater in public schools than in private and mission schools.

**Hypothesis 2:** The level of implementation of language provisions of the NPE does differ significantly based on school proprietorship.

Table 6: *ANOVA of teachers' level of implementation of language provisions based on school proprietorship*

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
Between Groups	4.217	2	2.108	13.679
Within Groups	34.064	221	.154	
Total	38.281	223		

\*Significant at 0.05, F critical = 3.04

Table 6 indicated that the calculated F-ratio (13.679) is greater than the critical F-ratio (3.04) at degree of freedom of 2 & 221 and .05 alpha level. Based on the result the null hypothesis is rejected showing that the Basic Education teachers' level of implementation of the language provisions of the NPE differ significantly based on school proprietorship. Post Hoc test of the significant F-ratio is as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: *Scheffe Post Hoc Test for Hypothesis 2*

<b>Multiple Comparisons</b>							
Dependent Variable: Level of Implementation							
(I) Proprietorship	(J) proprietorship	Mean (I-J)	Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Public(1.00)	2.00	.28800*		.06099	.000	.1377	.4383
	3.00	.35135*		.08156	.000	.1504	.5523
Private(2.00)	1.00	-.28800*		.06099	.000	-.4383	-.1377
	3.00	.06335		.07348	.690	-.1177	.2444
Mission(3.00)	1.00	-.35135*		.08156	.000	-.5523	-.1504
	2.00	-.06335		.07348	.690	-.2444	.1177

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 7 reveals that the mean difference public and private, public and mission, private and mission are .28800, .35135, and .06335 respectively. The relative mean score differences shows that there is a significant mean difference between public and private schools and between public and mission schools. This implies that the level of implementation of MTBI is greater in public schools than in private and mission schools.

**Hypothesis 3:** The Basic Education teachers' perception of the challenges that impede the implementations of the language provisions of the NPE do not differ significantly based on school proprietorship.

Table 8: *ANOVA of the teachers' perception of the challenges that impede implementation of MTBI*

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	df	Mean square	F
Between group	138.906	2	69.453	5.760*
Within group	2664.590	221	12.057	
Total	2803.496	223		

\*Significant at 0.05, F-critical = 3.04

Table 8 showed that F-calculated value (5.760) is greater than F-critical value (3.04) at degree of freedom 2, 221 and .05 alpha levels. Based on the result there is a significant difference in the teachers' perception of the challenges that impede implementation of the language provision of NPE based on school proprietorship. Since calculated F-ratio is significant, it is further analyzed using Post Hoc multiple comparison test shown on Table 9.

Table 9: *Scheffe Post Hoc Test for Hypothesis 3***Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable: Challenges of Implementation						
(I) Proprietorship	(J) Proprietorship	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Public(1.00)	2.00	1.79561*	.53937	.004	.4664	3.1249
	3.00	1.61378	.72134	.084	-.1639	3.3915
Private(2.00)	1.00	-1.79561*	.53937	.004	-3.1249	-.4664
	3.00	-.18184	.64986	.962	-1.7834	1.4197
Mission(3.00)	1.00	-1.61378	.72134	.084	-3.3915	.1639
	2.00	.18184	.64986	.962	-1.4197	1.7834

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 9 indicates that the mean difference between public and private, public and mission, private and mission are 1.79561, 1.61378, and .18184 respectively. The relative mean score difference suggests that there is a significant mean difference between public and private schools. This implies that the perception of teachers on the challenges that impede the implementation of MTBI is greater in public schools than in private schools.

**Discussion**

The result of the analysis presented in Table 1 revealed that basic education teachers are aware of the language provisions of use of MT in classroom instruction at pre-primary and primaries 1 - 3. Testing of Table 4 indicated a significant difference in the teachers' awareness of the language provisions of the NPE in relation to school proprietorship. Post Hoc Test in Table 5 shows that teachers in public schools are more aware of the language provisions than those in private and mission schools. The result is an indication that teachers from public schools are aware of the language provisions and other schools to a certain extent. This observation is in agreement with the findings of Spolsky (2004); Ojetunde (2012); Burton (2013) who in the independent studies found that the managers of the policy are not making concerted effort to monitor the implementation and to influence the practices in schools.

The result as shown in Table 2 indicated that Basic Education teachers do not strictly use MT as medium of instruction rather they prefer combining MT and English in classroom instruction. The result in Table 6 showed that there is significant difference in the teachers' level of implementation of MTBI in relation to school proprietorship. Further analysis indicated that whereas no school used only MT in instruction but mixture of MT and English Language, private schools use more of English Language in instruction than any other type of school. This result is expected because parents are resistant to the use of MT and private schools would want to maintain parents' patronage by using English Language in instruction. These findings collaborate with Schroeder (2004); Trudell (2007); Burton (2013) who in their separate studies found that parents, teachers and stakeholders have strong values for English Language having been convinced of its importance in education. Hence, they believe that mastery in official language is essential for education and economic development.

The result in Table 8 revealed a significant difference in teachers' perception of the challenges of implementation of language provision in the NPE based on school proprietorship. Post Hoc test in Table 9 further revealed that perception of challenges that impede the implementation of MTBI is more in Public schools. The finding is in line with Burton (2013) who found that teachers think

that it is difficult to adopt MTBI especially in multilingual urban schools where its adoption will entail a lot of extra work. Collaborating with the findings are studies of Ohiri-Aniche (2002a) and Ambatchew (2010) that identified multilingualism, lack of teaching material, general negative attitude toward MT, poor funding and lack of overall support of the government as impediments to implementation of MTBI. This finding is not surprising because teachers who are central to implementation of MTBI suffer poor working condition, excess work load, lack of support and training. There is also no commitment from the policy managers in monitoring the implementation of the language provisions of the NPE.

### **Conclusion**

It has been established from the findings of the study that teachers of pre-primary and primaries 1 – 3 are all aware of the language provisions of the NPE irrespective of the proprietorship of their schools. The importance and would-be outcome of MTBI are appreciated; however the policy is yet to be fully implemented. This calls for orientation of stakeholders in education, especially teachers, to the policy and the potential outcome.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made.

1. Government should be alive to the language provisions of the NPE and constantly monitor schools to ensure implementation of the policy
2. Government should adequately fund National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) and train more Nigerian Language teachers.
3. Training in use of MT for instruction should be integrated in the teacher education programme.
4. There should be improved working conditions for teacher, reasonable workload and training.
5. Textbooks in Nigerian Languages and other relevant materials should be made available to schools by the government.

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## ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY IN SOME SCHOOLS

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### **Abstract**

*Lots of scholarly papers have been presented by linguists and other scholars on the need to practically implement the language provisions of the National Policy on Education in Nigerian schools. The need is borne out of the realisation that every innovation and development has its basis on language. While some documents like the Nigerian Constitution (1979), the National Policy on Education (1977, 1981, 2004, 2013), etc., may be regarded as attempts at providing language roadmaps for the country, what remains to be seen is the implementation. A situation whereby Nigerian indigenous languages are only talked about on papers without any concrete use in reality, or where every attempt starts and ends with proposals is no longer healthy. This study was carried out to assess the extent of implementation of the language provisions of the National Policy on Education at the Lower Basic classes in 13 schools in Osioma local government area of Abia State, Nigeria. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire called Language Policy Implementation Instrument [LPPII]. The population comprised 40 teachers. Information collected was presented in tables and descriptive method of analyses and discussion were used. The result reveals that politics and frequent change in government, negative public attitudes, inadequate funding, lack of trained language teachers and facilities are among the factors facing the implementation of language policy in schools. The paper concluded by recommending a revolution of mind on the part of the government and the people.*

### **1. Introduction**

Language is a veritable tool for development and change. It is at the heart of every relationship, innovation and transformation. Language also possesses power for creativity. But, it does not possess this creative and transformative power on its own. The power of any language to bring about change is dependent on the people's use of it to communicate and carry out their daily activities. Thus, the native speakers of a language make their language what it is: either respecting and giving it value and prestige or making it look inferior. When groups do not make use of their language, it loses worth and the number of functions and uses it performs is reduced.

It is obvious that countries like China, South Korea, Japan, Russia, the Middle East, etc., have developed technologically through committed use of their indigenous languages. This is because they have policies that stipulate that knowledge be taught in the local languages. For any language to stand out, therefore, the people who own it must value, appreciate, and use it in such areas like education, administration, commerce, worship, etc. This goes to underscore the fact that the implementation of language policy in our schools is very crucial to the overall progress and development of the nation.

Nigeria is a multicultural society, with diverse indigenous languages. These languages are graded among other criteria, according to the number of speakers, into two basic groups: major and non-major languages. The major languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) have standard orthography and texts. They are widely used and enjoy national recognition. They occupy pride of place in communication, commerce, education, etc., at least at the local level. Notwithstanding this recognition, their present status does not guarantee them enough patronage as medium of instruction in schools.

The non-major languages, on the other hand, do not fare better. They are hardly recognised. They do not have well-developed orthography and texts on them are extant. In some instances, they are non-existent. This situation puts them at disadvantaged positions. But, whether major or non-major, “an indigenous language is an important symbol of one’s ethnic identity. It relates to one’s roots in the glorious past; a symbol of one’s cultural heritage” (Ituen, 2015:11). This being the case, the indigenous languages of Nigeria cannot be relegated or left in the dust bin; else their native speakers would be seen as people without culture and identity.

Given the fact that language is a human attribute that is at the heart of every human engagement and, every normal person and institution recognises and appreciates the strategic place and indispensable roles language plays in the affairs of a people, both at the local and international levels, the implementation of language policy becomes a matter of urgent priority. In this regard, therefore, the study looks at the present status of Nigerian language policy and the extent of implementation in schools from the following perspectives: (i) the introduction and delineation of operative concepts, (ii) the status of language policy in Nigeria, (iii) presentation and discussion of data, (iv) the constraints that impede implementation of language policy in schools and (v) recommendation and conclusion.

**Key words:** Language, Education, Policy, Language Policy, Implementation

## 2. Definition of Terms

**Language:** This is a means of communication by which a social group interacts or co-operates with one another, using all forms of internal and external representations like conventionalised signs, sounds, gestures, or marks having understandable meaning.

**Education:** This refers to the process of transmitting knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences from one person to another. It encompasses both the intended and unintended cues and behaviours exhibited by a person through which another can learn or copy from.

**Policy:** This is refers to the plan of action, statement of aims and ideas, made by an organisation, government, political party, etc.

**Language policy** refers to “the decisions of a polity regarding the acceptable language for those who are to carry out the political, economic, legal and social affairs of a nation or region of a nation” (Heath, 1985:2898). It serves to promote a language, giving it the status of official language. It also functions to protect and promote a regional or ethnic language whose viability is threatened.

**Implementation** here refers to the measures which provide strong force to achieve the goals of language policy. It is the plan by which a policy is to be put into use. It is the realisation of an application or execution of a plan, idea, model, design, specification, standard or policy. The best decision will amount to nothing unless it is implemented. Therefore, implementation is the action that must follow any preliminary thinking in order for something to actually happen.

### 3. The Status of Language Policy in Nigeria

Language policy planning is a function of language scientists and linguists whose duty is to describe the form of the language code and to spread, oversee its codification in dictionaries, grammar books and spellers (Ituen, 2015:9). It could also be seen as concerned with “both the symbolic function of language within a society and with the instrumental use that its speakers make of their language” (Hoffmann, 1991:204). Hence, peoples and nations work hard to make their indigenous languages count by using them in communication, poetry, drama, education, administration, commerce, religion, etc.

This is not to be the case in Nigeria where foreign languages (like English and French) have taken over these roles. The marginalisation of Nigerian indigenous languages dates back to the colonial periods when the language of the imperial masters became the dominant force in Nigeria’s socio-cultural, economic and political affairs. After many years of European rule and Nigeria gained her independence, the need to give the indigenous languages some level of recognition was felt. The Nigerian Constitution of 1999 in Section 55 took up this task and recommended that: “The business of the National Assembly shall be conducted in English, and in Hausa, Ibo (sic) and Yoruba when adequate arrangement have been made therefor”.

There was an extension of this same recognition to the other non-major languages, though indirectly, as Section 97 provided *inter alia*:

*The business of a House of Assembly shall be conducted in English, but the House may in addition to English conduct the business of the House in one or more other languages spoken in the State as the House may by resolution approve.*

Following this provision, the National Policy on Education (2004), affirmed government’s appreciation of the importance of language in the educational process and its interest to promote the indigenous languages to the level of curriculum subjects in schools, noting that language is “a means of promoting social interaction and national cohesion; and preserving cultures”. In this regard, then, it recommended that:

*Every child shall learn his/her mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment. Furthermore in the interest of national unity, it is expedient that every child shall be required to learn one of the three Nigerian languages, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba in addition to his/her Mother Tongue [NPE, 2004, Para. 10a].*

Hence, the three major languages are to be taught as subjects in schools. The NPE went beyond the teaching of the indigenous languages as school subjects to recommend that they should be used as medium of instruction from early childhood education to the first three years of primary education. “Government shall ensure that the medium of instruction is principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community... [NPE Para. 14c].

There have been other notable efforts at protecting and projecting the indigenous languages, as noted by Essien (2003:30) like, a terminology workshop on science and mathematics for primary schools organised in 1978 and sponsored by the National Language Centre, now Language Development Centre; the quadrilingual dictionary on legislative terminologies – in English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba – published by National Educational Research Development Council (NERDC); the publication of curricular or syllabuses in Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Efik for both junior and senior secondary schools, etc.

In spite of these efforts, there are clear evidences to show that Nigeria has not had a language policy consciously planned and national in scope. Rather, there have been pockets of language policies whose emergences were to address certain immediate needs or pressures. The inability to have a concrete language policy is seen, on the one hand, as a major problem in the development of Nigerian indigenous languages.

But, it is not enough to have language policy. The more important thing is its implementation. Thus, an important aspect of language policy provision is ensuring the use of the languages in different areas ranging from the earliest years of schooling to the National Assembly (Ituen, 2015:9). In the next section, we shall provide data to show that the language policy on education in Nigeria is not being implemented in schools.

#### **4. The Objective of the Study**

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To ascertain the level of awareness of the existence of language policy on education;
2. To determine the extent of implementation and/or the constraints to the language policy implementation in schools;
3. To come up with practical measures that will ensure the implementation of language policy in schools.

#### **5. Research Questions**

1. What is the status of indigenous language policy on education in Nigerian schools?
2. What are the barriers to the implementation of language policy on education in schools?
3. To what extent is the language policy on education implemented in schools?

#### **6. Data Collection, Sample Size, and Data Analysis**

The study was carried out in 13 randomly selected Lower Basic schools in Osisioma Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria. The survey design method was used for the study because it provides data to describe the existing conditions at particular points in time. The instrument for data collection was a 15-item questionnaire requiring “yes” or “no” answers from respondents. It was administered to 40 teachers in the selected schools. The validity of the instrument was obtained on expert opinions of two senior lecturers on Measurement and Evaluation. Oral interviews and personal observations were also adopted to complement the questionnaire. The oral interview was to gather relevant information concerning events, work results, knowledge, opinions, perspectives, values, attitudes, and other face to face contents (Kubr & Prokopenko, 1989). 38 questionnaires were returned out of the 40 distributed and data analysed descriptively.

## 7. Presentation of data, analysis and discussions

Item 1 of the questionnaire sought to ascertain the level of awareness of the existence of language policy on education in Nigeria.

**Table 1: Awareness on the existence of language policy**

Awareness of language policy	Total frequency
Yes	36
No	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>

The information in table 1 above shows that 36 of the respondents, accounting for 98% are aware that there exists language provision in the NPE in Nigeria, while the remaining 2% of the respondents are unaware of it.

Item 2 sought to know if those who are aware of the existence of the language policy on education also have idea of its content. From the responses, those who have knowledge of the content of the NPE are in the majority, with a total of 96%, while the remaining 4% do not have idea about what the policy contains.

Item 3 was to investigate whether there is enough awareness on the part of the society on the existence of language policy on education in Nigeria. The researcher gathered that the awareness is lacking on the part of the society, with 30 respondents as against 8 who said that there is such awareness. The result of this lack of knowledge is that most people are not aware of the importance and contributions of indigenous languages to the acquisition of qualitative education and the intellectual development of their children. In fact, most people think that enforcing the use of mother tongue in the schools will run counter to their interests of having their children acquire the official language as early as possible.

Item 4 of the questionnaire sought to know if schools implement the language policy, while item 5 was directed at finding out whether schools encourage the teaching, learning and use of indigenous languages. The result of the respondents is presented in table 2 below.

**Table 2: Implementation of language policy**

Items	Yes	No
Does your school encourage the teaching, learning and use of indigenous language?	10	28
To what extent does your school implement or encourage the implementation of language policy?	5	33

Table 2 above reveals that the number of schools that encourage the teaching, learning and use of indigenous language is on the low side, with 5 respondents. The schools in this category, as the result revealed are mostly public schools. Most schools do not implement nor encourage the implementation of the language policy. A greater number of schools, represented by the 33 respondents, do not implement the national language policy on education. In fact, many schools prefer using English as medium of instruction right from the kindergarten to using Mother Tongue, while only a little percentage use code-mixing to teach the children.

The issue is worse in private schools, with 36 respondents affirming that private schools constitute serious hindrances to the language policy implementation. This result is corroborated by the observation of Enwere (2015:144), who notes that

*Many private nursery and primary schools go as far as placing ban on the use of local languages on their premises to ensure that their pupils are not corrupted by a vernacular language. They even start to teach French in that early infancy. This attitude has never helped any Nigerian language policy to thrive.*

The study equally revealed that native speakers' negative attitude towards their language and preference for foreign language is a serious hindrance to the implementation of language policy in the schools, with 34 respondents as against 4 who think otherwise.

**Table 3: Native speakers' attitude**

Do you agree that parents are opposed to the implementation of language policy in schools?	35	3
Do you think that native speakers' attitude to indigenous languages is a problem to their implementation in schools?	34	4

That native speakers are not proud of their language is further confirmed by Aziza (1990:117) thus:

*There is the very serious problem of the attitude of the people themselves to teaching and learning the languages. No student wants to introduce himself as learning a Nigerian language. Students choose to study a Nigerian language only as a last resort if no other offer comes.*

The attitude of rejecting indigenous languages cuts across all frontiers: individuals and institutions, the literate and the unlettered. Many parents and schools neither accept nor encourage the teaching, learning and use of mother tongue in their environments, as evidenced in table 3.

*Instead, such parents always want their children to acquire English language right from the cradle. They do have the fear that the use of mother tongue will place their children at a disadvantage with respect to other children who study strictly in English (Sanusi, 2015:26).*

Many parents frown at their children whenever they speak any indigenous language. They prefer communicating with them in foreign languages, especially English and sometimes, Pidgin. They "also feel embarrassed and ashamed to inform people that their children are studying a Nigerian language in the university" (Aziza, 1990:117).

The native speakers' aversion for indigenous languages has been attributed to foreign mentality as averred by Anukam (2015:1) who wanted to voice out her "age-long reservation against foreign language mentality", but ended up a victim of the same mentality.

*The language of this lecture, however, is not just an irony but the inescapable fallout of the same foreign language mentality. If this lecture was written in my mother tongue – Igbo language, about 90% of the reading public would not and could not have read it despite the status of Igbo as one of the three unity languages in Nigeria.*

Justifying further why she wrote in foreign language and not Igbo, she said: “it is against the university culture in Nigeria to write such an official lecture outside the official language – English”. And so, finding reason to “succumb to this collective mentality at the national level”, she submitted: “*Ahughị nke e mere, e mee nke a hụrụ*” meaning that if the desirable is not available, the available is made desirable (Anukam, 2015:1).

Making the available desirable? There is the problem! Both the people and institutions that should project, safeguard and promote indigenous languages have no place for them. Yet, the indigenous languages are available to us. They are the Mother Tongue of their owners. The language in which a person is born, in which he grows, interacts, lives and even dies. Our mother tongue is part and parcel of us. It is our heritage; our identity. Why make it foreign to us? Why should we become strangers to our tongues?

**Table 4: Government and implementation of language policy**

Items	Yes	No
Do you think that the government has done enough to implement the language provisions of the NPE?	3	35
Do you agree that there is need for the government to enforce the implementation of language policy in schools?	33	5

The greatest shortcoming in the implementation of the language policy is traceable to the failure of the government at all levels to put into effect most of the measures it stated in the NPE aimed at ensuring that its objectives are actualised. For instance, section 32, subsection II of the policy states that government will (i) develop the orthography for many more Nigerian languages and (ii) produce textbooks in Nigerian languages. But, the result in table 4 clearly indicates that the government has not done much in the area of orthography development and production of textbooks, with 35 respondents, while only 3 think otherwise.

Further results reveal that there is also the problem of funding, which equally affects the training of qualified language teachers and providing other effective teaching and learning materials such as libraries, laboratories, CD tapes, etc. As a confirmation of the above, 33 respondents believe that the government still has a lot of works to do to ensure that the language provision of the NPE is actualised.

The incessant change of administration and lack of political will constitute other sources of worry in the implementation of the language policy. The Nigeria nation has witnessed 14 administrations between 1960 when Nigeria gained independence. And, since no succeeding government likes taking up projects begun by previous administrations, the result is that the money and personnel invested in such projects like language policy implementation are wasted.

Added to the above is the creation of states whereby some ethnic languages which were formerly regarded as minority languages have assumed more recognition. Consequently, some speakers of these minority languages disapprove of the recognition accorded the majority languages. They feel cheated and marginalised and see any move to raise any of them to the status of an official or national language as attempt to marginalise and relegate them to the background.

There can be no language policy implementation without language planners who have adequate knowledge of what is involved. A situation whereby an accountant by profession is made the Minister of Education or a lawyer heads a language institute will not augur well with the Nigerian education system or language policy implementation in schools. A necessary question then is: who plans our education and language policy: amateurs in language planning or language experts? It has to be noted that the best ideas cannot rule the world no matter how lofty and robust they may be, unless the right things are done and concrete steps taken to ensure that words are followed up with actions. According to Bamgbose (2003:13), “when an aspiration, proposal, or measure is unrealistic, it is as good as non-existent, as the chances of realising it are virtually nil”.

## **8. Recommendations and Conclusion**

Language plays a major role in all thoughts, descriptions, analyses, and arguments that are so crucial in development. “Language is a constant, since no human activity can be envisaged without language” (Essien, 2003:25). For any meaningful progress to be made, the question of language use in the country must be addressed. In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are put forward:

There should be a consciously planned and practicable (realisable) language policy for the nation. For this to be achievable, real linguists and language education scholars should be directly engaged. Furthermore, Nigerian linguists and language educationists should embrace the challenge of publishing works in Nigerian languages.

Leaders of governments at all levels should learn to take up, complete, and implement good projects begun by their predecessors. In addition, the Houses of Assembly of the various States should intensify efforts and adhere strictly to the provisions of the Constitution to conduct their sitting at times in the native language of their respective States.

Enough public awareness should be created through jingles, advertisements and announcements. Individuals, schools, communities, government, NGOs should organise seminars, workshops, and orientation programmes on the need to teach, learn and use indigenous languages in Nigerian schools. The mass media – telecommunications, newspapers, radio houses, television outfits, must intensify efforts at using Nigerian indigenous languages to disseminate information to the public.

Laws should be enacted that will make it a punishable offence for schools that ban the teaching, learning, and speaking of indigenous languages. Such schools should be closed down and those that implement the policy should be rewarded. Hence, the government should mandate every school in Nigeria to teach, learn and use Nigerian indigenous languages as stipulated in the NPE (Chinagorom, 2014:279).

Again, the study of any of the three major indigenous languages should be made compulsory at the nursery, primary and secondary levels of education and a good grade in the subject (at least a credit) should be an indispensable criterion for admission into the university, no matter what course one is offering (Asuoha, 2008).

The right people with good training, qualification and experience should be appointed into offices that have to do with language planning to ensure implementation.

The International Mother Language Day as declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), which comes up every February 21st, should be made a national event and all schools mandated to observe it.

## 9. Conclusion

The study was conducted to ascertain the extent of implementation of language policy on education in Nigerian schools. It observed that there is no language policy consciously planned and national in scope, although some documents contain few directives on language. From the data collected and discussed, the study observed that there are serious constraints in the actualisation of language policy in schools. It therefore recommended that the achievement of the objectives of the language policy on education will require a revolution of the mind. The Nigerian people must take unanimous decision: peoples' will. All must see themselves as Chief Official Languages Implementation Officers responsible for the implementation of the language policy on education.

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# LANGUAGE PROVISIONS OF NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION AND THE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

By

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## **Abstract:**

*Language is a means of communication by which human beings interact and exchange their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Nigerian languages now co-exist with English language which has been institutionalized. In view of the above issue, there is a great need for the speakers of this foreign language to learn Nigerian languages for diverse purposes. This paper discussed the instructional role of the teacher in improving quality teaching and learning of Nigerian languages with emphasis on systematic planning (Educational technology) and making learning experiences more meaningful for learners. Finally, the roles of educational technology in improving quality teaching of Nigerian languages are identified.*

**Keywords:** Teaching, Instruction, Effective Teaching/Instruction, Educational Technology.

## **Introduction**

Language is a means of communication by which human beings interact and exchange their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Language is therefore an indispensable tool in any given human society. In agreement, Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (2004) appreciates the importance of language as a means of promoting social interaction, national cohesion and preserving cultures. The policy also stresses that every child shall be required to learn one of the three Nigerian languages – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Nigerian languages now co-exist with English language which has been institutionalized.

In view of the above issue, there is a great need for the speakers of this foreign language to learn Nigerian languages for diverse purposes. It becomes pertinent to adopt an instructional technology that can help achieve this objective. Education technology (instructional technology) stands for the continued improvement of effectiveness in education especially the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching occupies a key position in all educational activities. Most other educational issues or matters are geared towards supporting and promoting teaching and learning. It is also common knowledge that teaching in its multiform is one of the most important conditions that encourage and stimulate learning. The strategic position or focal role of the teacher stems from the central position of teaching in the education process. The quality of education lies squarely in the domain of the teacher and he will only have himself to blame if he fails.

For the teachers, their main function and task in the educative process is instruction through which curriculum objectives and in fact all other objectives of education are achieved. At this point, some relevant questions may be asked. These are:

- 1) What is teaching/instruction?
- 2) What is effective teaching/instruction?
- 3) How can educational technology contribute to effective teaching of Nigerian languages?

The rest of this paper will attempt to provide some answers to these questions.

## **Teaching**

This paper focuses upon professional teaching within the setting of school, classroom or learning situation. Teaching constitutes the curriculum implementation level and the most problematic area of education. It is the nerve-centre of education i.e., the whole process through which curriculum objectives and other intents of education are achieved. What is achieved culminates in character formation, personality development and eventually national advancement. Teaching processes involve the teacher, learner, curriculum guide and working conditions – good school surroundings, classroom/learning spaces with seats, materials and other facilities that promote learning. Teaching simply represents the series of interactions or events which take place at different intervals during communication in the classroom or in a teaching – learning situation. As an involving human activity, teaching is complex. Teaching is a complex activity because it involves the subject – matter, methods and materials as well as human beings who have physical, emotional, psychological and intellectual reactions. As an education undertaking, it is dynamic.

Teaching may be defined as an attempt to bring about desirable change in human learning, abilities and behaviour. The aim of teaching therefore is to influence learners to make those desirable changes in their behaviour that contribute to better living. These changes may take three forms:

- 1) An increased store of useful information and the understanding of basic principles in the subject – matter.
- 2) Acquisition of skills, abilities and habits, for instance, psychomotor skills – the physical competencies required to perform certain activities efficiently.
- 3) Possession of desirable attitudes and ideas, such as developing satisfaction about learning outcomes or achievement obtained through the process of sharing meaning.

Teaching is the creating of opportunities from which learners can gain such experiences that will enable them acquire the knowledge, skills, attitude and appreciation that will serve as tools in life. In the school situation, teaching involves the determination of worthwhile objectives, the selection and arrangement of learning experiences, guidance, motivation as well as testing and correcting with a view to ensuring and improving upon learning (Onwuka, 1996, P. 314).

Teaching is a closed system of social interaction which exists wherever teachers and students meet for the purpose of giving and receiving instructions. Teaching involves arranging, manipulating, adapting or adjusting and managing the learning environment so that any person with appropriate entry behaviour placed in that environment may learn and exhibit the desired learning outcomes. No wonder then (Imogie, 1988. P 43) summarized the knowledge and skills required in teaching as follows:

The mediocre teacher tells  
The good teacher explains

The superior teacher demonstrates  
The great teacher inspires.

Finally, teaching refers to getting the student from where he is to where we would like him to be; in other words a movement from entering to terminal behaviour. The purpose of teaching is to change behaviour in a specifiable and desirable way both in the classroom and outside it.

### **Instruction**

Instruction is a deliberately arranged set of external events designed to support internal learning processes. According to Driscoll (2000) “Gagne’s nine events of instruction refer to steps instructors should take in an effort to meet learning outcomes”. These events of instruction are:

1. It is imperative to gain student’s attention.
2. It is important to help students recall previously learned information which might be helpful in learning new materials.
3. Instructors should make students aware of the learning outcomes(s).
4. New material should be presented.
5. Instructors should provide students with learning guidance for example; you might suggest an effective way for students to organize the new information.
6. Students should be given a chance to demonstrate that they have learned the information.
7. Providing feedback is corrective rather than final.
8. Assess performance – specifically, whether students have achieved your initial learning outcomes and
9. Retention and transfer. Instructors should strive to reinforce learning and help students apply it to other instructions.

When instruction is designed, it is these events that are being considered, chosen and represented in the communications and other stimulation offered to the learner.

As a result of New Technologies of instruction in education, a modern conception of instruction is therefore clearly explained by modern authors. For example, instruction is the arrangement of information and environment to facilitate learning. By environment we mean not only where instruction takes place but also the methods, media and equipment needed to convey information and guide the learner’s study. Information and environment can be arranged on a continuum from very formal to informal. The relationship between the information and environment can change depending on the instructional goal (Heimlich, Molenda & Russell, 1993).

The new dimension introduced by these writers is the crucial issue of learner – centered education. It means that self-instruction can be effectively carried out when a learner is appropriately guided with the right methods, relevant media and equipment needed to convey the right and precise information. The teachers’ role then changes from expert to facilitator or coach.

Imogie (1988, p. 44) states that instruction “is the process whereby the environment of an individual is deliberately managed to enable him to learn, to emit or engage in specified behaviours under specific conditions or as responses to specified situations”. Emphasizing on the definition, he states that objective guidance is the main purpose of instruction in education as against teaching which is less objective or less directional. Instruction consists of leading the learner through a sequence of

statements and restatements of a problem or bodies of knowledge that can increase the learner's ability to grasp, transform and transfer what he is learning.

The term instruction contains all the elements necessary for promoting effective classroom interactions. It is therefore preferable to teaching.

### **Effective Teaching/Instruction**

The word effective means having effect or producing the intended result. Effective teaching or instruction is therefore that which stimulates and inspires the learners into attaining the desired instructional/lesson objectives, maintaining positive attitude and using the knowledge and skills gained in solving problems in new situations.

Several studies have been carried out on factors associated with effective teaching or teaching behaviours that facilitate pupils' learning. Findings that indicate teacher's attributes are as follows:

- Warmth,
- Understanding,
- Organized and businesslike,
- Stimulating and imaginative, (Ryan's factors)
- Ability to ask questions,
- Acceptance of pupils' feelings,
- Acknowledgement of pupil's ideas,
- Use of praises and encouragement, (Flanders indicators)
- Enthusiasm,
- Businesslike and task oriented,
- Clear presentation of instructional content,
- Use of variety of instructional materials and procedures, and
- Provision of opportunities for pupils to learn the instructional content.

Since the learners are the centre of all instructional activities, they are the reflector of the teacher's instructional efforts. They are therefore in a better position to identify or establish what effective teaching means for them through their behaviour and performance. Therefore effective teaching contributes to the individual's understanding, helps to improve his abilities and develops in him more desirable attitudes.

Rosenshine and Berliner (as cited in Onyejemezi, 1995) identify seven observable indicators of effective teaching as exhibited by pupils' behaviour and performance. They are:

1. Pupils show knowledge and understanding as measured by performance on tests.
2. Pupils exhibit independent behaviour in learning curriculum content
3. Pupils exhibit behaviour which indicates a positive attitude towards the curriculum and the school.
4. Pupils exhibit behaviour which indicates a positive attitude towards teacher and peers.
5. Pupils exhibit behaviour which indicates a positive attitude towards themselves.
6. Pupils do not exhibit behaviour problems in class.
7. Pupils seem actively engaged in learning academically relevant materials while the class is in session.

In conclusion, the researchers stressed that the last indicator which they refer to as “academic engaged time” is a very vital factor in the achievement of teaching – learning objectives.

Rosenshine and Berliner see the academic engaged time as the amount of time the pupil spends on reading, writing or other activities which involve the pupil or student in learning academically relevant material. The findings and conclusions of Rosenshine and Berliner along with the other observable indicators of effective teaching establish that effective teaching or qualitative instruction is that which satisfies learner needs and objectives.

Relating this learner satisfaction to the manager of the learning environment (the teacher), the observable studies strongly indicate that the effective teacher is one who is able to demonstrate the ability to bring about intended learning outcomes. Finally, an effective teacher is one who is able to influence classroom behaviour to achieve specified and appropriate educational objectives; he is resourceful and imaginative and can blend his own unique style of teaching and his personality into basic teaching skills to produce useful results.

### **Learning**

Learning is basically a process of adapting to and improving the environment. What is learned can be measured either by those things that we observe in the behaviour of the individual or those that can be inferred. There is continuity in learning and it builds on experience and practice. Learning is also seen as the process by which we acquire and retain attitudes, knowledge, understanding, skills and capabilities that cannot be attributed to inherited behavior patterns or physical growth. Learning by its nature requires reasoning and co-ordination. As a process, learning progresses are in stages. Skinner experimented with this idea in the 1960s and discovered that when the content or the material to be learnt is effectively planned or designed i.e. broken down into very small steps and arranged in carefully designed sequence which leads from the known to the unknown and presented to students, meaningful and pleasurable learning takes place. Meaningful learning is the off-shoot of teaching and instruction as conceptualized in modern education and the major objective of education. It is defined as adaptive change in behaviour as a result of experience, conditioning, training, acquiring of motor skills, effective and cognitive learning.

### **Educational Technology: Conceptual Framework**

Educational technology is an area of study in education that adopted the small step-by-step programmed learning approach during the mid 1960s for the effective handling of educational problems especially instructional and learning problems. The step-by-step programmed learning approach is also known by other names such as step-by-step plan, systems analysis, systematic approach and systems technology. When emphasis moves from tools technology to systems approach or systems technology, this change became known as educational technology.

Educational technology is defined as the application of the small step-by-step programmed learning approach of breaking complex tasks into simpler parts to the process of improving education as a whole and particularly in the process of teaching and learning. The Association for Education Communication and Technology (1979) in Iwu, Ike and Chimezie, (2006, p. 43) defines educational technology as “a complex integrated process involving people, procedure, ideas, devices and organization for analyzing problems and devising, implementing, evaluating and managing solutions to those problems involved in all aspects of human learning”.

Akude (2004, p.5) sees educational technology as “the selection and utilization of instructional materials, identification of target audience, formulation of educational objectives to help solve the identified problems, utilization of appropriate teaching methods and strategies as well as evaluation of the whole processes with a view to improving learning in the classroom”.

Onyejemezi (1996, p. 448) concluded that:

Educational technology embraced educational objectives, curriculum content, means of learning and the evaluation and modification of the learning system with a view to improving effectiveness. It is concerned with the whole process of acquiring knowledge. This process involved the learner, the content, methods, resource materials as well as other educating agents. Educational technology emphasizes new developments in teaching and learning, course content and the fullest use of central services concerned with the application of instructional materials and devices.

From the foregoing, it is evident that educational technology is both product and process. The product must be fully and properly integrated into the process in order to achieve objectives by instruction or overall education objectives.

The product aspect of educational technology includes all kinds of instructional resources/materials. They range from real objects/life situations to all representational materials such as print materials and non print materials, radio, television, films, computers, satellite and models. the process properties of education technology are:

- i) An objective oriented approach
- ii) A systematic approach to instructional design or course development.
- iii) A systematic approach to the management of instruction or teaching and learning processes.

### **Federal Government Policy on Educational Technology**

National policy on education calls education technology “Educational services” (NPE 2004, p. 51). The Federal Government educational services objectives are stated in the following vein: To facilitate the implementation of educational policy, the attainment of policy goals and the promotion of effectiveness of educational system. The goals of national policy on the educational services are to:

- 1) Develop, assess and improve education programs;
- 2) Enhance teaching and improve the competence of teachers;
- 3) Make learning experiences more meaningful for children;
- 4) Make education more cost – effective;
- 5) Promote in-service education and
- 6) Develop and promote effective use of innovative materials in schools (NPE 2004, p. 51).

### **Improving the quality of teaching and learning of Nigerian languages through educational technology**

#### **Benefits of educational technology in education**

In instructional activities, educational resources can be used to:

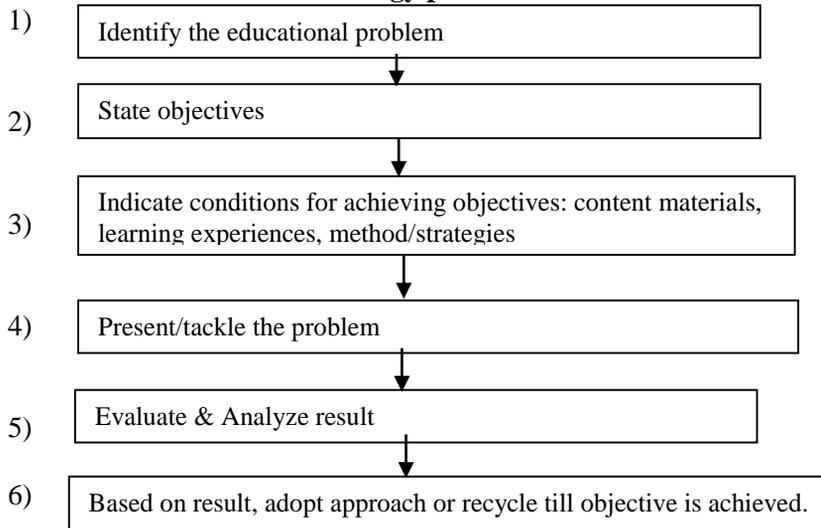
- 1) Help the teacher provide his students with meaningful sources of information.

- 2) Provide the teacher with interest compelling spring boards which can launch students into a wide variety of learning activities.
- 3) Multiply the teacher's efficiency in providing tutorial stimuli and responses, guidance for individual students and small groups.
- 4) Clarify and illustrate non-verbal symbols and images, quantitative relationships, complex relationships, abstract concepts, partial relationships and special details.
- 5) Provide increased interest in learning
- 6) Hold the learner's attention
- 7) Offer rich opportunities for learners to develop communication skills while actively engaged in solving meaningful problems.
- 8) Offer a variety of reality of experience which stimulates self activity on the part of learners.
- 9) Stimulate learners through both visual and auditory controls.
- 10) Provide the learners with the opportunities for independent and individualized learning.

### **Conditions for achieving effective teaching and learning of Nigerian languages through educational technology**

Education technology can be used to achieve instructional objectives or effective teaching and learning of Nigerian languages through the application of both process and product aspects of educational technology.

#### **The basic educational technology process**



#### **Education technology for effective teaching of Nigerian languages**

Education technology provides the system approach to learning. The systems approach, according to Adeosun (1988) is the break-up of a task into many parts, the study of the connections between these parts and the utilization of these connections to achieve cost-effective results on the task. The application of this approach to the teaching – learning situation refers to the step-by-step, systematic planning and delivering of instruction. This would involve what Onyejemezi (1995) refers to as the identification of educational problems, the specification of objectives, the planning of the

implementation of the objectives, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the operation and the revision of the processes.

These are however, to be proceeded by a clear, thorough, realistic and accurate understanding of the present system to identify future goals and the necessary medications on present functions. Through this analysis of the present system, which may also be regarded as initial evaluation aimed at identifying future goals, many factors are considered including the theories of learning. Through these theories, we know how learning could be enhanced. Through the perception process we know the five sensory modalities through which the learner becomes aware of his environment. These are the eye, ear, nose, tongue and body.

Okoye (1967) as cited by Adeosun (1988) makes it emphatic that learning is better facilitated through multi-modal perceptual utilization. A child will gain a better learning of what Okoro soup is by seeing it, hearing its name, touching the soup, smelling it and finally tasting it than by only hearing its name or by only seeing it. This goes on to show that the more sensory modalities we involve in the learning process, the more learning we achieve. Education Technology makes use of these theories through its systems approach and this is where instructional materials come in. A teacher may have problems with verbal communication in the class due to the language factors but there are languages understood by everyone. If the teacher strives very hard to effect the utilization of as many sensory modalities as possible by the students he sets goal. Some of the students will understand through visual perception, some through auditory perception and so on. Whoever does not see may hear or be able to feel, the language we speak notwithstanding.

Therefore, it is only left to the teacher to determine which experience will easily achieve his objectives, knowing fully what language problems he has with the children. Hence, he must have the knowledge of the existence of various instructional materials/methods and their uses, for example, the use of print media in teaching language. There are different ways of using for example newspapers in the language classroom. The student may read the articles therein written in Igbo, Hausa or Yoruba and this could transmit some form of culture into the student or reader. An example is reading a story with the headline; “New yam festival of Owerri turns into a great carnival”. Here the younger generation who do not know much about new yam festival in Nigeria, in Igbo land or in Owerri, will acquire vital information about the culture. Newspapers also help in reflecting changes in the language, morphological, semantic and even stylistic changes and as well assist students, readers and even teachers where necessary to keep themselves abreast with changes.

Again the use of television conveys a great number of signs simultaneously. It can gain heavy impact from mutually reinforcing gestures, words, postures and sounds and a background of symbolically significant issue. An example is watching movies with a Nigerian language say Igbo as the dominant language of communication. The visual and critical awareness of the student is increased and thus enhances language learning and development. The student listens to the authentic language as it is spoken by the native speaker in the movie aired by the television station, the student sees the action of the characters, listens to what they say (their words) and thus matches action with words and gets a better grasp of the language. Again photographs and illustrations presented on a television program help the learner to describe situations, objects or images in an apt manner.

## Conclusion

This paper has tried to highlight a few things. The major issue is the need to approach the instructional role of the teacher in improving the quality of teaching and learning of Nigerian Languages with emphasis on systematic planning. This calls for the use of educational technology in the real sense of it. By its nature educational technology has a very important role in the development of Nigerian languages and in bringing about quality teaching and meaningful learning of Nigerian languages. The process of educational technology is a quality control instrument which should not elude any serious educational system. The need for teachers and educational administrators to be well equipped and encouraged to apply educational technology processes and materials is at best mandatory for the attainment of the national objectives on Nigerian languages.

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## LANGUAGE PROVISIONS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION IN THE EFFECTIVE ACTUALIZATION OF GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

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### **Abstract**

*The real actualization of educational objectives as stated in the National Policy on education depends highly on the learner's disposition as it concerns understanding of concepts and proper guidance. A learner understands the teaching when it is delivered in the language he/she understands well. The National Policy on Education stipulates the use of mother tongue at pre-primary and junior primary, and should be taken as a compulsory subject in junior secondary schools. This provision is highly neglected. This paper examines the language provision of the National Policy on Education and the effective actualization of Guidance & counseling in schools.*

**Key words:** NPE, Actualization, Guidance & counseling, School

### **INTRODUCTION**

The very high regard that English Language has as a school subject and medium of communication at all levels of education in most places in Nigeria derives mainly from its utilitarian value to the larger Nigerian society. In reality the importance of English language acquisition as a medium for proficiency in other school subjects cannot be overemphasized. Knowledge is important not only for classroom teaching and learning but also for economic and national development. It also serves the purpose of increasing communication among the numerous ethnic groups in Nigeria. Hence, there is the need to improve the quality of spoken and written English language as well as increase the number of people that can use it fluently and freely.

According to Oluwole (2008) in recognition of the importance of English language for enhancing educational attainment as well as for improving communication ability of citizens, the government has made the subject a core subject.

However, one of the ultimate goals in learning to read and reading to learn is to construct meaning. One way to make reading meaningful is to connect the new content to what is already familiar or known. From an instructional viewpoint, contextualization refers to drawing connections between what needs to be learned and learners' existing knowledge and experiences. In Nigerian situation,

there should be a connection between a learner's mother tongue and the highly graded English language in order to make learning meaningful.

On the other hand, to actualize the high meaning that is attributed to learning one need to consider other factors. One of the most important among them is the learner's disposition physically and Intrinsic. When this is not properly handled the teacher may put in his best only to realize that the learner achieved nothing. Truly, proper management of disposition goes together with Guidance & Counselling. Here also depending on the learner's level and understanding ability, the Guidance Counsellor truly actualizes her purpose when the language the learner understands deeply is used in reaching or counseling. According to Akpa, Udoh & Fagbamiye (2005), evidence abounds in literature on different manifestation of indiscipline in school as a result of lack of proper Counselling. From the researchers' experiences most indiscipline acts among learners are results of either mismanaged or unmanaged learner dispositions. It has been noted that absence of discipline in school frustrates the teacher, lowers the tone of the school and threatens acceptability of the products of the school. According to Ugodulunwa,( 2004), cited in Akpa, (2005 ), it could also make the school environment less child friendly and teaching and learning ineffective even when the teacher uses the right language and method with the view to make the learning meaningful.

Therefore, the use of mother tongue or the child's first language in the management of behavioural disposition through proper Guidance & Counselling cannot be over emphasized. Thus, in view of the fact that sufficient effort has not been directed to the proper implementation of the language provision of the national policy on education as it concerns the use of mother tongue, this work is directed to the language provision and the effective actualization of Guidance & Counselling roles in schools.

### **Conceptual Framework on Guidance & Counselling and Mother Tongue**

Guidance & Counselling is a process of planned intervention within a school system by which the total development of students is stimulated in areas relating to their personal, social, career, emotional and academic concerns. Counselling services require more than one person; it is an enlightened process whereby people help people to achieve positive adjustment through self – understanding. This is better done by a professional who works by facilitating growth toward achievement. In Akinade's (2012) contribution, Guidance & Counselling is a process of helping an individual become fully aware of him and the ways in which he is responding to the influences of his environment.

Akinade states further that Guidance & Counselling also assist an individual to establish some personal meaning for his behaviour and to develop and classify a set of goals and values for future behaviour. From the above explanations one can freely add that the influence of effective Guidance & Counselling is of both immediate and long time importance. The process involves one on one relationship between a person that is troubled by problems he cannot cope with and a professional or trained personnel whose experiences have qualified him to help others reach solution to personal needs. In other words, one can say that the Counsellor helps people to help themselves through interactional relationship designed to facilitate the personal development of information leading to effective decision making.

However, in addition to creating self awareness and effective decision making, the counsellor helps the individual concerned to learn and also understand their environment. With such exposure they will be in a position to choose between accepted behaviours that can help them to develop progress and mature positively. It can also help them to expand their understanding educationally, vocationally and socially. From practical examples one can understand that the learning process in counselling is transformative in nature whereby people are helped to learn all they need inside and outside the classroom.

During the counselling process, the counsellor makes use of languages. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. Considering the understanding of the participant the counsellor uses the language the client can better understand and with which he can give proper explanation on what he needs. Consequently a proper knowledge of a client's mother tongue is of great importance to the counsellor.

Mother tongue is defined as a language which a group of people considered to be indigenes of an area acquired and accepted to be their medium of communication. Mother tongue may be the first language a child comes in contact with in his environment. It may also be the language of the parents especially the father. However, a child's first language may not be his parents' language but the language of the environment where he was born and brought up. If he understands this language well and better than any other, it becomes his mother tongue (L1). For instance an Igbo boy was born and brought up in Akwa Ibom State where the language spoken is Ibibio. The boy understands Ibibio more than the parents and understands concepts better in Ibibio than Igbo and English language. Whichever language the boy prefers, the fact remains that his Mother Tongue is the Igbo language. Often a child learns the basics of the first language(s) from the family.

It is accepted that in teaching, learning and counselling processes, the Mother Tongue of the child is of utmost importance. Oluwole, (2008), is of the view that it categorizes a large path of the child's environment. He explains that it has names for most of the objects, actions, ideas and attributes which are so important to the learner as well as to any society. Truly children learn through communicating in a language they understand and which they can speak well. The mother tongue is the natural base on which verbal skills can be built; it is the Child's environment. Wikipedia (2007) also added that if a child's Mother Tongue is the first language that a person learned, the person is defined as a native speaker of the first language, although one may also be the native speaker of more than one language if all of the languages were learned without formal education, such as through cultural immersion before puberty.

### **Main goal of education**

According to Egbo (2013) in Nigerian philosophy of education, it is believed that education is a pivot for national and all round development of an individual. From Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN (2004) various aspects of education may include the following: the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development and the interaction of persons and ideas.

Education is not only a tool for liberation from illiteracy but also a veritable instrument for transmission of norms and values to the younger ones. When more people are educated social vices is reduced and there is peaceful coexistence. As stated in the Nigerian National Policy on Education, Nigerian philosophy of education is based on these three major goals.

1. The development of an individual into a sound and effective citizen.
2. The full integration of the individual into the community.
3. The provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal schools system.

Egbo (2013) suggests that in order to make the philosophy of education work harmoniously with the Nigerian national goals, education in Nigeria has to be geared towards self realization, better human relationship, individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity as well as social cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological process. Egbo's suggestion here, embraces nearly all aspect of human engagements. Thus, when this is actualized more and more Nigerians will be liberated from illiteracy.

The issue of Education for all has been in major education policies for some years. Hence, for proper actualization, there is need for guidance and counselling service as a major tool to be given in a language the clients understands well which is the language of the immediate environment.

### **Relationship between actualization, language and guidance and counseling**

Language is a tool to express feelings, thoughts and help one to be creative, reflective and to learn. For instance using motivation properly allows pupils to integrate their specific cultural identity with universal culture, thus helping the pupil to acquire the skills of speaking, listening reading and writing the language of the immediate environment.

Students' focus on the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing is supported by using poetry, creative writing, drama and theatre to foster mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment.

Language in our school is an intense process which starts in kindergarten where the pupils first begin with the mother tongue or language of the immediate environment and continue until they can use it in their daily lives. Mother tongue is not just a class lesson in pre primary and junior primary but a skill which can be used on a daily life basis. (The basic aim is to achieve the basic objectives of primary education as stated in the national policy on education NPE 2008, p8). This adds value to their lives and improves their ability to fully understand that writing, reading, speaking and listening are the essentials of communication. Through the use of mother tongue, the pupils are enabled to share their experiences, acquire information in the language of the immediate environment and trust in themselves.

Teachers encourage pupils to link various ideas from different things that they read in order to fully comprehend and apply them to their lives.

### **Speaking and listening**

As students are engaged in the activity of listening to dialogues and speech in the local language, it will help them to understand and also criticized others. Hence, their boldness and understanding are enhanced. This activity will also help them express their thoughts and feelings clearly and appropriately in the mother tongue.

### **Reading**

The counsellor encourages the pupils and students to read all available, appropriate books in their mother tongue since this gives them the ample opportunity to enjoy reading in mother tongue.

### **Writing**

The counsellor encourages and expects students and pupils to master skills of writing and grammar in their mother tongue in order to write effectively, to be careful about spelling and reflect their thought accurately, express their feelings through use of different kinds of writings and using it as a tool for learning.

A school counselor helps to make learning a positive experience for every learner. They are sensitive to individual differences. They are aware that a classroom environment that is good for one child may not necessarily be good for another child. They see the need for the use of mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment. The counsellor facilitates communication among pupils, teachers, parents, administrators and students to adopt in the school environment. This can best be achieved by the use of language of the immediate environment which the child understands most and will be able to use easily to express him/her freely.

As stated earlier, the rationale behind counselling individuals who understand themselves and their world will become transformed. Understanding lies in effective communication which also entails the use of a person's language. Most of the things in the world around us can best be explained with the concept around us.

It is in reality true that every individual both adult and infants is more exposed to the language of the immediate environment than the English Language. Hence forcing them not to accept and speak the language of the immediate environment freely means creating a gap between the individual and the environment. Such a gap can neither lead to understanding nor effective actualization of goals. In Egbo (2013) one of the objectives of Guidance counseling in schools is to work with significant others in the life of a child, helping them to understand the needs and problems of the child with the purpose of creating, arousing and sustaining their interest and this understanding of the child's needs, problems and goals.

To help the child to attain goals, handle problems at his level and meet his needs everyone involved must be sure that there are no gaps since most children are sensitive to what they do not understand. Most children's needs and problems lie in their immediate environment, which is in what they see, hear and experience around them. A child understands the environment better when he has a sound understanding of language in the immediate environment. Teachers and counselors are aware that most children hang out of school. Today with the neglect on the language provision of NPE such children only become 'on lookers' conscious of the fact that there are things they should understand in the environment if not for the handicap presented by language barrier. The counselor may understand the needs and problems of the child easily, but helping the child may be difficult because there may be some concepts which the child will understand better with indigenous language. Hence such help is better achieved by actualizing the language provision of NPE.

### **Actualizing the NPE**

The use of motivation as provided in the NPE will make it easy for the Guidance counselor to effectively actualize these few objectives among others:

- a. Help the learners acquire as early as possible in their lives a positive image of self through self understanding and self direction. The child can achieve this easier when there is no confusion in language.
- b. Help the child acquire the skills of collecting and using information. This is best achieved when the child can interpret the skills in a language he hears more around him.
- c. To help build up and sharpen the child's perception of reality, development of a sense of autonomy and to top up motivation for creativity and productivity. This is an important objective for the guidance counselor. Building and sharpening of perception requires adequate understanding, developing the sense of autonomy requires both understanding and sound communication ability. When the child has no stand in these, the guidance counsellor's effort will be in vain. A good alternative is to hold firmly to the language provision of the NPE.

Odiembo (2012) noted that the Guidance counsellor is to check school dropouts and intercept and assist disadvantaged children. Most school dropout and disadvantaged children are more comfortable with their mother tongue. In other words many /students that drop out of school as a result of inability to cope with a second language as these disadvantaged children are more familiar with their mother tongue. If the guidance counsellor is to live up to Odiembo's expectation the above stated alternative is a good choice. Educationists had a fore sight of the important need of motivation before making provision for it. Hence, the counsellor should see the urgent need for the language provision of the NPE and its implementation of accordingly in his capacity.

### **In the primary school**

The National Policy of Education (NPE 2013): The medium of instruction both in the pre-primary and junior primary shall be the language of immediate environment for the first three years (3yrs) in monolingual communities. During which English shall be taught as a subject. The objectives of primary education as stipulated by National Policy on Education are:-

- a. To inculcate permanent literacy, numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively. Based on this the guidance counselor should interact with the children at this level in the language of the immediate community. This is to enable the child open up and to feel a belonging to the community. Parts of the body have to be taught in mother tongue. If the child could master these basic words in the mother tongue translation into English will not pose a problem to the child. The child will thus be free to communicate with the counsellor who understand his/her mother tongue. But the problem here is that before the child could reach the school going age he/she speaks and understands only English and when you try to.
- b. To lay a sound basis for scientific, critical and reflective thinking; for the counsellor to achieve this he/she has to interact with the children in their mother tongue; by pronouncing important words on their mother tongue; holding discussion group using the language of the immediate environment this will help the children appreciate their mother tongue.
- c. Promote patriotism, fairness, understanding and national unity. The counselor achieves this by teaching the pupil to sing the national anthem and pledge in the language of the immediate environment.

- d. To install social, moral norms, and values in the child. The counselor achieves this by encouraging the pupils to appreciate the culture of other people around them like the Yoruba's or the Hausa children in their midst.
- e. To develop in the child the ability to adopt to the changing environment the counselor ensures that the pupil adapts smoothly to their changing environment.
- f. Provide opportunities for the child to develop life manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capability the counselor tends to achieve these by allowing the pupil participate in the local craft like broom, basket.

One can understand that counselling services cut across all aspects of an individual's life. These services help the students in school and also out of school environment. In reality our local language are very important in the effective actualization of guidance and counselling roles in schools.

Ogbuagu (2016) Opines that the local language should be used in pre-primary and junior primary schools but this is not the case in many Nigerian schools, both private and government. Contributing in the same Television broadcast Aniche (2016) added that in her 2011 research it was discovered that 25% of children under 11 years cannot speak their language. She States further that if nothing is done, more languages will go into extinction as some have done already. She explained that UNESCO highlights the use of indigenous language as language of instruction in lower classes and advises that there should be books to reflect curriculum written in local languages. Teachers should be trained to produce books so that everybody is carried along. If this is done youths are energized and empowered and the NPE will be implemented through proper Guidance & Counselling.

### **Conclusion:**

This paper has given the general responsibilities, function and importance of Guidance & Counselling in the effective implementation of the NPE It also stipulates the use of the language which the students are is very familiar with, if it is to lead to the effective actualization of the importance of Guidance Counselling in schools. It is anticipated that Counselling Association of Nigeria (CAN) would agree on the use of mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment in schools during counselling. They should also promote the production of documents to this effect. If this is implemented, counsellors should be able to operate easily in schools at different levels and with different classes of people. This will help the implementation of the NPE. With this counselling in Nigeria can be said to have made another giant stride among others towards the actualization and implementation of the NPE.

Therefore first it is clear from this paper that a basic issue that any school counselor must address concerns the medium of exchange between him and his client, as stated in the National Policy of Education.

### **Recommendations:**

The following recommendations are made for promoting effectiveness in Guidance & Counselling in school teaching and learning using the mother tongue

1. There is need for serious enlightenment on the part of the public and schools to accept and implement the use of mother tongue at the expect level for the expected individual for effective actualization.

2. Guidance & Counsellor on their own part should be committed to the counselling programmes through helping the teachers with the identification of learner with learning problems and inform the teachers, so that individualized methods can be used with the mother tongue for learner for effective teaching and learning.
3. Government should help train qualified counsellors in the use of mother tongue to help meet with learners problems effectively.
4. Parents should also be included in Guidance & Counselling programme through giving them progressive report of their children and advising them on the importance of the use of mother tongue. If parents help at home it will be easier with the teachers and counsellors in the schools.
5. There is need for the clarity about the services rendered by school counsellors. This is done by redefining the counsellors' roles, functions, and objectives for the benefit of school administrators, teachers, learners, parents, staff and community. For every member of the groups listed above to understand this properly, there is another urgent need to promote and implement the use of mother tongue.
6. Every state can imbibe the practice in Anambra State where the legislatures dedicated one day a week for legislation with the mother tongue. Schools can also dedicate one day a week to teach all the subjects for the day with the mother tongue.
7. Nigerians can benefit from what happened in Hongkong where after 100 years of British rule went back to their language same night as observed by Obiefuna (2016).

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## LANGUAGE PROVISIONS OF THE NATIONAL POLICY AND CONSTRAINTS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

By

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### **Abstract**

*In view of the importance of special educational training given to people with special needs, there is need to give concrete meaning to the idea of equalizing educational opportunities for all children, their physical, sensory, mental, psychological or emotional disabilities notwithstanding. Consequently, to help achieve the national goals and objectives, the paper attempts to review areas in the national policy that concerns special education, meaning and classification of special needs, the use of Nigerian languages in teaching and learning and in designing a diversified and appropriate curriculum for all the beneficiaries. The challenges of providing adequate education for all the people with special needs are discussed. Finally, suggestions and recommendations towards their effective implementation are made.*

**Keywords:** Special education; Educational opportunity; Psychological and emotional disability

### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is meant for the generality of people irrespective of one's physical disposition. Nigerian Educational Research Development Council (NERDC) (1989) stated that education is the social instrument through which the culture of a people is perpetuated, implemented and reformed. In this regard therefore, education must serve not only the physically and academically adequate, but also those who display a wide variety and range of different learning patterns. This implies that every Nigerian child has the right to educational opportunities that are consistent with his or her abilities. Thus the educational programmes must plan and develop diversified curriculum that will satisfy diverse need areas including special education.

Article 25; Section one of the Universal Declaration of Rights, states that every one has the right to education whether blind, deaf or autistic and other physically challenged children who roam the streets of Nigeria (Arenyeka, 2012). The 2006 National census noted that there are 3,253,169 persons with disability in Nigeria with nearly 39 percent of school age. The need to consider individual differences is not unconnected with the fact that children do not develop the same way. For example, some people are born blind while some are deaf. Others also have differences in intelligence, emotional maturity and social development. There are also the learning disabled, the gifted, the talented and the mentally disordered. These categories of children are those for which special education is meant. However, this paper discusses briefly the field of special education, its position in the national policy on education, meaning, classification and curriculum of special needs, the use of Nigerian languages in learning and teaching and the challenges of Special Education in Nigeria.

### **The concept of Special Education**

Special Education is an aspect of education that treats people as individuals and makes allowances for the use of special equipment and methods of teaching according to individual needs (Adima, Ladipo and Abosi, 1981). Osakwe (2010) sees Special Education as classroom or private instructions involving unconventional techniques, material, exercises, facilities and subject matters designed for children and adults who have physical deformities, behavioural disorders or learning disabilities.

The Federal Government Defined Special Education as:

*The education of children and adults who have learning difficulties because of different kinds of disabilities - blindness, partial sightedness, deafness, hardness of hearing, mental retardation, social maladjustment and limb deformity or malformation, due to circumstances of birth, inheritance, social position, mental and physical health patterns or accidents in latter life (National Policy on Education, 2004:34).*

Ozaji (2005) describes special education as a formal training given to people (children and adults with special needs) who need additional learning commonly identified as:

1. Neuromuscular or physical characteristics;
2. Sensory abilities;
3. Mental characteristics;
4. Communication abilities;
5. Social or emotional behaviour.

These groups of people require some modification of the normal school practice and special education services in order to develop to their fullest potentials. Mba (1991) opines that special education is an ideal general education in which individual differences are considered and provided for.

Federal Government of Nigeria (2004), in its national policy on education states the objectives of special education among others as, to provide opportunities for exceptionally gifted children, to develop at their own pace in the interest of nation's economic and technological development. To achieve the above objectives of special education, the preparation of teachers for adequate education for both learners with disabilities and use of appropriate curriculum and the use of the children's mother tongue, these defamations are relevant to the present discourse because the paper is focusing on the national policy and special education. Children with special needs are known as people with disabilities in one form or the other, capable of limiting their involvement and participation in the regular educational programme, which also affects their academic performance and functioning in the society. This group can be classified into eight groups with respect to the type and nature of their disability problems. These classifications are as follows:

#### **1. The Hearing Impaired**

These are people with little or no ability to hear sounds through one ear (unilateral impairment). They can be totally deaf or hard of hearing.

## **2. The Visually Impaired**

These are people with difficulties in one or more functions of their visual system. They are also either blind or partially sighted.

## **3. The People with Speech Disorders**

They are people with speech disorders who experience lack of development and stimulation which affects the effective mental formation of words or their physical production.

## **4. The Emotionally Disordered**

These are the people with problems in their emotional development. They are not usually emotionally stable.

## **5. The Mentally Retarded**

They are people with mental retardation whose mental ability, growth and development are hindered by biological environmental or hereditary factors that prevent them from adapting and adjusting to the normal environment. They could be the moronic, the imbeciles, the idiotic, the trainable and the educable based on the degree of their retardation.

## **6. The Physically Disabled**

The physically disabled people are physically disadvantaged due to conditions that permanently prevent them from exercising normal body control and movement.

## **7. The People with Learning Disabilities**

These people have disorders in one or more of the fundamental physiological processes involved in the understanding, speaking and writing of language which include wrong word pronunciation, spelling and reading.

## **8. The People with Multiple Disabilities**

These are people who are with more than one form of disabilities. They suffer from a combination of any of the above mentioned disabilities (Akinwale and Abimbola, 2011).

### **The People with Multiple Disabilities**

Designing an appropriate special education curriculum should take cognizance of every Nigerian child whether disabled or not, such curriculum should provide opportunities for activities and or all children.

### **Special Education Curriculum:**

Designing an appropriate special education curriculum should take cognizance of every Nigerian child whether disable or not; such curriculum should provide opportunities for activities for all the children. In this respect, Nwachukwu (2006), identified the following areas as where teachers and curriculum planners should focus attention:

- (1) The content of curriculum that is taught to children generally at school.
- (2) The adapted curriculum that addresses the peculiar needs of children with special needs.
- (3) The curriculum that would make special needs children education worthwhile; and
- (4) The curriculum that is specially designed to address the specific learning needs of special needs children.

Mogbo (2002) defined curriculum as encompassing the content, structure and processes of teaching and learning which the school provides in accordance with its educational objectives and values. This includes the knowledge, concepts and skills that children acquire including the factors that inform the ethos and general environment in the school. The source continued that the way in which the curriculum is defined, planned implemented and evaluated crucially will influence the quality of education provided.

The above definition sees curriculum as the life-wire of any school be it special education or normal education. Ozoji (2003) agreed with the above idea when he pointed out that any effective and ideal curriculum process should be made up of such fundamental issues like objectives, content, learning experiences, organization and evaluation. Nwachukwu (2006) noted that planning is one of the defining features of any good curriculum. Planning therefore should involve:

- ❖ breadth and flexibility and
- ❖ The choice it offers in the selection and sequencing of content that ensure its adaptability to the dignity of children's circumstances and experiences.
  1. Activity-based learning;
  2. Self-directed learning;
  3. Cooperative and group work; and
  4. Peer-learning.

### **The Use of Nigerian Languages in Teaching and Learning the Special Needs Children:**

The importance of mother-tongue is stressed in the national policy of education - 1978, 1983 and 2004 revised. The Federal Government appreciates the relevance of indigenous language as a means of promoting social interaction and national cohesion and preserving cultures. The policy therefore indicates that every child shall learn the language of his immediate environment. It also emphasized that every Nigerian child should learn his mother tongue as well as English and French. It is possible that a child's first language (i.e. mother-tongue) used in his home is not the language spoken in that area. So he will be forced to learn the language spoken in that area. Thus every Nigerian child is expected to be at least bilingual. The child should speak more than one language. Ikediashi, Iroegbu and Agugoesi (2014) noted that bilingualism and multilingualism involve speaking and writing in two languages as well as being able to comprehend meaning either orally spoken or written in these languages. The source noted that every language has its own vocabulary, grammar, word-meaning and pronunciation, so that the bilingual child is expected to learn two different words for every object he names and for every thought he wishes to express.

In view of the above issues, the language contents should start as from pre-primary and primary levels indicating that there should be at least one Nigerian language to be taught to pupils plus French language from primary 4 - 6 classes. The NPE stressed that the medium of instruction in the primary schools shall be the language of immediate environment (LIE) of the child for the first 3 years (i.e. primary 1 - 3), in areas or communities where only one language is spoken or used (i.e. monolingual communities), while English Language shall be taught as a subject. It also stipulates that from primary 4 - 6, English shall progressively be used as a medium of instruction and the language of immediate environment and French and Arabic shall be taught as subjects. Thus provision is made for every Nigerian child to be at least bilingual or multilingual as the case may be.

The curriculum planners should take cognizance of every Nigerian child whether disabled or not. Such also should provide opportunities for activities and experiences of all educational needs of every child as specified in the national policy of education to suit every child using his mother tongue.

### **Constraints of Special Need Education in Nigeria**

There are many challenges facing children with special needs in Nigeria. Egbo (2005) noted that despite many well-intentioned educational policies that have been adopted by the Federal Government of Nigeria, for example, the 6 - 3 - 3 - 4 system and the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme, education in Nigeria has fallen victim of the nation's chronic, social and political challenges that tend to reduce institutional efficiency. Abang (1992) noted that the implementation of the 6 - 3 - 3 - 4 system of education has not been successful in the schools for learners with disabilities because the government has not required commitment and seriousness in the implementation of the system.

Nigerian education is not adequately funded and this has effects on the education of students with disabilities. For instance, facilities and equipment which could have enabled the disabled to learn are not provided. Nwoagba (2013) identified funding as the major constraint and barrier to the growth of special education in Nigeria. Article 3, Salamanca Framework for Action (1994), advocated that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social and linguistic conditions. However, since 1994, Nigeria and other developing countries of the world have been very slow in implementing this framework. Adebisi (2010) noted that the shortage of funds leads to shortage of resources, inadequate facilities and unemployment of personnel.

The Nineteen eighty to nineteen-ninety six (1980-1996), made a notable success in the field of special need education both within and outside the country (FME, 1986). As the old infrastructures and equipment become obsolete, many special needs education children have dropped out of school because inclusive schools are not available. The government pays attention to disabilities like hearing impairment, visual and handicapped more than other special need areas. The major concern in Nigeria is the policy of inclusive education since it remains unimplemented thereby, limiting access to schools for children with disabilities (Nkechi 2013).

The policy on Special Education as contained in the national policy of education made the stated objectives clear. The Adebisi and Onye (2013), noted policy problem to the federal government which failed to stipulate the administrative structures or functions of the three tiers of government thereby making it difficult for proper funding. Osuji (2004) stated that the Nigerian Universal Basic Education offers free primary and secondary (nine-year basic) education with the document that emphasizes - access, equality, equity, inclusiveness, affordability and equality to every Nigerian child. This means that children with special needs are entitled to free education that can bring about adequate level of literacy for them to learn in vocational and academic institution.

The findings of Okeke (1987) in Benue, Kogi, Enugu, Anambra, Imo and Abia States in Nigeria revealed that poverty related factors rank first among other factors as most prominent barrier inhibiting families or communities from participating in the education of persons with special needs in Nigeria. Adebisi, Jerry, Rasaki & Igwe (2014) noted that a nation is judged not by how the

affluent view life but by how it takes care of its less fortunate citizens. For instance, high cost of educational materials and equipment such as Braille machines and papers, typewriting machines and sheets, carbon papers, thermoforming papers, tape recorders, cassettes, ear mould hearing being used by these students cannot be afforded by families of these students.

Eleweke (2003), and Adebisi, et al (2014), noted that most of the promises in the national policy on education (NPE) document relating to the implementation of plans and programmes for special needs education and provision of other essential services have remained at the theory level due to lack of mandatory legislations to give support to their implementation. Iheanacho (1988), however noted that without a supporting legislation, the implementation of the provisions of the NPE document is not obligatory on the Nigerian government and thus lacks organizational backing and administrative clear-cut line of action. Hence achievement of programmes and policies contained in the NPE and other documents concerning special needs education remain subjective.

In their views, Erscheidet and Bartlet (1999), argued that legislation is a key approach for improving services provided to individuals with special needs. The source explained that mandatory laws are necessary in the provision of services with the following benefits:

- ❖ Protective safeguards which guarantee the rights of the beneficiary to receive specific services;
- ❖ Time of onset and phase plans;
- ❖ Consequential effects (i.e. punishment) for non-compliance; room for litigation;
- ❖ Accountability, evaluation and monitoring procedures; .
- ❖ Financial backing and structure; and
- ❖ Unemployment of trained manpower.

Employment of manpower and development is one major challenge to the special needs education and its policies at national and international levels. Adebisi et al (2014) stated that special education teachers, psychologists, physiotherapists, social workers, vocational instructors, doctors and nurses are not employed directly to take care of educational and other needs of children with disabilities. Vandeh (2003) remarked that the successful education of students with special needs requires the involvement of the different professionals to assist in the areas of identification, referral, diagnosis, treatment and provision of appropriate educational services.

Evidence from the World Bank (1999 and 2005), reports that there is a staffing deficit in Nigerian colleges and universities and also that the position of special school in Nigeria indicated grossly inadequate numbers of special education. The irony is that the programmes for the training of support personnel such as educational audiologists, psychologist speech and language pathologists and communication support workers like interpreters are not offered in most of the institutions of higher learning in Nigeria (Adebisi et al 2014). Adebisi and Onye (2013) maintained that if there is political will by the policy makers, things would be done in favour of persons with special needs. People in charge of policy making and the administration of special needs education at various levels of policy implementation are professionals who do not have passion for the needs of persons with special needs. As such, all efforts to see that things work well for the special needs are jeopardized.

## **Suggestion and Recommendations**

Resolving the problems of special education in Nigeria requires the involvement of practitioners and policy makers in schools, local government authorities, the health service, voluntary and other stakeholders in the training of disabled children. Oyemo (1999) remarked that the growth of the human society depends entirely on the contributions of its members. It is evident that almost all disabled children can be trained to live productive lives. Thus, it needs government's vision to provide clear national leadership supported by an ambitious programme of sustained action and review in the following areas:

### **❖ Early Intervention**

There should be early intervention to ensure that children who have difficulties in learning receive the help they need as soon as possible and parents of children with special need have access to suitable childcare services .

### **❖ Delivery**

There should be delivery improvements in partnership with NGOs and other national and international agencies on approaches to enable parents have confidence that their children will receive the education they need without feeling that the only way to achieve this is through policies on paper but action at the local, state and national levels to build the skills and capacity of the children.

### **❖ Inclusion**

Disabled children could be properly educated by inclusion and exclusion strategies (Osakwe, 2010). Inclusion is a process by which regular education classes are combined with special education services in a regular system. Inclusion according to Osakwe is two models namely full and partial. In full inclusion model, specialized services are provided within a regular classroom by sending the service worker to work with one or more students in the regular classroom setting, while in the partial model, specialized services are provided outside a regular classroom.

### **❖ Exclusion**

This strategy involves teaching children with special needs with special techniques and equipment by specialist personnel (Osakwe, 2010). In this model, children are placed in special schools and classrooms so as to cater for their specific educational needs, aspirations and challenges that will enable them learn at their own pace.

### **❖ The Use of Indigenous Languages (Mother Tongue) in Teaching and Learning**

Indigenous languages should be used in teaching at the levels of nursery, pr-primary, primary and junior secondary schools to enable our children grab the teaching from the grassroots. Special attention should be paid to the introduction of new concepts using local languages. This however will encourage those who would have dropped out at the primary level of education (NPE 2004). It is said that practice makes perfect, children should be allowed to learn concepts in their local language and use them frequently first before application with English language. This method will help them remember and recall the concepts faster and easily too.

❖ Government should encourage private agencies and NGOs to establish more special schools as well as vocational and rehabilitation centres and fund them to enable the schools provide educational materials and facilities needed by students at their levels.

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## LANGUAGE OF TESTING IN THE ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING DISABILITY IN READING (DYSLEXIA): IMPLICATION FOR MOTHER TONGUE LITERACY

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### **Abstract**

*This paper sheds light on the importance of language of testing in the identification, assessment and management of students with learning disability. The study is descriptive in nature. Bilingual Reading Achievement Test (BRAT) was deployed to elicit data from 86 pupils from private and government owned schools. Three research questions were raised and responses provided. Previously, the primary issues in the identification and assessment of dyslexia can be summed up in the construction and validation problem of identification tools. However, embracing the use of Nigerian languages as Language-in-Education (LiE) and its use put into consideration for assessing students for learning disability will yield a different result. The performance of pupils from government owned schools in English and Yorùbá language revealed that the transparency of the Yorùbá orthography resulted in the low percentage of pupils with difficulty in reading comprehension compared with English since 42.9% had zero as raw score in L<sub>1</sub> BRAT (Yorùbá) while 76.7% had zero as raw score in L<sub>2</sub> BRAT (English). On the other hand, their counterparts from private schools exhibited a different relation. Eight point two percent (8.2%) had a raw score of zero in L<sub>1</sub> BRAT (Yorùbá) and 3.6% had zero in L<sub>2</sub> BRAT (English). Hence, more pupils in public schools are at-risk of learning disability than in private schools.*

**Key words:** mother-tongue literacy, learning disability, dyslexia, literacy, language-in-education

### **1.0 Introduction**

“Maybe it is time to consider young people’s out-of-school knowledge and cultures not as ‘distractions’ from the main business of schooling, but as rich, complex, diverse and powerful sources for learning ...” (Sutherland *et al.* 2009 cited in MacBeath, 2012).

Biologically, people do not need to talk to survive. However, the sophisticated neurophysiological mechanisms that are used in oral language are linked to biological survival. For example, the primary functions of the lungs are biological. Talking is most efficient only when the biological functions are satisfied or not severely interrupted. When breathing is interrupted, one does not think of speech. By instinct, one struggle to catch breath and keep the process. Afterwards, the person tries to relate the experience to a friend who in turn expresses his/her shock and surprise about the trying moments.

Communication has a long history dating as far back as the Garden of Eden and the story of the tower of Babel according to biblical account. However, reading and writing are human invention not natural as speaking and listening which can be predicted on biological basis as Lenneberg opined (1967:371 cf. Fernandez, and Cairns, 2011). Reading is a complex act of communication,

a skilled and strategic process, which learning to decode and read word accurately, and rapidly constructing meaning is central to the acquisition of other skills and school success. Hence, a child who is at risk of reading difficulty needs to be identified early in life and necessary intervention provided.

Language, especially the knowledge and use of mother-tongue, is an important out-of-school knowledge that children bring with them upon arrival at school, since they do not appear in school as a vacuum. However, there seem to be an inscription placed at the entrance of our schools that forbids the use of mother-tongue. The resultant effect is; children upon encountering a new language in school are engaged in a battle to keep their self-confidence and self-esteem when they should be engaged in extension of cognitive skills and abilities. The Global Education Monitoring Report in her Policy Paper, released for International Mother Language Day 2016, lending support to the above ‘argued that being taught in a language other than their own can negatively impact children’s learning.’ Language of testing as conceived in this paper is the language in which the evaluation of cognitive skills – vision, listening, arithmetic, reading, sensory motor functions and memory – are conducted. This is important as learning assessments have shown that when home and school languages differ there is an adverse impact on test scores.

Learning disability is a general term that describes specific kinds of learning problems that can cause a person to have trouble learning and using certain skills. The skills most often affected are reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, and mathematical skills. Moments spent with the student in an interview sharing of experiences and difficulties experienced in learning coupled with information obtained from parents about the academic, developmental and medical history help in collecting information that relates to the observed or suspected disability (Ahmad, 2015). This along with communication patterns, linguistic usages and efficiency of the child properly set the stage for assessment. However, as laudable as that sounds, assessment attempt will hit the rock when language to facilitate evaluation of students becomes a barrier. The role of English and other international languages in Africa was x-rayed in McIlwraith (2013) and the importance of a multilingual approach to education which recognizes the need of a language of instruction that learners understand was therein pointed out.

The whole area of language in Africa, in particular the issue of which language of instruction should be used in African schools and universities, has been a controversial subject of debate for years. Despite consistent advice from education experts and international organizations such as UNESCO, many governments have continued to neglect the importance of introducing children to formal education in a language they understand, and have persisted in the use of European languages as the medium of instruction even where such use is not educationally appropriate (McIlwraith, 2013:3).

As a result of the various adaptations of the National Policy on Education currently in practice in the Nigerian educational sector, some children, in spite of having normal intellectual capacity and unimpaired visual, hearing or physical abilities are unable to acquire one or more language skills appropriate for their ages, even when adequate opportunities for learning are provided and available. The primary identification of students with learning disabilities is done at the school by the teachers, who through observation assess the need for diagnosis and assessment of these

students, who are then referred to the special educators (or counselors in absence of special educators in the school) who try to identify the traits of the disorder present in the child (Ahmad 2015).

Learning disability in reading is also known as dyslexia. Depending on choice with regards to definition, literature has it that 5% to 10% of the population is considered to have dyslexia. International Dyslexia Association (IDA, 2008) defines dyslexia as a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Other problem areas include reading comprehension that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003:2 cf. Thompson, 2013). It is a condition not a disease which may persist to adulthood and through life, if unchecked. However, proper and timely intervention can douse its effects on literacy skills and living.

This disorder is attested world-wide (Lallier, 2104; Thompson, 2013; Mortimore, Hansen, Hutchings, Northcote, Fernando, Horobin, Saunders & Everatt, 2012; Snowling, 2008; Langberg, 2007; Rose, 2009; Reid & Fawcett, 2005) and occurs in students irrespective of their mother-tongue. Currently, diagnostic tests administered in Nigeria are adopted from English standardized test which are in turn adapted from the western world. Some of these tests have been adapted for immediate uses in Nigerian Languages. While efforts at localizing them are acknowledged, it raises the questions regarding the applicability, reliability and validity of such tests. However, decisions regarding the presence or absence of learning disability in reading in students are currently based on predictors from assessment of this nature.

## **2.0 Learning Disability and Literacy**

The term 'literacy' seems to be a term everyone understands particularly if a narrow view as expressed by Wilkins (1980:5) is considered – a literate person is someone who can understand written language. However, the concept has proved to be both complex and dynamic. It has continued to be interpreted and defined in a multiplicity of ways. Individual, group and people's views of what constitute literacy and illiteracy are shaped by a number of factors; academic research, institutional agendas, national context, cultural values and personal experiences (Education for All report 2006:147). United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) lends support to the idea of a 'fundamental education', this occasioned her 1958 statement that 'a literate person is one who can, with understanding, both read and write a short simple statement on his or her everyday life.' They further recognize what is regarded as multiple literacies and a view of literacy as a continuum.

Learning disability in reading is manifested differently in terms of severity and varies with settings and environment. Hence, identification, comprehensive assessment and management of such cases need to be expanded to accommodate differential diagnosis to distinguish between and among other disorders, syndromes, and factors that can interfere with the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities; one such important factor is 'language of testing'.

More often than not, in developing nations like Nigeria, people with various visible disabilities or disorders suffer neglect and are considered outcasts in the society. It is therefore not surprising that people with dyslexia (being a non-visible disability) suffer in silence. Hence, instances of students with learning disabilities abound in our mainstream schools and they remain unattended. It is almost natural that students who fail to make educational progress will manifest other behavioural and social problems. They are thus often characterized by avoidance of tasks, disorganized study habits, overreaction, lack of attention and poor use of time (Olashinde, 1994). Failure and frustration in school often breed aggressive behavior which may spread to all facets of life.

Previously, the primary issues in the identification and assessment of learning disability in reading are summed up as follows:

the construction and validation problem of identification tools, identification criteria, identification of reasons for the occurrence of a particular learning disability, identification of co-occurrence (co-morbid) of other deficits along with Learning Disabilities in an individual, the implication of learning disability on the overall functioning of an individual and the probable causes of the deficit (Ahmad 2015).

The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD, 1994) views on issues important to an understanding of current concerns on learning disability can be summed up in the above as presented by Ahmad (2015). However, ‘lack of sufficient competent personnel and appropriate programs to support the efforts of the teachers to accommodate the needs of children who do not have learning disabilities but who require alternative instructional methods’ was not captured in Ahmad (2015). NJCLD (1994) addressed the concerns by emphasizing the importance of integrating assessment, diagnosis, and procedures that lead to a diagnosis of learning disability and eligibility for services.

- Learning disabilities are manifested differently over time, in severity and various settings.
- Differential diagnosis is necessary to distinguish between and among other disorders, syndromes, and factors that can interfere with the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities.
- A comprehensive assessment is needed for diagnosis and for planning an appropriate intervention program
- A multidisciplinary team is necessary for assessing, diagnosing, and determining provision of services.
- A clear distinction must be made between ‘diagnosis of learning disability’ and ‘eligibility for specific services’

The NJCLD recommends that all agencies and individuals concerned with the assessment and diagnosis of learning disability carefully put into consideration the above recommendations. They did not make any statement about language used in testing and how this may and may not affect result of assessment.

Admittedly, there are not enough special education teachers to go round our mainstream elementary and secondary schools. Yet, text has become an integral part of basic social, political and economic institutions – in offices, law courts, libraries, banks and training centers – and the notion of ‘literate

societies' has become pertinent (EFA, 2006). The fate of students with dyslexia in such schools is to suffer in silence. However, literate societies are far more than locales offering access to printed matter, written records, visual materials and advanced technologies. They also enable the free exchange of text-based information and provide an array of opportunities for lifelong learning. Moreover, the aim of teaching is not to produce learning but to create an environment conducive for learning to take place. Literacy in mother tongue in Nigeria would grant access to unlimited human resource and development like never before. Putting in view that students do not arrive school as a vacuum but with latent knowledge seeking expression.

Thus, this paper suggests an alternate system of education which embraces the use of Nigerian languages (mother-tongue literacy) as espoused by the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) and the use of indigenous languages for screening for learning disability. When this is put into consideration and implemented, students will test differently and better therapeutic approaches would be born in the management of learning disability. This will result in the reduction of the incidence of school failure in Nigeria occasioned by her linguistic heterogeneity. Given that learning disabilities may show in a second language when they are not present in one's first. Conversely, a learning disability may be so subtle in a first language that it is masked by an individual's compensatory strategies.

### **3.0 Purpose of the study**

The central purpose of this study is to stress the need and importance of the implementation of the Language policy of the National Policy on Education. The study therefore tends to:

- Examine the effect of language of testing in the assessment of learning disability in reading
- Raise awareness for a mother-tongue based evaluation for learning disability
- Identify that students in certain school setting stand a higher-risk of learning disability

### **4.0 Research questions**

The following questions have been raised;

- Is reading outcome different in line with language used in screening for learning disability in reading?
- What is the effect of language of testing on assessment of learning disability in reading?
- What role does learning environment (school setting) play in literacy development?

### **5.0 Methodology**

The method employed in this research is tease out under the following headings; research design, participants, instrument, procedure of data collection and data analysis.

#### **5.1 Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey strategy with research questions generated. It examined how language of assessment influences identification of dyslexia. Subjects were selected from private and government primary schools in Ibadan.

#### **5.2 Participants**

The sampled pupils and schools were selected purposively using multi-staged random sampling method. 86 pupils from private and public schools in Ibadan participated in this survey. These

pupils in Upper Basic Classes 4 and 5 filled out Bilingual Reading Achievement Test (BRAT) made up of questions presented in Yorùbá and English. The selected schools are settings where English language is the medium of instruction for all subjects except for language courses such as Yorùbá. English language also enjoys the benefit of been recognized as the language of communication within the school premises with indigenous languages been pejoratively regarded as vernacular.

Table 1 shows in percentages the demographic information about the respondents. Thirty three point seven percent (33.7%) of the pupils are 10 years old while 1.2% is 15 years old. Thus majority of the sampled pupils are under 15. Also, 59.3% of the sampled population was drawn from private schools while the remaining 40.7% is from government owned schools. 54.7% of the pupils are in basic 4 while 45.3% are pupils of basic 5. A total of 51.2% of the respondents are females while that of male stands at 48.8%.

**Table 1: Demographic Variables**

Demographic characteristics		Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Male	42	48.8
	Female	44	51.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age</b>	8 years	4	4.7
	9 years	27	31.4
	10 years	29	33.7
	11 years	12	14.0
	12 years	9	10.5
	13 years	2	2.3
	14 years	2	2.3
	15 years	1	1.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Class</b>	Basic 4	47	54.7
	Basic 5	39	45.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>School</b>	Private	51	59.3
	Public	35	40.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>

### 5.3 Instrument

Bilingual Reading Achievement Test (BRAT) is the instrument deployed to elicit the data. It is a researcher-developed scale that adapted comprehension passages from English textbook for public schools – Modular English Course for Primary Schools, Evans Brothers (Nigeria Publishers) limited, and Eko Ede Yorùbá Ode Oni, Macmillan Publishers Limited and popular texts used in private schools e.g. Mastering English by M.O. Odiaka. The reliability and content validity of the instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficient indices of the instrument are; 0.637 and 0.548 for BRAT in English and BRAT in Yorùbá respectively. All items with less than 0.1 and negative values for 'corrected item-total correlation' were removed to yield the reliability coefficient.

### 5.3.1 Composition of the Bilingual Reading Achievement Test (BRAT)

BRAT is made of comprehension passages adapted from textbooks and other exercises that test word recognition, phonological awareness and reading fluency. It was completed by the pupils and presented in 2 languages; English and Yorùbá.

The English part of the BRAT consists of 32 questions divided into 5 sections.

**Section A** this section has its focus on fluency test. Pupils were presented a comprehension passage which they are expected to read aloud and this was recorded for further analysis. This is aimed at testing the pupils' skill on sight words, reading speed, and verbal processing speed.

**Section B** presents a comprehension passage this is aimed at assessing the pupils' ability in reading comprehension and they are expected to answer questions in the spaces provided below the passage. This section has 6 questions.

Test on vocabulary form and tense is brought to bear in **Section C**. pupils are to answer 6 questions. They are expected to fill the blank spaces provided with the appropriate form of words in the bracket.

**Section D** consists of 10 questions. Pupils are expected to make up words by using any of the letters provided to complete word formation process. Adjoined to this section are images which pupils are expected to identify and write their names in the spaces provided? There are 5 images in all.

The last section focuses on phonological awareness i.e. the ability of pupils to match grapheme to phonemes. In this section, pupils were expected to select from the options lettered A to D the letter that has the sound that is the same as the underlined sound in the key word. In judging this, pupils are to answer 5 questions.

The Yorùbá part of the BRAT consists of 17 questions divided into 4 sections.

**Section A** presents a comprehension passage this is aimed at assessing the pupils' ability in reading comprehension and they are expected to answer questions in the spaces provided below the passage. This section has 6 questions.

**Section B** borders on word recognition therefore pupils were presented with images of objects localized to their cultural setting. They were to identify and write their names in the spaces provided. Five images are in this section.

**Section C** tests pupils' numeration skills in Yorùbá. Pupils were asked to name 6 numerals in Yorùbá.

**Section D** is the last section has its focus on fluency test. Pupils were presented a comprehension passage which they are expected to read aloud and this was recorded for further analysis. This is aimed at testing the pupils' skill on sight words, reading speed, and verbal processing speed.

## 5.5 Data Analysis

Data were analysed using Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18 and results presented in percentages, graphs, and frequency table. Also, miscue analysis was employed to examine oral reading. Miscue analysis focus on reading comprehension rather than decoding of

individual words and letters. Miscue is any departure from the text by the reader (this provides picture of the underlying cognitive processes).

## 6.0 Findings and Discussion

The performances of pupils differ from one another on the basis of school setting (i.e. private versus public) and in line with their level of comprehension of the read passages. This is expressed below in percentages. The performances of the pupils in different sections of the BRAT they were presented in their L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub>, Yorùbá and English respectively.

Result of performance in L<sub>1</sub> (Yorùbá)

8.2% of participants in private school had a raw score of zero, while 26.2% scored between one and two and 65.6% had a raw score of three and above. On the contrary, 42.9% of the participants in public school scored zero, while 54.3% scored between one and two and 2.9% scored three in reading comprehension.

13.1% of the participants in private school had a raw score of zero, while 67.2% scored between one and two and 19.7% had a raw score of three and above. On the contrary, 31.4% of the participants from public school scored zero, while 51.5% scored between one and two and 17.1% scored three and above in the test on object identification.

49.2% of the participants in private school had a raw score of zero, while 37.7% scored between one and two and 13.1% had a raw score of three and above. On the contrary, 91.4% of the participants from public school scored zero, while 8.6% scored one and non above that in numeration.

Results of performance in L<sub>2</sub> (English)

3.6% of the participants in private school had a raw score of zero, while 26.8% scored one and two and 32.2% had a raw score of three and above. On the contrary, 76.7% of the participants from public school had a raw score of zero and the remaining 23.3% scored between one and two thus indicating a low or poor level of comprehension.

1.8% of the participants in private school had a raw score of zero, while 98.2% had three and above. On the contrary, 3.3% of the participants from public school had a raw score of zero, while 20% score between one and two and 76.7% scored three and above in the word recognition exercise.

5.4% of the participants in private school had a raw score of zero, while 3.6% scored between one and two and 91% had a raw score of three and above. On the contrary, 30% of the participants from public school had a raw score of zero, while 26.7% scored between one and two and 43.3% had a raw score of three and above in test on phonological awareness.

The summary of the above statistics is presented in figures<sup>23</sup> 1 and 2, showing the level of pupils' performance as judged by their level of understanding of the read comprehension passages in Yorùbá and English in both private and pupil schools.

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<sup>23</sup> Refer to appendix for descriptive tables for the figures.

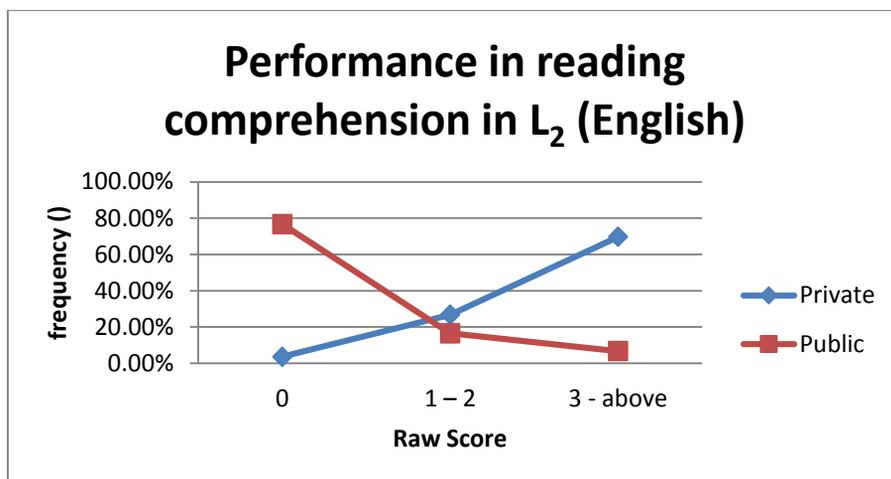


Fig. 1 performance in reading comprehension in L<sub>2</sub> (English)

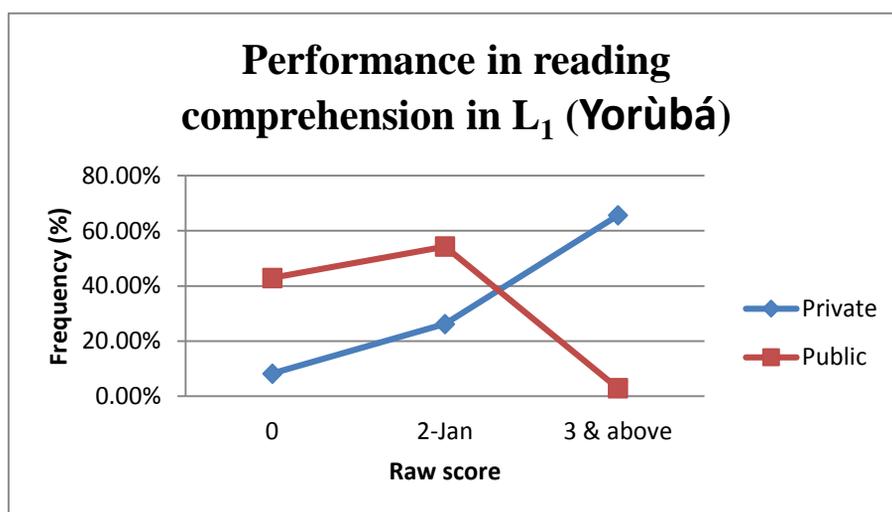


Fig. 2 performance in reading comprehension in L<sub>1</sub> (Yorùbá)

### 6.1 Discussion

From the foregoing, performance of the pupils on the BRAT differs on the basis of the setting in which they are acquiring reading skills. Exposure to written Yorùbá is limited in the public schools despite its wide use in verbal communication. Also, transparency of the Yorùbá orthography resulted in the low percentage of those who could not understand and make sense of the comprehension passage compared with English since 42.9% had zero as raw score in L<sub>1</sub> BRAT (Yorùbá) while 76.7% had zero as raw score in L<sub>2</sub> BRAT (English). While for their counterparts in private school, the relation is different 8.2% had a raw score of zero in L<sub>1</sub> BRAT (Yorùbá) and 3.6% had zero in L<sub>2</sub> BRAT (English). Thus only a few of the pupils could not make sense of the read passage in English fewer than those who could not in Yorùbá. This is expressed in the fig. 1 and 2.

There is an inverse relation between pupils performance in reading comprehension in Yorùbá and English within the sampled population. Since, larger percentage of the pupils from public school did not comprehend or could not read the passage in English language compared with the few with similar problem in private school (76.7% and 3.6% respectively). In Yorùbá, similar thing apply with 42.9% and 8.2% in public and private school pupils respectively showing no understanding of or could not read the passage judging from their performance. The implication is that mother-tongue literacy (or literary awareness in mother-tongue) has not been effective in the government owned schools despite the prevalent use of indigenous languages in oral communication in such settings. However, this is not to say private school owners particularly revere the National Policy on Education but they have ensured the continued teaching of Nigerian languages. Yet, others treat indigenous languages with disdain tagging them vernacular.

The implication of the above on assessment of learning disability in reading is that one cannot say with assertion that the entire 76.7% and 42.9% of the sampled pupils from public school are sufferers of the form of learning disability known as dyslexia, in English and Yorùbá respectively. Some might have been misclassified on the basis of improper exposure to enabling environment for literacy development. Also, the language of testing has proven to be significant and a determinant of test result going by the percentage difference in the population with reading comprehension difficulty. Seventy-six point seven percent (76.7%) and 42.9% of respondents from public school and 3.6% and 8.2% of respondents from private school in English and Yorùbá respectively have shown strong indications of learning disability. Given the statistics, less percentage of respondents from private school has reading difficulty in English language compared to Yorùbá language. Conversely, less percentage of the respondents in public school has reading difficulty in Yorùbá compared to that of English language.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

Expanding the scope of language of testing to accommodate mother tongue would give room to determine whether mother tongue development goes beyond the learner's conversational skills. Thus, whether a learner can use his/her mother tongue for cognitive development as an academic language i.e. for teaching and learning purposes can be determined. It would also ensure proper identification and evaluation of disability in children. Moreover, there is the need to develop assessment test in Nigerian languages that would entail a battery of assessment tools administered in mother tongue including among others an intelligence test, an aptitude test, a visual perceptual test, a reading, spelling and writing test as well as mathematics proficiency test.

## **8.0 Recommendations**

The present study has proved that pupils ability to read in Yorùbá and English vary and would change more depending on the kind of exposure they have to develop the requisite skills needed for reading acquisition. There is therefore the need to raise the standard and quality of education in government owned school. Given the wide spread use of Yorùbá within the school system in the public school, majority within the sampled population cannot read at age-matched level neither in Yorùbá or English language. Furthermore, it is important that governments, at all levels, make available materials that would aid the teaching of indigenous languages across board; as well make funds available to support research towards advancing and promoting the reach of indigenous languages in Nigeria.

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## Appendix

Table 1 showing summary of performance of pupils in reading comprehension in L<sub>2</sub> (English)

	0	1 – 2	3 & above
Private	3.60%	26.80%	69.70%
Public	76.70%	16.60%	6.70%

Table 2 showing summary of performance of pupils in reading comprehension in L<sub>1</sub> (Yorùbá)

	0	1 – 2	3 & above
Private	8.20%	26.20%	65.60%
Public	42.90%	54.30%	2.90%

# LINGUISTIC THEORIES AND THE TEACHING OF NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

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## **Abstract**

*This paper examines the role of linguistic theories in language teaching. The aim is to highlight the relevance of linguistics to language teaching. Using data from Nigerian languages, the study attempts to answer the following question: How do linguistic theories fit into language teaching and learning? The study accomplishes this feat with discussions of Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis; Classical Phoneme Theory; Morphophonemics; and their implications for language teaching. The paper concludes that linguistic theories can facilitate listening and speaking proficiency; and can be used to handle learning issues such as interference and transfer.*

## **1.0. Introduction**

*“A striking phenomenon in applied linguistics is the length of time it takes for changes in general linguistic theory to show any applicability, if they ever do, to language teaching or other real-world endeavours for which an understanding of the nature of language is a prerequisite. (Henderson 2009)”*

One probable reason for the minimal impact of linguistic theories on language teaching is the fact that language teaching encompasses more than the acquisition of sounds, as language learners are evaluated not only for oral skills, but also the ability to read and write. Another reason why language teaching and linguistics have not fully explored either's potential may be the fact that advances in linguistic theories have been largely sub-field specific, whereas language teaching has a holistic orientation towards language. This paper examines some linguistic theories with the aim of highlighting the benefits of their knowledge and use in the teaching of Nigerian languages.

The paper is divided into three sections. Section one is introduction, which provides a definition of terms and an overview of the paper. Section two focuses on phonological theories, morphophonemics and the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. It examines their application and adaptation in the language classroom, as well as the implications for language teaching. Section three provides the summary and conclusion.

## **2.0. Phonological Theories and Language Teaching**

Phonology is the sub-field of linguistics that studies the sound systems of individual languages. It describes the way sounds function within a given language or across languages. An important aspect of phonology is determining which sounds are distinctive in a given language. Other aspects of phonology include the study of speech related phenomenon such as accent, tone, intonation, stress and syllable structure. There are several theories of phonology. Some of these theories are concerned primarily with sounds (e.g. classical phoneme theory); others are concerned with non-segmental phenomenon such as tone (e.g. Autosegmental Theory) and stress (e.g. Metrical Phonology Theory) while others cater for both sound segmental and non-segmental phenomena (e.g. Optimality Theory). Although, they have different origins, in respect to language acquisition all phonological theories are concerned with providing answers for three basic questions (cf. Gierut 1990). These questions are;

- How do sounds differ from one another?
- Which structural properties are used to distinguish meaning?
- How are the properties that distinguish meaning organised in morphemes?

The principles of phonological theory have been applied to the analysis of sign language, and studies in other sub-fields of linguistics such as morphology. However, its use in language teaching has been very minimal. In the following sub-section, the paper would examine a phonological theory that has been applied in language teaching and learning.

## 2.1. Classical Phoneme Theory

The classical phoneme theory, also referred to as structuralist phonemics or derogatorily as taxonomic phonology, deals exclusively with phonemes. A phoneme is the minimal distinctive unit of language. Proponents of the theory include Nikolai Trubetzkoy (1969) and Roman Jakobson (1962). The tenets of this theory are as follows;

- Phonological analysis should be undertaken solely and exhaustively by the setting up of phonemes.
- All analyses should be independent of and separate from analysis at other levels such as semantics, syntax and morphology.
- The phonemic system of a language and its representation in phonemic transcription should be demonstrably derived exclusively from phonetic data in utterances of the language.
- Sounds are indivisible segments.
- Segments have no inherent features.
- Segments have allophonic variants; but there are no shared allophones that overlap two or more phonemes.
- Every phone belongs to one and only one phoneme.

### 2.1.1. Classical Phoneme Theory in Language Education

In language education, the classical phoneme theory has fared better than other phonological theories. The reason is that it has a grammar correlate, which has been widely adopted in the field of education. This correlate is known as the *Structural Grammar Theory*. The theory is associated with structural linguistics - an approach to linguistics that flourished in Europe and the United States in the first half of the 20th century. This approach to language study is assumed to have started formally with the publication of the book *Cours de linguistique générale* (Saussure 1916). The underlying assumption of structural grammar is that there is a distinction between *Langue* and *Parole*. *Langue* is the linguistic system shared by a speech community i.e. the totality of language stored in the minds of language users, while *parole* refers to the concrete utterances of an individual language user. Structural Grammar Theory is characterised by the following;

- It employs a scientific approach to language study.
- It supports linguistic claims with objective and observable analysis of linguistic data.
- Every language is treated as a unique, coherent and integrated system, which should be studied on its merits without recourse to models established for well-studied languages.

### 2.1.2. Classical Phoneme Theory in the Language Classroom

In the language classroom, the classic phoneme theory finds its application in the *audio-lingual teaching method*. The audio-lingual also known as aural-oral method was “derived from the intensive training in spoken languages given to American military personnel during the Second

World War” (Crystal 2010:394). This teaching method consists of an analysis and selection of structural patterns of the target language. These are embedded in dialogues as structured drills and are first presented orally, and much later in the written form. The goal is to enable learners comprehend and produce the target language correctly. Hence, the method emphasizes the development of language skills in the order of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The learner is moved gradually from oral speech work into reading and finally into writing. The underlying principle is that speech holds primacy over writing. Indeed, all language users can speak/sign but not all can read and write.

The audio-lingual method is especially useful when the objective is to ensure that a learner is well grounded in the lexical, grammatical and phonological systems of the target language (Aje 2006). In relation to phonology, the method can be used for teaching and testing the differences in the phonemic and prosodic patterns of the subject language. For example; it can be used to teach aspects of spoken language such as rising and falling intonation in statements and questions; and the distinction between voiced and voiceless consonants. Although these differences are common to all language subjects in the curriculum, some distinctions are peculiar to particular Nigerian languages. For example, Hausa marks a distinction between long and short vowels but in Èdo the distinction is between oral and nasal vowels as illustrated below.

**Èdo** (cf. Omozuwa 2010:117)

[tà] “to tell”  
 [tǎ] “to be tall”  
 [isɛ̃] “Amen”  
 [isɛ̃̃] “five”

**Hausa** (cf. Amfani 2007:131)

[fítòò] “ferrying”  
 [fíítòò] “whistling”  
 [kááriì] “addition”  
 [káriì] “string”

The language teacher would find knowledge of the classic phoneme theory particularly useful in teaching second language learners, as well as native speakers whose dialects differ from the standard forms adopted for educational purposes.

### 2.1.3. Implications for Language Teaching

The Classic Phoneme Theory has the following implications for language teaching

- Language teaching should emphasize the primacy of speaking skills.

The classic phoneme theory emphasizes the distinctiveness of sounds. This has advantages for the acquisition of oral skills. These skills provide a solid foundation for the development of reading skills, which in turn facilitates teaching and learning. This advantage may be limited in some languages like English, where sounds do not exactly tally with the written form of the language. On the other hand, teachers of Nigerian languages will find this theory very beneficial, as the orthography of many Nigerian languages follow the one sound-one grapheme rule, where every sound is represented by a given grapheme.

- Proficiency can be achieved within a short time.

The wide spread use of the audio-lingual method and pilot studies (see Geirut 1990) suggest that learners are able to acquire high degrees of listening and speaking skills using few teaching materials (i.e. the corpus or native language speaker model). The implication for language teaching is that students can achieve listening and speaking proficiency presumably earlier in their learning experience.

- Language learning is a process of habit formation.

The practical application of the classic phoneme theory relies on the learners' ability to respond accurately to a given stimulus. Learners are exposed to corpus or models of the target language, and are expected to replicate the same by imitation. The idea is to make learners' comprehend and produce the target language without errors. However, human language goes beyond stimulus-response kind of interaction. Besides being productive, language is also creative. Consequently, the language teacher must ensure that the students' are able to apply what they have learnt from structured drills and classroom dialogues to real world interactive situations.

## 2.2. Morphophonemics and Language Teaching

Morphophonemics is study of the relationship between morphology and phonology. Morphology is the study of the grammatical structure of words, and the categories realised by them. The basic unit of description is the morpheme – the minimal meaningful unit of grammar. Thus, a morphological analysis will divide the word *students* into two morphemes: *student* and *-s* which indicates plurality. Phonology, on the other hand, is the study of the sound systems of individual languages. Its basic unit of description is the phoneme – the smallest distinctive sound unit in a language. For example; in English language /ɪ / and /a / are phonemes because [tɪp] and [tʌp] mean different things. Similarly, they are the smallest units because they cannot be analysed into smaller units. Morphophonemics deals with the relationship between words (morphemes) and their representations (phonemes). It is concerned with the rules and alternations, and involves the investigation of phonological variations within morphemes. In relation to language teaching, morphophonemics can also be used to develop speaking skills; it can also be used to teach aspects of grammar such as Number, and Tense.

- Using Morphophonemics to Teach Number

Number is a grammatical category associated with nouns. It is used to mark the distinction between one and more than one. In many languages, this distinction is binary and marked as singular/plural. In English for example, plural is regularly marked by adding the morpheme {-s} to singular nouns. This morpheme is realised as three allomorphs {-s, -z, -IZ} depending on the environment in which the plural marker occurs. {-s} is used with voiceless consonants, {-z} with voiced consonants and vowels; and {-IZ} with alveolar and palato-alveolar fricatives and affricates as illustrated below.

Cups	[kʌps]	Cubs	[kʌpz]
Bets	[bets]	Beds	[bedz]
Boxes	[bɒksɪz]	Fishes	[fɪʃɪz]
Churches	[tʃɜ:tʃɪz]	Judges	[dʒʌdʒɪz]

In many Nigerian languages, number distinctions can be marked using plural morphemes, plural affixes, quantifiers and numerals. However, these languages also indicate number via strategies that are better understood with knowledge of morphophonemics. In Edo and Urhobo, for instance, vowel substitution can be used to show whether a noun is singular or plural. Consider the following examples

### Edo (Omoruyi 1986:63)

	Singular	Plural	Gloss
/ɛ/ ~ /i/ as in	éghélè	íghélè	young man(men)
/o/ ~ /i/ as in	ògìè	ìgìè	king(s)
	òkpìà	ìkpìà	man(men)

/ɔ/ ~ /e/ as in	òdìónwèré òmwá	èdìónwèré èmwá	village head(s) person(s)
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**Urhobo** (Aziza 2007:291-292)

/e/ ~ /i/ as in	ékpù ékpèti	íkpù íkpèti	bag(s) box(es)
/u/ ~ /i/ as in	ùghòjọ́ ùwènvwì	ìghòjọ́ ìwènvwì	clock(s) house(s)

These examples show that the initial vowels /e, ε, u, o, ɔ/ in the singular noun forms become high front vowel /i/ or the non-low front vowels /e/ in the plural forms.

- Using Morphophonemics to Teach Tense

Tense is a grammatical category associated with verbs. It indicates the time of speaking relative to the actual time of the event. Common tense distinctions include present, past, continuous and future. In English language, for example, the simple past tense {-ed} is conditioned by a voicing rule. The morpheme is realised either as voiced /d/ or voiceless /t/ depending on the sounds with which it occurs. For example;

Shopped [ʃɒpt]      Carved [kɑ:vɔd]

The Nigerian language teacher can also use the knowledge of morphophonemic rules to teach tense. In Igbo, for example, the simple past tense is formed by adding an rV suffix to the verb stem. The vowel (V) of the suffix is derived by copying the vowel of the verb i.e. *partial reduplication*.

**Igbo** (Nwachukwu 1984:92)

Há bì n'Abá	Há bìrì n'Abá
They live at Aba	They lived at Aba
Ó nọ yá	Ó nọrọ yá
She/he is in	She/he was in
Índi nwaànyí má jọ̀jọ́	Índi nwaànyí màrà jọ̀jọ́
The women are dressed in George wrapper	The women were dressed in George wrapper

In Èdo on the other hand, the rV suffix has a base form –re, which is *phonologically conditioned*, by the preceding vowel of the verb stem. The vowel is realised as /e/ which is [-high, +tense] when it occurs in the environment of /ε, a, ɔ/ which are [-high, -tense]. In other environments, it is realised either as /i/ which is [+high, +tense]; /u/ which is [+high, +tense] or /o/ which is also [-high, +tense], the difference being that /u/ and /o/ are also [+labial]. For example;

**Èdo** (Yuka & Omoregbe 2011:10)

fì	'throw'	fírì	'threw'
gbè	'dance'	gbérè	'danced'
dẹ	'buy'	dèrè	'bought'
gbà	'tie'	gbárè	'tied'
wu	'die'	wúrù	'died'
sò	'weep'	sórò	'wept'
kọ	'plant'	kọrè	'planted'

- Morphophonemics as a tool for developing oral skills

In language teaching/learning, the goal is to achieve something akin to native speaker proficiency. A little knowledge linguistics would make this goal achievable for both teachers and learners. This knowledge is essential because languages do not employ sounds in isolation; “sounds tend to be modified by their environment (Pike 1947)”. This tendency is manifest in different ways. For example in Igbo and Yoruba, there is homorganic nasal assimilation – a rule which states that a nasal stop assimilates to the place of articulation of the following consonant. While Igbo employs this rule for nominal prefixes; Yoruba uses the rule for its aspectual verbal prefix *ń*-as illustrated below.

**Igbo** (Iloene 2007:178)

bido	[bido]	‘begin’	mbido	[mbido]	‘beginning’
tá	[tá]	‘hunt’	ntá	[ntá]	‘hunting’

**Yoruba** (Stahlke 1976:42)

tà	[tà]	‘sell’	ntà	[ntà]	‘selling’
jà	[jà]	‘fight’	njà	[njà]	‘fighting’

### 2.2.1. Implications for Language Teaching

Morphophonemics has the following implications for language teaching.

- Language is a rule-governed system

Morphophonemics deals with rules that characterise the morphology (words) and phonology (sounds) of language. It captures the interaction between these sub-fields of language, and makes it possible to understand the principles underlying sound-meaning relations with a limited number of rules. Thus, it simplifies the task of language teaching and learning.

- Language rules are not absolute

The language teacher must exercise caution in the use of morphophonemics. The reason is that every rule has an exception. This paper states that the plural morpheme is an example of conditioned variation. This may not always be the case, because there are words that have the same lexical form for both singular and plural. For example body part terms in English are usually inflected to indicate number as in *eye/eyes*; *lip/lips*; *ear/ears* etc., but in *Èdo* these words do not change forms like other nouns in the language. The word for *eye* and *eyes* is *àró*, but a learner who wrongly applies the vowel substitution rule would derive *\*èró* (which means *trick*) as the plural form of *àró*. Therefore, in the use of morphophonemics as a tool for developing oracy, the teacher should make learners aware of its limitations. This will curtail problems of language learning such as the over-generalisation of rules.

### 2.3. Cultural Relativity, Cultural Transmission and Language Teaching

Language can be defined as “a system of arbitrary vocal symbols which permits all people in a given culture or other people who have learned the systems of that culture to communicate or interact”. Several features distinguish human language from other systems of communication. One of such features is *cultural transmission*, which is the transmission of language from one generation to the next through membership of a society, as opposed to genetic inheritance which characterises animal systems of communication.

### 2.3.1. Cultural Relativity and Cultural Transmission

Cultural relativism is a sociological concept about norms and values. The principle of cultural relativism states that “judgments are based on experience, and experience is interpreted by each individual in terms of his own enculturation” (Herskovits 1972:15). The underlying idea is that function and meaning of a trait are relative to specific social contexts. Thus, societies or cultures are to be analyzed objectively without using the values of one culture to judge the worth of another. In relation to language, cultural relativism can be understood in terms of one of the two principles of the *Sapir-Whorf Hypotheses*. The principle in question states that the distinctions encoded in one language are not found in any other. For example, the concept of time distinction (or grammatical tense) has morphological distinction in the English language as in *I see him* and *I saw him*. But, in Yoruba the distinction is marked in terms of when the sighting occurred either before or after the utterance. The Yoruba equivalent of the English examples is *Mo rí i* which could mean either “I see him or I saw him”.

Cultural relativism and cultural transmission can be seen as interwoven features of language. This is because the language a person learns is language as defined by culture. One way to examine this statement is by looking at the lexicon. Every language has a vocabulary which largely reflects the ideas, concepts associated with the culture of its speakers. For example, the concept food is common to all humans, but the terms for food are culture specific. This connection between cultural transmission and cultural relativism has several ramifications.

Firstly, it could be an impediment to language teaching and learning. It was assumed that if a language lacks words to express a given concept, the speakers of such language cannot grasp the concept. However, experience has shown that this assumption is unfounded. For example, people may never have seen the substance “snow”, but exposure to communication media such a television makes it possible to grasp the concept “snow”. Additionally, psycholinguistic research has shown that when people learn other languages, they are able to express concepts encoded in that language in a manner that is comparable to that of native speakers. For example, a Nigerian child who learns English or French language should be able to express present/past tense distinction of those languages as appropriately as he/she marks temporal distinctions in his/her mother tongue.

Secondly, there is the issue of understanding and memory. Culture influences language which is the vehicle for perception and communication. Research (e.g. McKoon & Ratcliff 1989) has shown that language influences the way we perceive and remember things. This is because people find it easier to differentiate concepts and ideas if they correspond to words available in their language.

### 2.3.2. Implications for Language Teaching

Cultural relativism and cultural transmission hold the following implications for language teaching;

- Linguistic Entry Behaviour (Input Competence)

The twin concepts outlined above determine an individual’s input competence, which forms the basis for all learning. This entry behaviour is one’s native language. Thus, there is need for the language teacher to be a native speaker of the language he/she teaches. This adds an edge to academic and professional training, as the native speaker-teacher will naturally have a higher input competence than the non-native speaker. Another way of checking the influence of cultural relativity and cultural transmission on language teaching/learning is by mastering the culture.

Language teaching methods are general but languages tend to have their specifics. Hence, the language teacher should know the culture of the subject language well enough to enable learners gain mastery of the language.

- Transfer and Interference

Interference refers to a situation where what is known prevents one from learning a similar but new thing. It is based on the idea that one set of language and culture skills can be transferred to another. Lado (1957) cited in Aje (2006:31) expresses the idea in the following terms.

*Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language – both productively and receptively when trying to understand the language and act in the culture as practiced by the natives.*

Transfer is seen as both positive and negative. It is positive when it facilitates learning and negative when it impedes it. Negative transfer produces interference which manifests as errors in the learner's speech/writing. Ideally, a language teacher should know the linguistic and cultural factors that will enhance learning, and those that will impede it.

### 3. Summary and Conclusion

The paper discusses the relevance of linguistics to the Nigerian language teacher. Specifically, it outlines the applications of linguistic theories in the classroom. The theories examined include the classic phoneme theory, morphophonemics and the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. This paper explores their implications for language teaching/learning, and concludes that the knowledge of these theories can facilitate the task of teaching, as well as enhance the learning experience.

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## MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND THE WAY FORWARD

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### **Abstract**

*The concept of multilingualism as it affects Education in societies is quite relevant because of its delicate nature. The choice of the Language to be used as a medium of instruction can be quite tricky if not properly handled. While there is a wide agreement that the mother tongue should be adopted as a medium of instruction, UNESCO (2003) suggests that a careful balance also needs to be made between enabling people to use local languages in learning and providing access to global languages of communication through education. This paper examines the challenges of multilingual Education in Nigeria in the implementation of the National Policy of Education (NPE, 2004) and proffers solutions to the problems discovered.*

### **Introduction**

There have been profound political transformations leading to new language policies. Hundreds of languages have disappeared throughout the world and many more remain endangered; migratory movements on a large scale have brought new and varied languages to other countries and continents; the internet has also dramatically affected the way in which language languages are used for communication and indeed for learning; and rapidly accelerating globalization.

As a linguistic heterogeneous nation, Nigeria is a multilingual nation with over 400 living languages and its accompanying problems of language choice, language planning and policy implementation. According to Olagbaju (2009:4), Nigeria is a perfect example of a multilingual nation with the resultant effect of the majority of her citizens having access to a minimum of two languages. Therefore, there are individuals who are bilingual or multilingual either in the indigenous languages (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo) or in the indigenous languages and the English language (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and English).

The National Policy on Education allows the use of more than one language in the Nigerian educational system due to the linguistic plurality in Nigeria. Although, English later assumes the status of the language of instruction from the fourth year of the primary school education, other languages still function alongside the English language in the school system. By implication, the policy intends to expose an average Nigerian child to at least three languages in the course of his or her education.

Emenanjo (1985) describes the NPE as a multidimensional, multi-lingual three tier political statement which tries to capture the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual nature of Nigeria. The three tier approach of the National Policy on Education provides for the mother-tongue (MT) and/or

Language of the immediate community (LIC), the three major national languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba languages of national culture and integration) and English (the official language) as the language of formal literacy, Administration, Government, Media and the Judiciary etc. The policy also makes provision for French (as the second official language) in order to ensure smooth interaction between Nigerians and their French speaking neighbours.

Awobuluyi (1992) captures the sincerity of the government at making every Nigerian learner a multilingual through the multilingual provisions in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Awobuluyi (1992) cites a portion of the 1989 constitution dealing with the educational objectives of state policy. The subsection in question, viz: sub-section 19(4), states that "Government shall encourage the learning of indigenous languages."

Although, it is not providentially cast in such general terms as allows it to be easily read as fully sanctioning everything the Government had done up to that point in time in regard to the teaching of the indigenous languages. But in a way, it sanctions the NPE which requires the teaching (both at the Primary and Junior Secondary School levels) of the child's mother tongue or, in the alternative, some indigenous language of immediate community. Awobuluyi (1992) concludes that since there is nothing specifically said there to the contrary, it can also be readily construed as permitting the teaching of the three major indigenous languages. To what extent have these policies been effectively implemented? Is the question teachers and Education policy makers should be asking.

### **Multilingual Education**

UNESCO adopted the term Multilingual Education in 1999 in the General Conference Resolution to refer to the use of at least three languages, the mother tongue, a regional or national language and international language. The resolution supported the views that the requirements of global and national participation and the specific needs of particular, culturally and linguistically distinct communities can be by multilingual education. In regions where the language of the learner is not the official or national language of the country, bilingual and multilingual education can make mother tongue instruction possible while providing at the same time the acquisition of languages used in larger areas of the country and the world such as English language, French and Chinese languages.

### **The Role of Mother Tongue in Multilingual Education**

The term "Mother Tongue", though widely used may refer to several different situations. Definitions often include the following elements; the language one knows best and the language one uses most. It also may be referred to as primary or first language. Mother tongue is essential for as a part of intellectual ability. Mother tongue is the language human beings acquire from birth. It helps the child in his /her mental, moral, and emotional development. Plessis (2008) suggests that much of a child's future social and intellectual development hinges on the milestone of mother tongue.

The mother tongue clearly is beneficial and crucial to an individual's cognitive development but how can this be carefully selected to ensure that a larger number of the Nigerian pupils benefit immensely from this reality? Policy makers and other stake holders in the Educational sector have

an enormous responsibility in ensuring that the final choice of the language(s) to be used for instruction must be appropriate.

When curriculum content is presented in an unfamiliar language, an enormous amount of time must be spent first teaching children to understand, speak, read and write L2 or a foreign language, something that is extremely difficult and wastes valuable years in the early grades that could be spent learning to read and learning academic concepts in L1. Moreover, children who cannot understand the languages used in the classroom are unable to demonstrate what they know, ask questions, and participate actively. In contrast, providing children with an opportunity to learn in a language they understand starting on the first day of school – confers significant advantages for the education system, teachers, parents, and students.

The benefits of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction are numerous; it helps improve access to Education, (Smith, et al, 2008), Improves learning outcomes, (Ball, 2010), Facilitates learning a second or foreign language, improves children's self concept and identity and supports local culture and parental involvement.

### **Multilingual Education in Nigeria: Challenges**

The NPE supports the practice of multilingual education but the reality on ground is far from the provisions of the policy. Olagbaju (2009: 3) opines that although the National Policy on Education supports multilingualism education; in practice, most private nursery and primary schools teach even the pre-primary and Junior primary classes using the English language as the medium of instruction without any restriction from the ministry of education officials who are never available. These so called 'private schools' do not allow the use of other languages either as the language of instruction or a school subject apart from the English language in the school system. Ogunbiyi (2008) asserts that despite the provisions of the NPE and the position of the Government on the status of the English language and other Nigerian languages in education, some schools still relegate Nigerian languages to the background and promote the teaching of English and French languages. Emenanjo (1985) opines that the policy is difficult to implement because the statements contained in the NPE are laced with ambiguity.

### **Multilingual Education in Nigeria: The Challenges.**

The multi – ethnic nature of Nigeria is a barrier to the successful implementation of the multilingual provisions of the policy. Oyetade (2003) asserts that the problems associated with the use of indigenous languages as media of instruction or as school subjects as stated in the NPE (that every Nigerian child should be encouraged to learn one of the major languages in addition to his own) has not been implemented. This is supposed to be progressively implemented from the fourth year of the primary school to the Junior Secondary School level, but this provision is being waived in many schools.

The use of indigenous languages in education as contained in the NPE cannot be fully implemented. This is because only a few of the languages have enough materials to sustain teaching them as they really ought to be taught at any level. In practice, only the three 'major' indigenous languages - Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba can be said to satisfy this implied criterion of teaching materials for Primary and Secondary Schools, and to varying degrees for the tertiary level also. Other indigenous languages like Efik/Ibibio can satisfy that same criterion for Primary and Secondary School levels,

but not for degree level. Awobuluyi (1992) opines that the majority of the indigenous languages in Nigeria have a very long way to go yet in terms of availability of educational resource materials, particularly for the languages that lack standard orthography or are yet to be codified.

In addition, scarcity of qualified language teachers in indigenous languages is another obstacle to the successful implementation of the multilingual education provisions of the NPE. Awobuluyi (1992) and Olagbaju (2009) assert that only the three major indigenous languages can actually boast of enough teachers at all levels. Olagbaju (2009) termed the inadequacy of indigenous language teachers as a product of some attitudinal factors. These factors include: the status of the English language and other foreign languages in Nigeria, negative attitude of the elite parents and other societal – related sentiments.

Language is not only a tool for communication and knowledge but also a fundamental attribute of cultural identity and empowerment, both for an individual and the group.

The multiplicity of languages may worsen, aggravate or exacerbate the difficulty of providing Education in each mother tongue and Inter- ethnic marriages also hinder indigenous language learning leaving a greater number of young children with very little or no knowledge of their indigenous languages.

### **Solution and Recommendations**

The debate on the shortcoming of the National Policy on Education has gone on for so long. The government, stake holders and Education policy makers have to go back to the drawing board to review the policy as against the present realities of multilingual education in Nigeria and budgeting funds for the development of our indigenous languages.

Obanya (1998) suggests that more educational resources in indigenous languages outside the school system (traditional poetry and drama and cinematographic resources) still have to be fully developed in order to be able to cope effectively with the demands of multilingual education.

The federal and state ministries of education need to do more in the enforcement of the multilingual provisions of the NPE. There is a dire need for constant inspection of what goes in the private and public nursery and primary schools in order to enforce total adherence to the use of Nigerian languages in modern education.

Though Nigerian languages have been described as grossly insufficient to meet the demands of modern Education (Taiwo1976)), they should therefore be developed and the orthography needs to be improved upon. In addition, Emenanjo (1985) is of the view that something drastic needs to be done concerning the orthography of most Nigerian languages. Taiwo (1976) and Awobuluyi (1992) are of the view that the orthographies of the three ‘major’ Nigerian languages – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba have been fully developed while Emenanjo (1996) reinstates that more should be done in the area of developing the orthography of the minority languages in Nigeria. It is therefore important that textbooks and educational materials in Nigerian languages should be developed while obsolete ones should be improved upon or upgraded to cope with the present realities of multilingual education.

The government needs to embark on a radical campaign on the benefits of Nigerian languages in modern education. Parents, students, teachers and other stake holders in education need to be educated on the dangers of relegating our local or indigenous languages to the background. It is also suggested that government should come up with a policy that will make at least a credit pass in any of the indigenous languages a pre – requisite for admission into any of the higher institutions of learning in Nigeria.

Emenanjo (1985) while proffering a solution to the death of indigenous language teachers in Nigeria suggests that producing graduate teachers in the right quantity and quality for all Nigerian languages is the only way by which we can meet the demands of multilingual education as contained in the NPE.

Emenanjo (1985) concludes that in - service teachers of Nigerian languages need to be updated in content, methods and language technology.

### **Conclusion**

Multilingual education provisions of the NPE should be implemented to the letter in the Nigerian educational system because it motivates students to learn and fosters understanding in class. The government needs to tackle the issue of minority languages squarely by developing more materials for teaching and learning in other indigenous languages so that the ambiguity associated with the choice of a mother tongue (MT) and language of the immediate environment (LIC) in the NPE will be addressed.

There is also a need for a more comprehensive in - service training for teachers in the primary and junior secondary schools on the importance of multilingualism education. Government should improve on the level of supervision or inspection to school so that strict compliance to the provisions of the NPE can be achieved. The National Orientation Agency (NOA) through the mass media and other relevant bodies should sensitize Nigerians on the need to allow our indigenous languages to grow and function in the education of our children.

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## INSTRUCTIONS IN THE MOTHER TONGUE: A CASE FOR THE JJU AND THE TYAP LANGUAGES

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### **Abstract**

*The paper has succeeded in making a case for instructions in the Jju and the Tyap languages of the minority tribes of the Southern Kaduna. Since none of the institutions of learning in the State uses any of the minority tribe except Hausa. This submission is in line with the language provisions of the national policy on education over the years (NPE) that instructions at the pre-primary level should be done in mother tongue or language of the immediate environment. The choice of the two tribes out of 34 is purposive, hence, they are amongst the minority languages whose orthographies have been standardized and will be used as a microcosm for the establishment of this policy in the state. This study is therefore, hinged on the eclectic theoretical approach to teaching and learning. The conclusion of this study is on the premises that teaching and learning in the mother tongue at the pre-primary, secondary and tertiary levels will go a long way in the revitalisation and preservation of our mother tongues, most especially the minority languages of the Southern part of Kaduna State.*

### **Introduction**

The Jju (kaje) also called Bajju people of Nigeria are found in Kaduna State in Kachia, Zangon-kataf and Jema'a local government areas. They have a remarkable presence in Chikun, Kaduna South and North Local Government Area (L.G.A) in the Kaduna municipal city. The location is in West Africa (Nigeria) approximately  $9^{\circ}.6' - 10^{\circ}.1'N$  and  $7.8^{\circ} - 8^{\circ}2'E$ . The origin of the Bajju people lies at Miango on the Jos Plateau. The language Jju is part of the Niger-Congo Language family Iso code (3 letter code) from ethnologic code. The population is put approximately between 300,000 – 481,000, National Population Commission (NPC) 2006 census put it at 360,000. The population is highly literate with more than [50%] literacy level attained. The Bajju people have a document on literary and literacy work in the dialect with a well concluded and adopted orthography and other literatures that are being promoted and put to use to enable reading and writing (cf. Joshua 2012).

The Atyap (Katab), as they were fondly referred to by the Hausas and other tribes, call themselves Tyap (the t being palatalized). The second syllable of Katab no doubt represents the word by which the tribe call themselves. This language has been provisionally included, on grounds of vocabulary in the Nigerian Semi-Bantu group of the Middle Sudanic Zone. The Atyap (katab) who number about 11,000 in 1931 as postulated by Meek, consists of four patrilineal groups or clans, viz (1) Minyam (population 3,600), (2) Agbat (population 6,100), (3) Shokwa (population 200), (4) Aku (population 960). Each clan is exogamous, that is to say that intermarriage between members of the same clan is not permitted (c.f. Meek1931:4).

According to Grace and Amos (2015), the Atyap people are found in other local government areas apart from the Zangon Kataf local government area. Some are found in Kachia LGA, Kaura LGA, Sanga LGA and Jema'a LGA all of Kaduna State of Nigeria. This explains why it is so difficult to have an authentic strategy of the total population of the Atyap (Kataf) people of Southern Kaduna State. In discussing the Atyap (Kataf) cluster dialect. D. H. Crozier and R. M. Blench (67) have estimated the Atyap people to 130,000 in 1990 (c.f. Grace and Amos 2015, 103-4).

The Bajju as well as the Atyap people are two of the three or four major languages that form the Southern part of the Southern Kaduna State minority languages. They are the two main tribes and the closest neighbouring tribes found within the Zango- Kataf local government area of the State. The Bajju people like the Atyap are also found in some other local government areas like Jema'a local government area of the State, while the Atyap too are found in Jema'a, Kaura and Sanga local government areas of the State. In discussing the Political – Geography of the Southern Kaduna people, Yohanna avers that one can view this enclave from the flat top of the Kagoro massif, as far as the Ludo Hills towards Kaduna, over one hundred and fifty kilometers away. Facing the Western horizon, the Kagoma, Nok- Chori and Jagindi Hills can be seen. To the North, the Surubu and Kauru Hills viewed from a distant and isolated stand. In all of these, the Kagoro- Attakar Hills happened to be the dominant feature of the Southern Kaduna landscape. Like the biblical Mount Nebo, from where Moses was shown the Land of Canaan so also can the whole of the Southern Kaduna region be viewed from the Kagoro Hills which stand conspicuously at over 4000 feet above sea level. The Kafanchan Township is located at the foot of these hills. And this is an area that one colonial officer, John Smith, described in 1954, as "Heaven on Earth." The Kagoro hills and several other lesser ones give rise to various inland water systems. These water systems divide themselves into two and empty their contents into the Rivers Niger and Benue respectively (1). The Southern Kaduna people form the two (2) third of the majority of the population of the people of Kaduna State with 34 languages from the Southern part of the State apart from the Hausa- Fulani. Votes from this zone remain the determining factor for who becomes the governor of the State. This region is fertile and endowed with both human and natural resources (c.f. Yohanna 1999).

It is therefore against the backdrop of the Political- Geography of the Southern Kaduna people that the case for the Atyap and Bajju people is advanced for a prompt consideration. This is consequent upon the fact that none of the 34 Southern Kaduna Tribes is taught at any of our educational levels; not even in the Kaduna State College of Education Gidan- Waya, Kafanchan where the writers of this paper teach. Below is the list of a 34 languages of the Southern Kaduna people:

Aegworok	Bakulu
Tyap	Bunu
Attakad	Eggon
Asholio	Gbagyi
Igbiri	Gwong
Adara	Fantswam
T'kurmi	Ningkyop
Attacherak	Kuvori
Anirago	Kiwollo
Abisi	Amap
Aninka	Ham
Anunu	Nunku

Atom  
Abinu  
Amalan  
Angan  
Jju

Nandu  
Nindem  
Uzar  
Mbang  
Atsam

### Examples of the Jju and the Tyap Orthographies

#### The Jju Alphabets (Zuzzwa Njju)

a	a'	<u>a</u>	b	bv	bvw	c	cw	cc	d	dw	dy	dyw	dyy
f	ff	g	gw	gy	gyy	gg	ggw	gb	gby	gbyy	h	hw	hww
hy	hyw	hyy	hyyw	j	jj	jjw	k	kw	ky	kyw	kyy	kyyw	kk
kkw	kp	kpy	l	m	my	myy	n	ny	nyw	ng	p	py	pyy
pf	pfw	r	rw	ry	ryw	ryy	ryyw	rr	rrw	s	sw	ss	
ssw	sh	shw	ssh	sshw	t	tw	ty	tyw	tyy	ts	tsw	tss	tssw
u	<u>u</u>	v	w	ww	x	y	yw	yy	yyw	z	zw	zz	zzw.

Adopted from, Kuhyop and Bature (“n.d.”).

#### The Tyap Alphabets (Zhunzhwuo Alyem Atyap)

Aa	<u>Aa</u>	B	Ch	Chy	Dd	Ee	Ff	G	Gb		
Gh	Ghw	Ghy	H	II	<u>II</u>	Jj	Jhy	Kk	Kh	Kp	
L	Mm	Nn	Ng	Ny	Oo	Pp	Rr	Ss	Sh	Shy	
Tt	Ts	Uu	Vv	W	Yy	Zz.					

Adopted from, Carl, F. (1992).

Unlike the English alphabets that are 26 in number, the Atyap has 39 alphabets that help in the formation of the Atyap morphology and syntax and on the phonological aspect of the Tyap language: /n/, /A/, /Aa/, and /ah/ are very pronounced in the Tyap consonants and vowels. The Tyap language has 12 vowel sounds and 74 consonant sounds as contained in Dimos, H. Carl, & Joy F. (n.y. 72-3) (c.f. Grace and Amos 2015, 103-4).

Sherma argues that no foreign language can take the place of the indigenous language[s] and no system of education can afford to disregard it without serious detriment to the mental development of the child (c.f. Sherma 1975, 35). This postulation underscores the pivotal role and place of the indigenous languages in our educational system, most especially at the pre-primary and primary level of education that invariably is the foundational level of the teaching and learning experience. The mother-tongue of the child or the language of the immediate environment is the language that the child acquires at birth and finds it very easy to articulate his feelings, emotions and desires in it. No other language can best express the child’s feelings, emotions and desires like the mother-tongue at that developmental stage of the child; not even the English Language.

To support the above stated argument, the National Policy on Education stipulates that every child should be “encouraged to learn one of the three major Nigerian languages other than their own.” These major languages are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Therefore, this paper makes a clarion call for collaboration with the Nigerian government via the NINLAN Aba in the introduction of some Southern Kaduna languages that have on their own efforts developed and standardised their

orthographies in our institutions of learning, instead of learning only three major languages to the detriment of our mother tongues that are now endangered.

This Baldeh stresses with a view to consolidating the position of language as a medium of education and a vehicle for the expression of indigenous culture. Especially, in connection with the national languages, the policy continues: “Government will see to it that the medium of instruction in the primary level is initially the mother-tongue or the language of the immediate community and, at a larger stage, English” (c.f. Baldeh 1990). Sad to mention here is the fact that this policy, to the Minority Languages of the Southern Kaduna people remains a mirage since the government’s efforts have not been felt by the good people of Southern Kaduna who form the two third of the population of the State and two third the votes casted in general elections in the State over the years now.

Today many Southern Kaduna minority languages do not have orthographies and some are going extinct as a result of the entrenched language policies that do not favour the minority languages in Nigeria. The resultant effects therefore, are the general apathy and attitudinal problems of our native language speakers who now allow such languages like the Jju and the Tyap to be relegated to the background due to the effects of imperial hegemony of the English language and the dominant effects of the Hausa hegemony on the minority languages too. Consequent upon this, the Attacherak language, which happens to be one of the neighbouring tribes of the Tyap has become moribund and extinct. Almost all of it older speakers today speak Tyap, and few of their children speak Tyap and other languages. If urgent actions are not taken to forestall the disappearing of our mother-tongues and their non-usage in our pre-primary education level, our mother-tongues’ epilogue will be summarized in the following words: One hundred years or slightly more ago, the Native American people were still speaking their own languages. They did not choose to shift to English. Their children were forced to go to government boarding schools where their hair was shaved and they were beaten if they were caught talking in their mother tongue. So, many lost their own language. There was nothing natural or voluntary about it. (- Tom Eoeddes, 2010).

It is therefore, against the above extrapolations that this study will attempt an assessment of the implementation of mother-tongue or the Language of the immediate community in the teaching and learning of our pupils at the pre-primary education level.

### **The Thrust of the Discourse**

The thrust of this study is to make a case for the development of the orthographies of the Southern Kaduna Minorities Languages and to advocate for their entrenchment in our teacher- training institutions in the State. Sad to reiterate is the fact that not even one of the above listed languages whose orthographies have been standardised is taught in our institutions of learning in Kaduna State. The NPE document, 2004 section 3 Sub-section C unequivocally stated that the Nigerian government shall ensure that the medium of instruction at the pre-primary level is principally the mother-tongue or the language of the immediate community; and to this end will develop the orthography of many more Nigerian languages and produce textbooks in Nigerian languages. It is worth stating here that linguists in the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century warned that 10% of the 6,000 to 7,000 existing languages would not survive into the 22<sup>nd</sup> century if nothing is done to prevent such an outcome. Every language as postulated by UNESCO (FAQ on Endangered languages) reflects a unique world-view with its own value systems, philosophy and particular cultural features. The

extinction of a language results in the irrevocable loss of unique cultural knowledge embodied in it for centuries including historical, spiritual and ecological knowledge that may be essential for the survival of not only its speakers, but also countless others. For speaker communities, languages are the creations and the vectors of tradition. They support cultural identity and are an essential part of a community's heritage.

It is therefore against the back drop of the above explications that this study got its relevance; the preservation of the minority languages in the Southern Kaduna State of Nigeria by ensuring that the NPE policy document on the aforementioned is implemented to the latter, hence teaching the child in his mother-tongue will rather help in the preservation of his folklore and culture; which are the integral part of his literature. The implementation of this policy will also enhance the development of his Language Acquisition Device (LAD) and his ability to learn other languages very fast, most especially the English language. This study is geared towards a passionate appeal on the introduction of some of the Southern Kaduna minority languages in our educational system in Nigeria for effective national development in line with government's efforts in relating education to the overall community needs (NPE, 3). This is consequent upon the fact that we are victims of European hegemony and imperialism as well as the Hausa hegemony; so if our Mother-tongues die, it then means that our rich orature will also die with the languages, that is, virtually everything about the people's culture, myth, legends and their world-view will also be lost, if no serious pragmatic and sustainable action plans are taken to introduce such languages in our institutions of learning.

### **Conceptual Explications**

The National Policy on Education was influenced by the Rome declaration of 1930 on the position of the vernacular in national education. The resolution, which was at the instance of the international institute of African Languages and Cultures succinctly intones that: It is a universally acknowledged principle in modern education that a child should receive instruction both in and through his mother tongue, and this privilege should not be withheld from the African child. The child should learn to love and respect the mental heritage of his own people and the natural and necessary expression of this heritage is the language. Neglect of the vernacular involves the danger of crippling and destroying the pupil's production powers by forcing him to express himself in a language foreign both to himself and to the genius of his race. As a general rule, therefore, during the first three years of school education, instruction should be carried out exclusively in a native language and we understand that there is a considerable body of educational experience which supports us in this opinion. We consider that no European language should be taught during that time and that it should be followed by a period during which the pupil begins to learn a European language while other instruction is continued in the vernacular (c.f. Benzie's 1940, 4). But unfortunately this declaration is a mere policy document that falls short of implementation. Especially with regards to the 34 languages of the Southern Kaduna people who until now are victims of the English language imperialism as well as hegemony and the Hausa language domination.

It was this resolution made by the Rome declaration of 1930 on the position of vernacular in national education that prompted the formulations of language policies across the African continent since 1930. However, many Southern Kaduna Minority Language speakers have been denied this opportunity. Even the efforts made by the minority languages to develop their orthographies have

not been complimented by the government. If the rich cultural heritage of the Southern Kaduna people will in the nearest future not go extinct, then necessary steps should be taken in the right direction to support, their efforts. The place of teaching in the Mother tongue in our institutions of learning in Southern Kaduna State at this time is very expedient. Baldeh strongly agrees with this by reiterating that, it has been necessary to look at mother tongue education for the following educational and social reasons: It is generally believed that instruction in the mother tongue greatly helps instruction in the second language. The more languages one knows the easier one finds it to learn other languages, as the case of Schliemann starkly illustrates. It is immorally and unethical to plunge the six year old child into the bewilderment of a foreign language and culture on the very first day at a school, making it difficult for him to grasp the subject matter of teaching (c.f. Baldeh 1990, 48).

In the same manner too, Fafunwa (1975) buttresses the above argument by stating that a child taught in a language that he is not familiar with can develop skills with trauma. He believes that Mother- Tongue is a base for learning subsequent languages and it also facilitates understanding, internalization of concepts and continuity in thinking. Giving credence to this postulation also, Opoola (2002:12) noted that: the proper development of the child is closely bound to the continuous use of the language he has from birth, the language of his parents, brothers, sisters, friends and people he is used to; which is the language he has acquired in his first experience of life (142).

Fasold reported that data obtained so far have strongly convinced project leaders that the African child will learn better and develop his talents faster if he is taught in his Mother- Tongue (Fasold 1997). This is why this paper makes a case for teaching and learning in the Southern Kaduna Minority Languages, using the Jju and the Tyap languages as a microcosm. Hence researchers have also shown that children who begin their education using their Mother Tongue are more confident and learn better than those who are made to learn in a second language in their early years (c.f. Lawal 2009). This is true because teaching in the Mother- Tongue becomes the sure foundation to a successful brighter education, and it is also hoped that the introducing of the aforementioned languages into our institutions of learning too will surely go a very long way in giving the Bajju and the Atyap children a successful brighter future and it will also help them to learn other languages, most especially the English language very well in their school.

### **Theoretical Frame Work**

This research work finds its relevance within the ambit of Eclectic Approach to Language Teaching which was propounded by Harold Palmer as not a compromise between the two antagonistic schools, but a combination of what is valuable in many systems or methods of teaching. This method as posited by Adeyi, Mike et.al is basically a compromise between the extremism of Audio-Lingua (A/L) method and the Cognitive Code Learning (CCL) method. In other words, it seeks to moderate what the linguists in the groups believe is the excess of the two methods. Thus, the eclectic method is looked upon as a bridge between the two methods. This method insists that language learning is basically a combination of mental activities and the imitation of adult speech (Adeyi et al 2013, 109-110). It is also hoped that this same approach will be adopted in the teaching and learning of the Jju and the Tyap languages in our institutions of learning within and outside Kaduna State.

## Conclusion

The above discussed languages are two among the Minority Languages of the Southern Kaduna whose orthographies have been developed and standardized and have bibles and other documents or texts printed and documented locally by the native speakers and few stake holders like the Nigerian Bible Translation Trust Fund, but are not taught in institutions of learning in Kaduna State. Over the past years and until now, no government intervention is seen, received and felt by the people of Southern Kaduna on efforts to document their languages and standardize it for academic purpose amongst others. This paper has succeeded in stating a case for the incorporation of the two mentioned languages that will serve as a platform for a pilot testing in the incorporating of the other 32 minority tribes of the people of the Southern Kaduna who have been victims of divide and rule as well as other forms of marginalisation. The entrenchment of these two of the major languages of the Southern in the teacher training syllables will underscore the government commitment towards the revitalisation and preservation of our mother tongues, most especially the minority languages of the Southern part of the State.

## Recommendations

- If the National Language Policy on education is not a mere document, then pragmatic efforts should be made to develop the orthographies of the remaining minority languages of the Southern Kaduna State and in the training of minority language teachers.
- Efforts should be made by the government and stakeholders in education to assess the implementation of the National Language Policy on Education over the years with regards to instruction in the mother tongue and the language of the immediate environment.
- The National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) in corroboration with the Bajju and the Atyap leaders together with stakeholders should take some practical steps towards the entrenchment of the Jju and the Tyap languages in institutions of learning in Kaduna State, especially the Kaduna State College of Education Gidan- Waya, Kafanchan.
- Government and non-governmental Organisations should join hands with the Jju and the Tyap to train teachers at the NCE level and produce more texts books and instructional materials for the teaching and learning of the said languages.
- Other minority tribes of the Southern Kaduna should see the success of this case as the beginning of their success story too.
- Consequent upon the aforementioned, a clarion call for attitudinal re-engineering of the minds of the good people of Southern Kaduna who hitherto have been victims of political and socio-cultural forms of marginalisations et cetera is graciously coveted.

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## EXCELLENT MASTERY OF MOTHER TONGUE AS A CATALYST TO EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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### Abstract

*Stakeholders in education have done so much and put in so much effort at finding a remedy to high rate of failure in English Language examinations in both internal and external examinations, yet the problem persists. However, it is the belief of these researchers that the solution to the above problem is not far-fetched - all hands must be on deck to make our children grounded in our mother tongue, as a stepping stone to engendering better performance in other subjects including the English Language. This is the major reason behind the different provisions in the National Policy in Education that our children be taught in their mother tongue in the formative years. If only we can implement these provisions, it will be the beginning of the end to poor performance in English Language. Both mother tongue and English are languages, so when we expose the child early to the mother tongue, it will trigger off an excellent performance in English Language in later years.*

### Introduction

English Language has continued to play dominant role in the political and economic power of Nigeria. According to Onyekwere and Nkoro (2007), it is today the language of governance, research, commerce and business. Again, owing to its official nature in Nigeria it has become the language for all official transactions in the three tiers of government. In educational institutions, it is the language of instruction. In fact, the issue of passing English Language at credit level before gaining admission into tertiary institutions has on its own, dressed the language with the "aura of a colossus," according to Onyekwere and Nkoro (2007:40).

Without English, communication would almost have been impossible, given the heterogeneous nature of Nigeria with numerous cultures and linguistic backgrounds of over 250 ethnic languages. English has therefore made it possible for Nigerians to accommodate one another. At the foreign scene, English is the language of diplomacy, political maneuver and economic viability, as it assures accessibility to global funds and aids.

Unfortunately, with all the above roles English plays, attempt to learn it by students has not been very encouraging, judging from the past achievement of students in the subject in internal and external examinations. According to Durojaiye (2007), who defined achievement as success in reaching a particular goal, status or standard; or as exceptional performance in learning what has been taught; students perform poorly in all the areas in which WAEC examiners judge candidates, a situation which the scholar attributes to poor training in the language skills. This low achievement in English examinations both at internal and external levels is already worrisome. It is against this background that seminars, workshops and high-level conferences have been organized by stakeholders to unravel the causes of this malady, which has continued to frustrate many students by denying them admission into higher institutions.

Incidentally, one area that is yet to be looked into in effort to improve students' learning of English is the impact of students' explicit knowledge of the mother tongue in their learning of the English Language. Explicit knowledge as a construct implies a clear, wholesome understanding and awareness of mother tongue structure, grammar, vocabulary and lexis. Unfortunately, parents do not encourage their children to learn or speak our mother tongue because they see children who speak their mother tongue as inferior or backward. According to Nguyen (2009) many students would not have been attending classes in mother tongue if it were not a condition for registration for school certificate examination. Many of them therefore attend classes for the sake of formality, not that they love their mother tongue.

Section 1, sub-section 8 (g) of the National Policy on Education, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition (FRN 2013), recognizing the role awareness and explicit knowledge of mother tongue plays in learning, insists that "every child shall be taught in the mother tongue or in the language of the immediate community for the first four years of basic education... every child shall learn one major Nigerian language." (FRN, 2013 (13).

Section 2, sub-section 20(b) also states that "the medium of instruction in the primary school shall be the language of the immediate environment for the first three years" (FRN, 2013(8). This is a welcome development because in studying English, a considerable knowledge of mother tongue is necessary since the child grounded in mother tongue thinks in it but writes down his thoughts in English. Even English essays with cultural contents are best written by students with good knowledge of their culture, which is embedded in their mother tongue. Actually, language and culture are inseparable.

According to Anukam (1995:76), it (mother tongue explicit knowledge) ought to be a curricular challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, aimed at discovering a "technology for improving students' English Language and at the same time, evoking their cultural awareness." According to her, writing essays on folklore topics (which are culture-laden) can help students discover and identify with their culture, as well as increase their performance in English Language. Therefore one way of making our children to achieve proficiency in English is to return to our mother tongue and be grounded in it because proficiency in it will lead to proficiency in English.

### **Wrong Perception of Mother Tongue by Second Language Speakers of English**

The government of Nigeria recognizes the importance of mother tongue in the overall development of the child; hence, it stipulates that it be used as a medium of instruction in both pre-primary and primary levels of education. The essence is to enable the child to identify with the happenings at school via his/her mother tongue. The government, therefore, in section two (2), sub-section sixteen (16) (j) of the National Policy on Education (2013:6), states that "government shall ensure that the medium of instruction (at nursery level) is principally the mother tongue.

Unarguably, the essence of the above provision in the National Policy on Education is to make the child grounded in his mother tongue as a prelude to effective learning of other subjects, including English Language, hence, effective learning of English Language and other subjects, to an extent, depends on a child's measure of knowledge of his mother tongue, (Oden, 2008). Speaking any language is the bedrock of its survival hence, any language not spoken is dead, (Amaechi and Ohakamma 2014).

Ironically, many Nigerians are ignorant of the importance of the mother tongue, neither are they proud of it, hence, they do not speak it. Opara (2009) posits that mother tongue is more or less stigmatized and considered an unsuitable medium of instruction in schools or even an unsuitable thing to be taught. According to him, parents, especially those living in urban areas are proud to declare that their children cannot speak, read, let alone write their mother tongue.

The consequence of this trend, according to him, is the production or emergence of a generation of children cut off from their cultural roots. According to Amaechi and Ohakamma (2014) again, mother tongue is considered a taboo in most schools and also perceived as inferior to the English Language. It is often associated with low socio-economic and academic status, compared to English Language which to them, commands respect, prestige and has high socio-economic connotation. Maduagwu (2008) however, chips in a remedy to reverse the trend. He advises that mother tongue be spoken at home and should be given a first language status. The blame goes to parents, who neither speak mother tongue to their children nor interact with it at home, thereby stripping the children of their linguistic and human right. They also have a word of caution to some traditional rulers, the so-called custodians of culture, who neither speak their mother tongue even in their meetings nor interact with their subjects in it. They are more comfortable in English Language than in the mother tongue.

As a panacea to the dwindling awareness and knowledge of our mother tongue, Amaechi and Ohakamma (2014) suggest the use of information and computer technology (ICT) in boosting mother tongue teaching and learning at schools and in the homes. They advocate the use of computers, internet, radio, television, video conferencing, telephony, satellite, computer-mediated conferencing etc, to generate, store, process, retrieve and disseminate mother tongue information. According to them, today's children can easily access the internet and engage in computer and video games, hence they advise parents to provide their children with localized video games and literature texts converted into cartoons in the mother tongue. Home videos acted in mother tongue or subtitled in it should also be provided to enable children learn to speak their mother tongue and be grounded in its vocabulary and grammar.

On the part of the government, they should ensure that schools have qualified mother tongue teachers. The law on the exclusive use of mother tongue in teaching in pre-primary and primary 1-3 should be strictly enforced and perhaps extended to secondary and tertiary institutions by making mother tongue studies a general course. They also advise the electronic media to air some of their programmes in mother tongue as well as create sensitization campaigns in mother tongue. The fear and widely-held rumour that the use of mother tongue at the early stage hampers the learning and acquisition of English should be completely dismissed.

Awareness and explicit knowledge of mother tongue vocabulary, grammar and structures lie in the hands of agents of socialization, (Ezuoke, 2014). He says that any attempt to stop the child from learning his mother tongue as his first language, smolders the child's language acquisition device (LAD) which constitutes an impediment to the cognitive development of the child. The church as another agent of socialization, according to Ezuoke (2014) should ensure that services in mother tongue must not be introduced with English Language, which is what is obtainable now. According to him, children learn mother tongue vocabularies a lot in prayers, sermons, songs and testimonies.

### **Challenges Facing Mother Tongue Teaching and Learning**

Mother tongue scholars are of the opinion that the greatest challenge facing mother tongue explicit knowledge is the failure of the home in executing its function of giving the child the opportunity of acquiring his mother tongue as his first language. According to them, the home is the first and foremost environment in which a child learns to speak, hence, the language he listens to at this early formative stage is the one he recognizes and learns to speak. It therefore follows that where the home fails to execute this function, the child picks up the next language spoken by his parents and peers. Ezuoke (2014) reports that there is need for parents, who are the child's first teachers to speak their mother tongue to him as the first step towards the child's awareness and explicit knowledge of mother tongue vocabulary and grammar.

He is also of the opinion that many indigenous languages in Nigeria lack official orthography, thereby hampering efforts to print books on them. Such languages are only spoken but not written, a phenomenon that may create opportunity for extinction. According to him, this situation makes it extremely difficult for speakers to be very versed in the knowledge of the vocabularies and grammar of such languages. One advantage of official orthography, according to Ezuoke (2014), is that more words are created and added to the vocabulary of that language as it is being revised.

Ugo, Abah *et al* (2014) identified lack of a clear and enduring language policy in the educational sector as a major challenge to mother tongue awareness and knowledge. To this end, they suggested to government to include Nigerian languages among the compulsory subjects in the school curriculum at both the junior and senior levels. Furthermore, Ugo, Abah, *et al* (2014), still on the issue of a language policy, called on government to fund the development of a national policy for Nigerian languages as well as to restore the language provision of 1977 which identified three major Nigerian languages for study at junior secondary level.

### **Mother Tongue: A Catalyst towards Effective Learning of English Language**

In a study titled: Effects of Awareness and Explicit Knowledge of Mother Tongue Grammar on Learning of Foreign Languages, Hassanzader (2011) used 40 English As a Foreign Language Students (EFL) of 17-25 years old, all native Azerbaijani Turkish speakers of East Azerbaijan in Tabriz. The subjects in the control group and experimental group were all Iranians who had all experienced English learning at school and different language institutes. To make two homogeneous groups, the researcher administered the modified HBJ Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) test.

In the research, two teacher-made grammar tests were utilized both in Turkish and English. Another instrument was a teacher-made questionnaire which had 20 questions and given to the experimental group who had experienced learning in their mother tongue. To be sure about the homogeneity of both groups, the HBJ TOEFL was administered to the learners. The results showed that they were homogeneous. They were then, randomly assigned to the control group and experimental group. In the experimental group, from the manuals of the teachers, the Turkish grammar (simple present, simple past, present progressive and future) were first taught in Turkish language.

Teaching in mother tongue in the experimental group was an attempt to create language awareness, as the learners had no or very little knowledge of Azerbaijani Turkish language. Then the same grammars, from *Intro-interchange Third Edition* were taught in English Language to the

experimental group. They were taught simple present, simple past, present progressive and future. Both groups received the same amount of instruction. Finally, the learners were provided with a written essay examination titled - Life: Past, Present and Future.

The process of data collection followed these steps: HBJ TOEFL, the pretest, English version, the first achievement test, writing the modified post-test, the result of Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Then the results were subjected to statistical analysis using t-test to find out whether the learners' awareness of mother tongue had an impact on the achievement of foreign language or not. The obtained frequencies and percentages were put in tables. The findings suggested that learners' awareness of mother tongue had a positive effect on their learning of English Language grammar: learners who received awareness in mother tongue were more successful than those who did not.

There was also a quasi-experimental study which compared senior secondary students' mean scores in folklore essay (FE) and usual (traditional) essays (T.E). The F.E. essays, according to Anukam (1995), focused on the students' indigenous culture while the T.E essays focused on a borrowed culture. Put differently, the F.E essays focused on students' cultural background and by implication mother tongue-based, while T.E. focused on students' foreign culture typified by English Language. By the way, language and culture are inseparable, according to Anukam (1995).

Anukam was gingered into this research having seen the Igbo students torn apart in the ongoing war between English language on one hand and Igbo language and culture on the other hand. According to her, many authors "have lucidly portrayed the richness of Igbo folklore, and have convincingly demonstrated why students should learn them in the school" (75). Anukam's study was therefore looking for a technology for improving students' English language and at the same time evoking the cultural awareness. She therefore hypothesized that writing on folklore topics can help students to discover and identify with their culture and will by extension increase their performance in English.

The researcher sampled six schools in Nsukka Urban and subjected their six English teachers to ratings they were not aware of. From these six, four were selected and their schools automatically became the experimental schools for the study. Each teacher was then trained to carry out the teaching and testing of his school, using the researchers' selected topics and marking guides duly validated and tested for reliability. The genres covered were creative, argumentative, narrative and expository, one genre for each school.

The study covered the three classes of the senior secondary. On the whole, 237 students were involved and each student wrote two essays: one traditional (40 marks) and one folktale (40 marks). The major instruments for collecting data were 24 essay topics. The students' mean scores were then computed in percentage. Comparing the students' mean scores in T.E and F.E, it was observed that although the students' mean scores are a bit higher in T.E than in F.E, the students' cumulative mean is higher in F.E than T.E. thus they scored almost equally in F.E as in T.E, although the overall better performance may go to F.E as indicated by the cumulative mean.

The finding implies that students performed equally well in the two categories, pointing out that teachers should design more topics focusing on both indigenous and foreign cultures. Writing on both categories offer the learner a rare technology of full analysis, synthesis and realization of

himself as an individual as well as a culture member. In other words folklore (rooted in culture/mother tongue) is a great asset in the learner's bid to write a well-worded and intelligent essay.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Of a surety, there exists a correlation between students' explicit knowledge of mother tongue and high achievement in English Language, especially from the point of view of the reviews made in the paper, hence, we recommend that:

- Teachers of Igbo should ensure that students have good or explicit knowledge of Igbo to enable them do well in English language. English Language teachers should not hesitate to use Igbo in teaching students whose mother tongue is Igbo in some aspects of English Language they are having difficulty in understanding.
- Schools and parents should not forbid students from speaking Igbo rather they should ensure that they have explicit knowledge of it and use it very well as it will help them do well in English Language. The state ministries of education should make the study of Igbo compulsory in secondary schools.

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## THE TEACHING OF IGBO AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

by

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### ***Abstract***

*Igbo language and culture promoters like Society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture (SPILC) and other educators and lovers of the language are greatly concerned on how best to teach the language in order to reduce the high rate of failures in this subject. The study investigated the problems and prospects of the teaching of Igbo as a second language in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. It adopted the descriptive survey design. The sample consists of 30 students and 40 teachers selected by simple random sampling. The instruments used were observation and interview. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by use of Cronbach Alpha and its index is 0.71. Findings show the following: Teachers use the curriculum meant for Igbo L1 students to teach the Igbo L2 students; Igbo L2 teachers do not use the required textbooks to teach Igbo L2 students; the medium of instruction being used in the urban schools in Port Harcourt is not the mother-tongue but rather English Language.*

### **Introduction**

Government appreciates the importance of language as a means of promoting social interaction, national cohesion, and preservation of cultures (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Thus, every child is mandated to learn the language of immediate environment. Moreover, for the interest of national unity, it is important that every child learns one of the three major Nigerian languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) other than his own mother tongue as second language. Through the process of learning a language, the culture of the host language people is promoted, preserved and transmitted. Hence, any nation that relegates its language to the background has missed tremendously a major vehicle of national development. That is why Anukam (2015) insists that the compulsory use of mother-tongue as a medium of instruction in pre-primary as stipulated in National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) should not be ignored. She is also of the opinion that a child who learns the mother-tongue (L1) before the second language (L2) masters the (L2) faster than the child who started off with the (L2). Hence, a child will be able to learn and understand the things around him better and easier if taught in his mother tongue. That is why the National Policy on Education promulgated by the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria emphasises the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in early formal education

In view of this, the policy applies to four levels of education, viz:

- a) At the pre-primary level, government will ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or language of the immediate environment and to this end produce textbooks in Nigerian languages. How far this has been achieved is yet to be determined.

- b) At the primary level, government will see to it that the medium of instruction in the first three years of primary school is initially the mother tongue and at a later stage, English.
- c) At the secondary school level, mother tongue comes as a basic subject to be chosen in junior secondary and made compulsory in senior secondary, where it is stated that in selecting Nigerian language, students should study the language of their own area in addition to any other one of the three major Nigerian languages: Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba, subject to availability of teachers.
- d) In the case of the adult education, The National Commission for the Development of Adult Education will work out the overall strategy for the inclusion of Nigerian arts, culture and languages in adult education programmes.

### **Problem of the Study**

Teachers encounter so many problems in teaching Igbo as a second language In Rivers State. Some of the problems are identified as follows:

- The use Igbo L1 curriculum to teach L2 Igbo students. There is no standard curriculum for L2 students. Hence teachers make use of the existing L1 curriculum which is not suitable for the students hence leads to slow comprehension of the subject matter.
- Lack of required teaching materials to teach. The instructional materials used for L2 is above their status. This also poses a big problem.
- Metropolitan nature of the State. There are so many local languages in Rivers State .This create difficulty in identifying the language of the immediate community and as such create negative attitude on the part of the parents.
- Teachers do not vary their teaching methods and they pay less attention to methods like guided inquiry, activity, field trip, etc. that are activity-oriented, which facilitate language mastery and better acquisition.

Therefore, this study intends to look into the problem and recommend ways of improving the teaching of Igbo as a second language in Rivers State as well as other states in Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is hinged on the theory of constructivism. Constructivism is a contemporary view of learning, which states that learning is an active process of creating meaning from different experiences.

Agulanna & Nwachukwu (2014) opined that students will learn best by trying to make sense of something on their own with the teacher as a guide to help them along the way. It challenges the assumption that the learner is a mere receiver and processor of knowledge, absorbing information as he or she encounters it.

Eggen et al (2004) is of the view that knowledge is first constructed in a social context and then appropriated by individuals. According to them, learning is an active process where learners should learn to discover principles, concepts and facts for themselves.

Woolfolk (2010) suggests that students should work together, ask and answer questions, engage in group projects/research and teach others in their group.

In this theory, the teacher's role is that of a facilitator; he/she displays different sets of skills, observes the learners as they work together, directs a discussion, and helps learners to understand the content (Brownstein, 2001).

The constructivist approach to teaching and learning is based on the combination of subset of research within cognitive psychology and a subset of research within social psychology. The basic premise is that an individual learner must actively build knowledge and skills (Bruner, 1995) and that information exists within these built constructs rather than in the external environment. However, all supporters of constructivism agree that it is the individual's processing of stimuli from the environment and the resulting cognitive structures that produce adaptive behaviour, rather than the stimuli themselves.

For the teaching and learning of Igbo L2 as stipulated in the National Policy on Education, there should be well-designed, well-structured environment and child-oriented activities that will engage learners with some problem-solving discussions. The use of language aids are required to facilitate language acquisition. The language aids include: audio aids, audio-visual aids, language laboratories, etc. The Igbo L2 learners should interact regularly with the owners of the native language to ensure effective mastery of the language. This implies taking regular trips into the communities in order to learn the language better.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study is guided by the following objectives:

- 1) To determine the problems of teaching Igbo L2 in secondary schools in Rivers State.
- 2) To ascertain the prospects of teaching Igbo L2 in secondary schools in Rivers State.
- 3) To ascertain whether teachers use the curriculum meant for Igbo L1 students to teach Igbo L2 students.
- 4) To ascertain whether Igbo teachers use the required the textbooks.
- 5) To determine the medium of instruction used.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide this study:

- 1) Do teachers use the curriculum meant for Igbo L1 to teach the Igbo L2 students?
- 2) Do Igbo teachers use the required textbooks during teaching?
- 3) Do Igbo teachers use Igbo language as their medium of instruction during Igbo classes?

### **Method**

The study adopted the descriptive survey design.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study comprised of fifteen (15) junior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area in Rivers State, Nigeria. They were selected because not all the schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State, teach Igbo Language as one of their languages.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The subjects for the study were 30 junior secondary school students and 40 teachers from schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The instruments used to collect data involved class observation and oral interview from the 30 junior secondary school students and 40 Igbo Language teachers. The purpose of interview is to gather relevant information concerning events, work results, knowledge, opinion, perspectives, values, attitudes and others in face-to-face contacts. Classroom observation technique was used to validate other data gathering methods like interview.

### **Teachers' Oral Interview**

Oral interviews in addition to classroom observation conducted for teachers.

The following questions were asked:

1. Do students show interest in Igbo Language study?
2. Why are you using the Igbo L1 curriculum to teach Igbo L2 students?

### **Results**

- 1) It was observed that the teachers find it difficult to teach Igbo as second language in Rivers State. Also, most of the students do not like to speak Igbo. This is because students that make up the population of the school come from different geographical areas of the country, making it difficult for a particular Nigerian language to be taught. These urban schools therefore resort to the use of English language as the medium of instruction. Moreover, most parents do not approve its study.
- 2) The teachers said that they only know of the Igbo L1 curriculum and have been using it to interpret what they teach the L2 learners.
- 3) The teachers also said that they do not have textbooks published for L2 Igbo; that they extract what they teach the L2 learners from L1 textbooks.

### **Oral Interview in addition to Classroom Observation Conducted for Students**

The following questions were asked:

- 1) How do Igbo teachers engage you in class work or activities?
- 2) How many times have you gone out on field trip into the communities to interact with the native speakers of Igbo language?
- 3) How and when do your Igbo teachers use instructional materials while teaching?

### **Students' Oral Interview Analysed**

- 1) It was observed that 10 students out of 30 agreed that their Igbo teachers give them class activities during and after their Igbo L2 lessons, while 20 disagreed.
- 2) 23 students said that they have not for once gone out to interact with the native speakers of Igbo language because their parents refuse to pay for their trip. But seven (7) indicated that they have gone once to interact with the native speakers of Igbo language. .
- 3) All the students indicated that their Igbo language teachers use teaching materials to teach them during the lesson.

### **Summary of the Findings**

The researcher's major findings are:

- 1) Teachers use Igbo L1 curriculum to teach the L2 learners instead of L2 curriculum, and they do not vary their teaching methodology to teach L2 as indicated in the National Policy on Education. For example, when teaching the Igbo's cultural life, various methodologies should be employed to enable the L2 students understand better.

- 2) Most students do not like to speak Igbo language because of the metropolitan nature of the school.
- 3) Most parents discourage their children from studying Igbo language by withdrawing both financial and moral support.

### **Discussion**

The parents' negative attitude towards the study of the language posed a big problem to the study of Igbo L2. Students could not go for acculturation program which is geared at interacting with the native speakers of the language. The finding is in line with Tobias and Duffy, T.M. (2009) who opined that people construct meaning through their interpretative interactions and experience in their social environments. Agulanna & Nwachukwu (2014) lending credence to the assertion emphasised that there are many channels one uses to construct understanding. The channels include reading, listening, exploring and experiencing.

The second research finding implied that teachers use the curriculum meant for Igbo L1 students to teach the Igbo L2 students. The finding is in agreement with Ibe (2016) who observed that a good language teacher should plan his/her lesson in such a way that the objectives will be attainable. In planning his lessons, he/she should take into consideration the age, interest, class of the students or learners and making sure that ambiguity is avoided in the lesson preparation. He/she should also vary his teaching methodology.

The research findings also indicated that Igbo L2 teachers do not use the required textbooks to teach Igbo L2 learners. Again, the instructional materials were not use by the teachers during Igbo lessons. According to Ezekoka (2009), instructional materials are the vehicles that carry messages/information from a transmitting source (teacher) to the receiver (learner). The vehicles that carry information interact with the learners through their senses. The more senses are stimulated in the teaching-learning process, the easier it is for the learners to remember what they have learnt.

The research findings also indicated that the medium of instruction used in urban schools in Port Harcourt city is not the mother tongue but English Language. This situation poses a problem for the teaching and learning of Igbo as L2. This is contrary to the view of Anukam (2015) which states that a child who learns the mother tongue (L1) before the second language (L2) masters the L2 faster than the child who started off with the L2. Such a child will be able to learn things around him better if taught in his mother tongue.

Hence, the learning of indigenous language at any level (L1) or (L2) is a welcomed development. This is because it will not only help in the actualisation of one of the injunctions of the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) but will go ahead to cement the unity of the country.

Retrospectively, the implementation of the national policy on education as regards Nigerian languages, which Igbo languages is one of them has great prospect for the nation and the people as a whole by the actualization of the following:

1. The study of Igbo as L2 will help the government to accomplish her educational goals concerning the teaching of Nigerian languages as L2 when students from different geographical areas will begin to interact and relate as a result of studying together.

2. It will help to attract the interest of other students who never wanted to learn Igbo L2, especially when the teachers make use of appropriate teaching aids and teaching methods.
3. Publishers and authors will produce credible L2 textbooks to enhance the teaching and learning of Igbo as a second language.
4. Students in Igbo department will be gainfully employed.
5. The study of the three major Nigerian languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba), other than the mother tongue, will go a long way to cement the unity of the country.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made:

1. Regular training and re-training of Igbo L2 teachers should be organised through seminars, workshops and conferences to update teachers on innovations in the curriculum.
2. Government on its own should employ more qualified Igbo L2 teachers and give scholarships to interested students who are desirous to study the subject to higher levels.
3. Parents should support and finance Igbo language field trips.
4. SPILC and education authorities should organise seminars for teachers and students.
5. Government and stakeholders should provide an enabling learning environment.
6. Teachers of Igbo language need to provide conducive learning environment that will meet the needs of the students and usher them in towards achieving their potentials.
7. Igbo language teachers should use various teaching methods to make their teaching learner-centred or activity-based.
8. Igbo language experts should be encouraged to write books for L2.
9. The society should encourage the use of Nigerian languages in their businesses, meetings, and neighbourhood.

### **Conclusion**

The result of the study revealed that some major factors hampering the teaching of Igbo language as L2 in Rivers State include: negative attitude of parents, lack of uniform medium of instruction, inefficient teaching materials, and inadequate teaching methods. Hence, the teaching of Igbo language as L2 is not an uphill task. It is surmountable if the schools adhere strictly to the directives of the NPE. On the other hand, the government on should make available the required curriculum and instructional materials for effective teaching and learning. The status of indigenous languages such as Igbo should also be elevated to create a higher market value. This will motivate students to study the language and parents will in turn motivate their wards to study Igbo. All hands must be deck curriculum planners, the government, students and parents for the realisation of this noble objective.

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## TERM CREATION, A PREREQUISITE FOR THE SURVIVAL OF NIGERIAN LANGUAGES: THE IGBO LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

By

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### **Abstract**

*Nigerian languages are still in their developmental stages. Development can only be made possible through creation of terms to reflect the realities of our day in any given indigenous language and any given domain. Terminological activities are thus necessary tools in the advancement and development of these languages. We decided to create terms in the area of Economics in the Igbo language. Compiling a list of about 80 terms on the New Economy in the English Language, we tried to look for the Igbo equivalents of these terms. It was not easy to get informants who are native speakers from whom we can get the equivalents of terms in the domain of New Economy hence we decided to create the terms. This paper thus focuses on the creation of Igbo terms in the New Economy and the methodology of creation. It further highlights the importance of terminological development in the Igbo Language as a veritable tool in the development of the language. We will equally discuss the possibility of implantation of the terms created.*

**Key words:** Terminology, New Economy, term creation, implantation

### **1.0. Introduction**

To the best of our knowledge, no terms have been created in the Igbo language in the New Economy. Okeogu (1998: 110) citing Okafor (1995: 5) opines that for any language to develop, it constantly needs to “increase its literary and communicative capacities in the world of realities” through lexical enrichment or otherwise face the risk of dying out. Nigeria is forging ahead to develop technologically and scientifically. For the development to be useful, indigenous languages need to be developed through term creation especially in the scientific and technical domains to reflect the realities in this 21st century.

Our area of study is not common so an explanation of what the New Economy is becomes necessary. The New Economy according to Wikipedia (assessed on line), “is the result of the transition from a manufacturing based economy to a service-based economy”. As a result of the New Economy, a lot of investments were made in the sector of technology. Business leaders claimed that “old laws of economics did not apply anymore and the new laws had replaced the old ones”. This is because of the claim that improvement in computer, hardware and software would dramatically change the future, since information/communication have the most important value in the New Economy.

Korten (2010) (assessed on line), is of the opinion that the old Economy is that of greed when he says “The old Economy of greed and dominion is dying. A new Economy of life and partnership is struggling to be born”. According to him the New Economy recognizes humans as living inhabitants of a living Earth and that they are creative, conscious and living in strong healthy

communities. Families are made up of strong and healthy people that make up the foundation of human happiness and well-being. Economy has no other legitimate purpose than to serve life, all life, including the entire world's people. He then calls for a radical reinvention of our defining economic culture and institutions to create a New Economy that serves all the people all the time.

The New Economy's areas of work range from:

- Business, Innovation & Science
- Planning, Housing & Environment
- Research, Evaluation & Cost Benefit Analysis
- Skills & Employment
- Strategy (<http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/about-us/about-new-economy>)

“The New economy is commonly believed to have started in the late 1990s, as high tech tools, such as the internet, and increasingly powerful computers, began penetrating the consumer and business marketplace”. (<http://www.investopedia.com/terms/n/neweconomy.asp>)

Having talked about the New Economy, we agree with Okeogu (2012: 86) that “each language has the stylistic and lexical capabilities to respond to the communication needs of its speakers.” We believe that the Igbo language is capable of creating terms in the New Economy.

Nigeria's indigenous languages can be enriched through creation of terms. Jibir-Daura (2014) (assessed on line), is of the same opinion when he stated that:

Indigenous languages can be made richer by finding ways of including new science and technology terms in the language. (...). Technological and scientific terms should be translated into the various languages to make teaching and learning easier.

This goes to prove that when terms are created in the indigenous languages, we show that our languages have the means to explain scientific terms.

## **2.0. National Policy on Education**

The first edition of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (NPF) was in 1977, since then other revised editions have appeared: 1981, 1998, 2004, 2007, and 2013. The 2004 edition emphasizes the importance of Nigerian languages as a means of preserving the culture of our people as well as for national unity and development. The new editions appear because it is believed that educational developments have taken place and such developments need to be incorporated, but implementation is always not carried out. This goes to confirm what Ajulo (2000: 222) stated:

A document specifically called “Language Policy for Nigeria” has not emerged. However, given the fact that the country has witnessed an endless wave of launching of National Policies on different aspects of governmental business, there is every reason to surmise that one day a “National Language Policy” is to be formulated and launched. (...) In the final analysis, the “National Language Policy” might emerge as a codification of the existing linguistic practices, usages and conventions adopted in accordance with provisions of those documents.

It goes without saying that Nigeria tries to progressively create language policies to help development in Science and Technology. The said development can only be attained if terms are created in these areas to enable indigenes know the names of objects in their mother tongue and not

only in the English language. This is one of the reasons why we decided to create terms in the area of New Economy.

### 3.0. Methodology

Our methodology of term creation is based on Socioterminology which “is the study of terminology within the real use of language in a specific social context” (Okeogu 2015: 92). Gaudin (2003: 154), defines Socioterminology as a “sociolinguistic conception” of the discipline which is directed towards the study of terms in relationship with the contexts in which they appear. Terms are thus studied in their linguistic, pragmatic, social and historical contexts. Socioterminology “is, in fact, a sociolinguistic approach to terminology that takes into account the analysis of terms (emergence, formation, consolidation and relationships), considering them from a linguistic perspective in a social interaction” (Okeogu 2015: *ibid*).

To collect the necessary information for our study, a documentary research became necessary. We consulted dictionaries and encyclopedias relating to New Economy from where we extracted terms relating to New Economy in the bid to look for their equivalents. We equally searched the Internet. The list compiled, we searched for their meanings in the Dictionaries and Encyclopedias. We were not able to do a field work because the area is not well known in the Igbo language judging from the few attempts we made and could not get any favourable results. We could not also get the equivalents to these terms in Igbo since no known glossary or work exists in Igbo. We then decided to create the terms based on the collection from our documentary research. Since no known glossary of New Economy exists in the Igbo language, we therefore made enquiries from some Igbo linguists. The linguists interviewed include Dr. Bright Nnabuihe of the University of Lagos, Dr. Zebulun Iwuala of National Institute of Nigerian Languages, Dr. Ogbonna Anyanwu of University of Uyo and Dr. Ijeoma Iloene of University of Nigeria.

### 4.0. Criteria for selecting and accepting terms

The criteria on which the selection of terms were based on are semantic, morphologic and syntactic.

#### 4.1. Semantic

For a term to be accepted, it has to indicate a scientific or technical notion or concept belonging to the domain under study. For this to be possible, collaboration with specialists is necessary. Since no known specialist in the domain of New Economy was around, we relied on the linguists for the confirmation of the meanings of the terms created. This criterion also helps to differentiate words from terms. A term is only valuable if it represents concepts in the domain in question Audet (1994: 24) and we adhered to the semantic criteria in our acceptance of terms.

#### 4.2. Morphologic

The form of the term can suggest its meaning: free market = *ahĩa oha n'eze*. The term has to be brief and simple: one price = *otu onụahĩa* but it is not always easy to respect the criterion of a term being brief and simple thus: nethead = *ndi n'aga n'igwe ntaneti*. This term as we see is an explanation.

#### 4.3. Syntactic

We were careful of the rules of syntactic combination for a given word or words to be a term. Following this rule we accepted Big Bang, data mining, feedback, shrinkage etc. as terms.

Our objectives in creating terms is to contribute in the maintenance or support of the National Policy in Education and to contribute in making scientific terms available in the Igbo language. We support Alberts when she gives the objectives of term creation as follows:

[...] implementation and maintenance of national policy and strategies concerning technical languages in order to promote scientific and technical communication in all [...] Language communities [...] to standardize technical and scientific concepts and definitions and to provide equivalents [...] in all the official languages and different domains – from grassroots level up to the highest tertiary level (Alberts, 1998 : 10).

By creating terms in the Igbo language, we identify the language as belonging to a distinct cultural group distinguished from other languages and at the same time, we uphold the Igbo language as one of the indigenous languages in Nigeria.

### 5.0. Criteria for creating terms

While proposing the new terms, we took into cognizance the cultural dimension in terminology as proposed by Diki-Kidiri (2008) and Edema (2008). To Diki-Kidiri, creating terms in African languages should be carried out in such a way that the experiences and knowledge of the terminologist should permit him/her to be able to name any new concept. As a result, Edema sees cultural motivation as being a product of the sum total of individual and collective memory in its continuity. Motivation permits the native speaker of a language to try to give names to objects. The cultural dimension helps in the understanding of technical languages of developing languages. The cultural dimension applied to the Igbo language favours naming things metaphorically and also through composition.

Dubuc (1980) outlined two techniques in term creation: Direct (derivation, affixation, composition) and indirect formation (borrowing, hybridization, semantic extension (metaphorisation)). Each technique must respect the rules of the language. In our work we made use of composition and borrowing which was either wholesome, phonologised or hybridization.

Term-formation varies between languages to some degree because of grammatical differences and preference for certain methods. While compounding or composition seems to be common to all languages, the methods by which words are combined vary. Noun + noun combinations are much less common in the Romance languages than in the Germanic. The French ‘noun + à+ verb’ construction (e.g., *machine à écrire*) has no morphological equivalent in English or German; the formation of nouns by combining a verb with a noun is no longer productive in English (nouns like *scarecrow* and *pickpocket* are no longer constructed) as it is in French and Spanish (e.g., *brise-vent*, *casse-mottes*; *portaaviones*, *rompeolas*, *tocadiscos*); French and Spanish have no adjective-participle construction paralleling the English *slow-running*. In Igbo nouns can be combined with verbs or other parts of speech as will be seen in the next heading.

### 5.1. Lexical Composition

In composition, each term can be composed with two or more words put together to form a term. The composition can belong to the same grammatical class for example:

N+N: *aha + njirimara = aha njirimara* (brand) or to different grammatical class:  
V+N+V+N: *ihazi + iwu + ji + ọnụahịa = ihazi iwu ji ọnụahịa* (deregulation),

N + N+ N: *ochichi + mgbochi + nsogbu = ochichimgbochinsogbu* (adhocracy),  
 N + N: *isiego + ahia = isiegoahia* (capital).

The composition can be hybrid. It can be English + Igbo or Igbo + English that is to say that each language supplies part of the name given to a term either before or after for example : *sistemu ego bekee* = EMS, *njemileniomu* = millennium bug, Chaos theory = *atutu keChaos*, Moore's law = *iwu keMoore*, - data mining = *ichunta data*.

It could be observed that the English words in the hybrids are phonologised or igbonised.

The composition is said to be syntagmatic if the term constitutes more than three or four words joined together: *mgbazinye nchekwa ego n'esighi n'uloaku* (securitization).

## 5.2. Borrowing

All languages borrow Edema (2008: 94). As Stroberski puts it,

[...] the development of a language depends not only on its own inner laws, as in the case with an individual, a family and a nation, but on external influences, contacts, and on adapting foreign words as well (Stroberski 1987 : 94).

The borrowed words undergo changes morphologically, semantically or phonologically. We had some borrowings. Only very few are wholesome borrowing for example WIPO, WTO, Smith Adams, PC. Other borrowings were igbonised:

- electronic = eletroniki
- bandwidth = bandwiti,
- capitalism = kapitalizmu
- Microsoft = Mikrosofutu
- monopoly = monopoli
- narrowcast = narokastu
- Netscape = Netskepu (ke komputa)

## 6.0. Implantation of new terms

The notion of implantation of terms is delicate and it varies from place to place. The terminologist should identify the users of terms proposed and if possible work with them. There is no doubt that the vocabulary of the New Economy is of interest not only to Economists but to all who would want the Igbo language to advance towards development and to be acceptable in the international arena. For the terms to be implanted, resources such as reference materials (lexique, glossary, and dictionary), education materials (manuals etc.), press articles etc. need to be involved. In a country like ours, where communication is limited, to reach a large number of people, the radio and television are necessary tools of implantation (Diki-Kidiri 2007: 2).

Another means of implantation is teaching. In this case the speakers of the language can be trained in schools following the various disciplines and specialty each speaker is studying to enable he or she impart knowledge learned to others (Diki-Kidiri 2008: 129).

### Terms and the Igbo equivalents proposed

English terms	Igbo equivalent proposed	Definition as proposed by the Encyclopedia and Dictionary
adhocracy	ọchịchị mgbochi nsogbu	Management that responds to urgent problems rather than planning to avoid them
bandwidth	Bandwiti	The range of frequency over which a receiver or amplifier should not differ appreciably from its maximum value
Big Bang	mmalite ahịa mba ụwa	Advent of world financial market. (Ref. The major modernization that took place on the London Stock Exchange on October 27 1986, after which the distinction between jobbers and brokers was abolished and operations became fully computerized.
bionomics	atụtu ọganihu ndi ọrụ na ụlọ ọrụ	A theory that establishes a parallel between the behavior of individuals and enterprises and their adaptation to technological progress that is analogue to evolution and considers the economy as an ecosystem.
brand	aha njirimara	A trade name or mark
capital	isiego/okpurukpuego ahia	Material wealth owned by an individual or business enterprise
capitalism	kapitalizmu/ndabere na ego	An economic system based on the private ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, characterized by the freedom of capitalists to operate or manage their property for profit in competitive conditions.
Chaos theory	atụtu keChaos	Theory of prediction applied to economy, that apparently random phenomena having underlying order.
churn	mgbafo ndi ahia	Progressive loss of clients, rate of loss of clients
community (virtual)	ndi ji igwe Ntaneti aru ọrụ	The totality of people using the Internet, or part of the users
complexity theory	atụtu mgbagwojuanya	A theory inspired from ecology but applied to economy that explains complex systems for interrelation to their components.
convergence	nchikota nkanuzu	The combining of different forms of electronic technology, such as data processing and word processing converging into information processing especially the web
coopetition	mmeko ụlọ ọrụ ndi na aso mpi	Collaboration between competing companies (firms).
data mining	ichunta azumahia	Ability to extract and combine disparate facts from various sources in order to get useful information on market and the customers.
decentralisation	nkewasi usoro ọrụ	To reorganize an industry into smaller more autonomous units as a result of an economy based information.
deflation	odida onuahia	A reduction in the level of total spending and economic activity resulting in lower levels of output, employment, investment, trade, profits and prices.
deregulation	ihazi iwu ji onuahia	Removal of regulations or controls form imposed by the State to liberalize the economy.
diseconomies of scale	nwepu otutu azumahia	Disadvantage, such as lower efficiency or higher average costs, resulting from the scale on which an enterprise produces goods or services.
disintermediation	nwepu iheakaebe n' ụlọahia	The elimination of such financial intermediaries as banks and brokers in transactions between principals, often as a result of deregulation and the use of computers.
distributed system	usoro nkesasi ọrụ	Applying the principle of division of labour to economy
e-cash	Iji igwe latrikikwu ụgwọ / okwukwu ụgwọ-e	Electronic payment used for little amount.
EMS	EMS/ sistemu ego bekee	European monetary system whereby in 1993 crisis, despite the effort of the United Kingdom government, it was expelled
Encryption	sistemu koodu maka nchekwa	Information coding system used in commercial electronic for security reasons.

Geography	Jiografī (mmeko ndi mmadu n'ibe ha)	Geography is here included because direct human contact is important and explains places of preference despite possibility of increase in communication
globalisation	ozuruwaonũ	The process enabling financial and investment markets to operate internationally, largely as a result of deregulation and improved communications. (explanation)
information food-chain	chenu ozi	A process through which given information becomes information
information technology	mgbasozi kenkanũ	Technology comprising computers, software and the network that connects them
information theory	atũtumgbasozi	A theory that is based on statistics, concerned with methods of coding, transmitting, storing, retrieving, and decoding information.
innovation	nchõpũta òhũrũ /mgbanwe	New Economy closely depends on its ability to be innovative, hence innovation is included in the list.
intangible assets	iheonwunwe keanahũghĩ anya	Intellectual property, such as a copyright or patent brand, research results, know-how.
intellectual capital	nhakõta amamihe keũlo õrũ	The sum total of the knowledge of an enterprise.
intellectual property	iheonwunwe keamamihe	An intangible asset such as copyright or patent brand.
just in time learning	õzũzũ n'õrũ	Professional training ie in-service training
knowledge management	nchĩkõta amamihe	The technique of managing knowledge. This is inherent to the new economy.
knowledgeable worker	onye õrũ nwere amamihe	A worker who applies his technical know-how to his work (competences)
lock in	mmechibido	Technical constraint that hinders progress. For example; windows 98 (A less reliable software well established to be changed).
free market	ahĩa òha n'eze	An economic system that allows supply and demand to regulate prices, rather than government policy.
mass customization	nhazi ngwa ahĩa ka ndi ahĩa si chõõ	Preparation or adaptation of products according to a customer's individual requirements.
microfinance	nchekwa obere ego	Provision of funds at a lower level./ Little quantity
microprocessor	igwe nhazĩõzi	A single integrated circuit performing unit in a small computer. It is relevant in New Economy where it helps process and stock information
Microsoft	Mikrosõftũ (nke kõmpũta)	Relevant to New Economy in the sense that the PC is the most known technique.
Millennium bug	nje milenĩõmũ	Any software problem arising from the change in date at the start of the 21st Century. This necessitate an expensive intervention on most of the computers to enable them take the year 2000 into account.
mindshare	nhazi ònweta ndi ahĩa	A commercial technique which aims at capturing the attention of potential customers.
monopoly	monõpoli	Exclusive control of the market supply of a product or service by a manufacturer.
Moore's Law	iwu keMoore	The principle by which the power of a microprocessor doubles every 18 months.
narrowcast	narokastũ	To supply (of programmers or advertisers) to a specialized audience on radio or television.
net head	ndi na-aga n'igwe ntaneti	Web communication participants
Netscape	Netskepu kekõmpũta	A new software that permits communication through Web and is inherent to the New economy.
New Economy	akũnaũba õhũũ/ mkpata õhũũ	Economy boosted by the development of new technologies in information and technology.
new media	mgbasaozi õhũũ	Media characterized by their interactivity and based on NTIC

one price	mkpebiñuàhija/ nkwekòrìta onuahija...	An economic principle that wants prize par product for a perfect market.
open system	sistemu gheoghe	A system whereby many actors can participate. The web is an example of open system.
outsourcing	nnyefe oru	To subcontract (work) to another company
PC	PC (kòmputa)	Relates to new economy in the sense that the PC permits its opening
photonics	Fotoniksi	The study and design of devices and systems, such as optical fibers, that depend on the transmission, modulation, or amplification of streams of photons.
privatization	azumahija kennòduru onwe	Transferring (the production of goods or services) from the public sector of an economy into private ownership and operation.
productivity paradox	ahija uru n'adighi	Observing that data processing investment is not rapidly translated in forms of productivity gains.
restructuring	nhazighari	Organizing (a system, business etc.) in a different way.
securitization	mgbazinye nchekwaego n'esighi n'uloaku	The use of such securities as Eurobonds to enable investors to lend directly to borrowers with a minimum of risk but without using banks as intermediaries.
shrinkage	ntalata obaoru	Decrease in size of an enterprise as a result of New Economy.
Smith, Adam	Smith, Adam (Nwoke a bu nna nke azum ahija oha n'eze)	Father and advocate of free trade and private enterprise. He opposed state interference and as such indirectly inspired the New Economy
standard	ukpuru nhazi izugbe	An open norm that can be exploited with the aim of enhancing productivity.
supply chain	usoro mbuga ahija	A channel of distribution beginning with the supplier of materials or components, extending through a manufacturing process to the distributor and retailer, and ultimately to the consumer.
technology	nkanuzu	It applies to today's technology which is defined in relation to communication and no more in relation to production.
time zone	ndiche n'oge	Time difference
tipping point	mgbasa ngwa ahija	The moment when success is inevitable, where a functioning product is spread everywhere.
trading limit	njedebe azumahija	Opening time of the Stock Exchange to function permanently and not to have trading limits.
transparency	nzimozì anaghì enyoenyò	Transparency permits flow of information in the New Economy.
ubiquity	ino ebe obula	The ability to be everywhere at once.
WIPO	WIPO (Otu mba uwa maka amamihe na ihe onwunwe).	World Intellectual Property Organization
work disappearance	ogwugwu oru	A situation where the authors of Encyclopedias predict the end of work due to technological renovations.
WTO	WTO (Otu mba uwa maka azum ahija)	World Trade Organization. The organization is in charge of rules regulating trade between countries.
zero sum	nkwusi ototo aku na uba	The theory through which L. Thurow (1980) predicted the end of economic growth. He recommended that countries should distribute their resources equally.

## 7.0. Conclusion and Recommendation

According to Franquesa (2001:16):

Language and knowledge work together and support each other mutually. Knowledge is constructed and extended and with this, language is constantly kept up to date and is able to indicate new concepts in all domains and all sectors of activity (our translation).

The Igbo language can become internationally valuable and attractive to the world at large when terms are created in areas of interest especially in this era of information technology. We are of the opinion that assessing scientific and technological knowledge in Nigerian languages enables us to be self-reliant thereby contributing meaningfully to national development. This can only be achieved through the usage of Nigerian languages in the creation of terms in various domains.

We believe that this work will contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the domain of New Economy and to terminology of the Igbo language in general. The bilingual lexical terms from this work will facilitate translation of documents in the New Economy into Igbo. We have by explanation given the meaning of the terms in English. We hope that our reflection will arouse terminological interest in this domain since no known work in Igbo can be cited in this area.

We highly recommend that NINLAN should establish a Centre for Translation and Terminological Studies as obtained in some universities abroad, for example *Université Lumière Lyon 11, France*. They can equally link up with the university's Centre there by further advancing the Igbo language to the outside world. The Centre, if operative, will serve as a research Centre for the study of terminology in Nigerian languages.

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## ROAD SIGN TERMS: THE IGBO TERMS AS A PARADIGM

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### **Abstract**

*Whenever and wherever specialized information and knowledge are created, communicated, recorded, processed, stored, transformed or re-used, terminology is involved in one way or another. Terminology is the study of terms and their use. Terms are words and compound words that are used in specific context. Terms serve as a basic for the increment in the number of tools for the identification, extraction, ordering, transfer, storage and maintenance of terminological information and other types of knowledge. It was observed that the Igbo language as one of the Nigerian Indigenous languages does not have indigenous equivalent terms for every concept and symbols probably because some of these new concepts are not of Igbo cultural background. In view of the above statement, terminological creation and documentation is an area that is still yawning for more research works. For this reason, this paper has attempts to create road sign terms in the Igbo language. It also looks at the extent technical terms have gone in the Igbo language.*

### **Introduction**

Nigeria with a minimum of 300 languages has developed at least three officially recognized languages, namely: Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. What then remains to be pursued more vigorously is the appropriate modernization of these languages. (Ukeje 1997:4), elucidating on language modernization, views it as “the development of new vocabularies or terminologies. This state in language development is imperative for the survival of any language”.

Scientific discoveries are taking place every day with the emergence of new scientific and technical concepts in the world’s leading languages such as English and French languages. With African’s relationship with these Western powers, there is the need to be at home with the use of every foreign concept we come in contact with. Foreign concepts refer to those cultures and their means of expression which have found their way into the Nigerian social environment, initially through colonization and imposition of foreign cultures and subsequently through normal international relations of co-operation and trade.

### **Igbo Technical Terms: How far?**

A lot of efforts and researches have been made for the advancement of technical and scientific terms in Igbo language. The society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture (SPILC) constituted an Igbo standardization committee to collate terms in Igbo so that our people may know these terms and feel at home using them. The committee’s effort in developing technical terms in Igbo held water with the publication of *Okasusu Igbo*. Vol. 1-5 of 1990.

As revealed in Emenanjo (1993:149) the National Language Centre (NLC) and NERDC have made substantial contribution towards term development in Igbo through the following projects:

- The Primary Science Terminology Project (NLC 1977-1987)

- The Legislative Terminology project (NLC 1980-1990)
- The Metalanguage Project (NERDC 1981-1990)
- The various Curriculum Projects for primary, JSS, SSTC

These projects have brought in no fewer than 20,000 words into the lexicon of standard Igbo. This has helped to a certain extent, but cannot take appropriate care of the ever increasing demand of equivalent Igbo terms in this new technological and scientific age.

Ezeuko, (1994) shows that out of 63 prose texts, 30 drama texts and about 27 poetry texts written in Igbo language, none is purely on sci-tech. domain. Actually there is no text to portray the Igbo man's cultural view on these occupations and trades such as: Pot making, basket making, Blacksmith, wine tapping to mention but a few. All these trades have specific terms for discussing them. There is no other way terms in these areas could be highlighted except through usage and written literature.

It is necessary to point out, that if the indigenous languages are fully developed, they will be fully utilized in Nigeria's educational policy, technological education and industrialization. It is also the contention of many scholars that Nigeria's economic development will be greatly enhanced if the indigenous languages are fully used in the areas of science and technology. We are more or less saying that using a language helps in sustaining its lifewire and for us to sustain our language "Igbo" we have to re-echo all technical terms of our local crafts and occupation.

At this point, the role of texts to humanity will not cease to be emphasized in providing information and education.

Texts on our local crafts and occupations will stimulate conversation between people, and a rich language environment will be created for language development and for the acquisition of a large vocabulary. These reading materials if developed will enable our young ones to fit better into the society, interact well and function effectively. The appreciation of how words are used in their stories will help them learn to use them in a variety of ways.

### **Theoretical framework**

The theory adopted for this work is Skopos theory of translation. This theory was developed by Reiss and Vermeer in the 1980s. The 'Skopos' has its root from the Greek word 'Aim' or 'Goal'. This theory stipulates that the aim or function of the translation solely decides the translation method to be used. The function the translation is meant to carry out gives the translator the freedom on how to tackle the translation. This theory according to Hatim, (2009) in Ezika, (2015:470) holds that "the way the target text eventually shapes up is determined to a great extent by the 'function' or 'Skopos' intended for it in the target text".

Discussing the term creation, Dubuc (1978) in his approaches to terminology creation, discusses under two major headings:

*The Direct formation of terms:* This entails the entire new creation of lexical units. Techniques/methods under this heading include

- Derivation: Formation of new words by derivation involves the addition of affixes to the root word

- **Composition:** Formation by composition involves the combination of already existing words or elements in the language to form new words. This is achieved by joining two or more words. It is a noun+noun construction

*The Indirect formation of terms:* This involves the morphological transformation of already existing words in a language in order to create new words. Techniques/methods under this heading include:

- **Semantic extension:** This is the act of extending the meaning of words either by logical relationship [ or by analogue of form or function.
- **Change in grammatical category:** Here, a term can simply be created by changing the form class to arrive at a new term.
- **Loaning or borrowing:** These occur when there is no existing and acceptable equivalent term in the target language. When a word is borrowed in Igbo, the rule stipulates that the word should be written with the orthography and sound system of the Igbo language

### **Igbo Road Sign Terms**

#### **Source text**

#### **Target text**

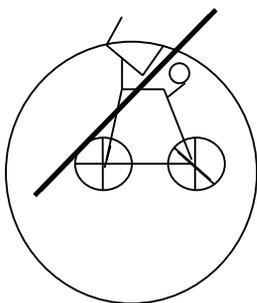
#### **Methodology**



Truck prohibited

A chọghị nnukwu ụgbọala

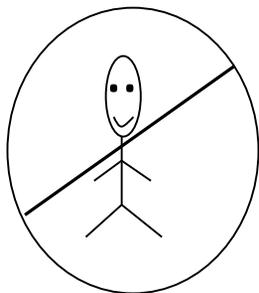
Composition/analogue of form



Cycle prohibited

A chọghị igwe

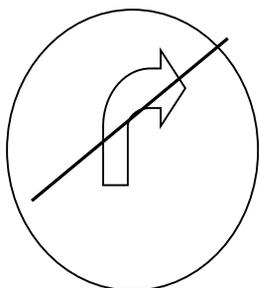
Analogue of form



Pedestrian prohibited

A chogh ndi ukwu

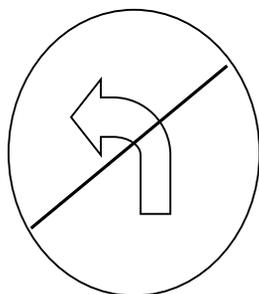
Composition/analogue of form



No Right turn

Atugharila akanri

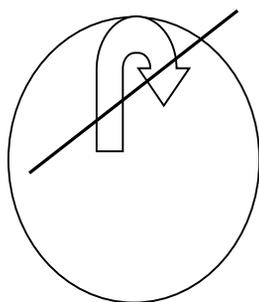
Analogue of form



No left turn

Agala akaekpe

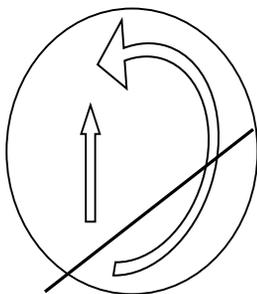
Analogue of form



No U turn

Echigharila azu

Analogue of form



No Overtaking

Agbafela ụgbọala ọzọ

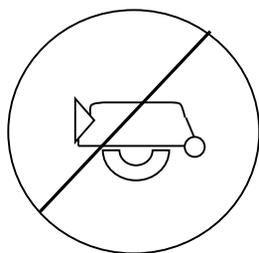
Composition/analogue of form



Speed limit

Agbakarịla KM iri ise

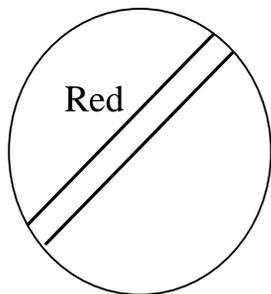
Change in grammatical category



No Honking

Egbula opi

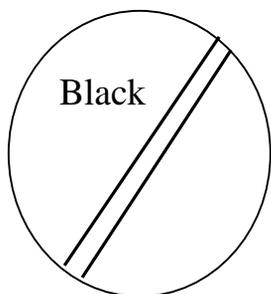
Analogue of form



No parking

Adọwala ụgbọala ebe a

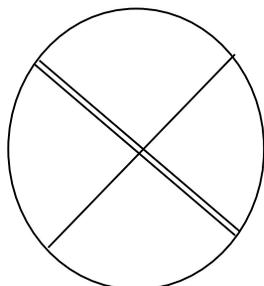
Composition/analogue of form



Restriction ends

Gawazie

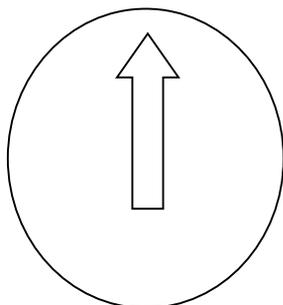
Analogue of form



No stopping

Akwuşıla ebe a

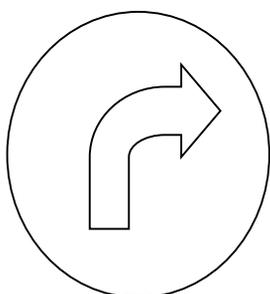
Analogue of form



Compulsory ahead only

Gawa naanị ihu

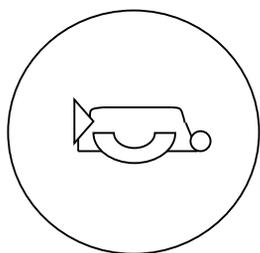
Composition/analogue of form



Compulsory turn left

Gaa akanri

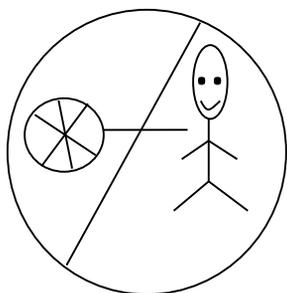
Analogue of form



Compulsory horn

Ị ga-egburiri opi

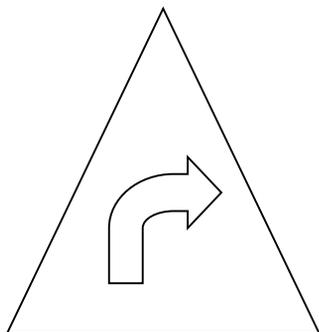
Analogue of form



Hand cart prohibited

A chọghị onye kwa ihe

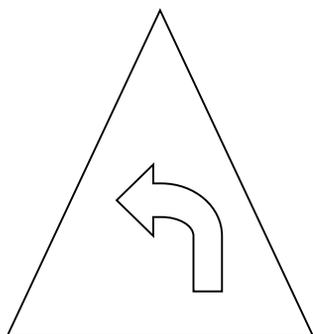
Composition/analogue of form



Right hand curve

Gaa akanri

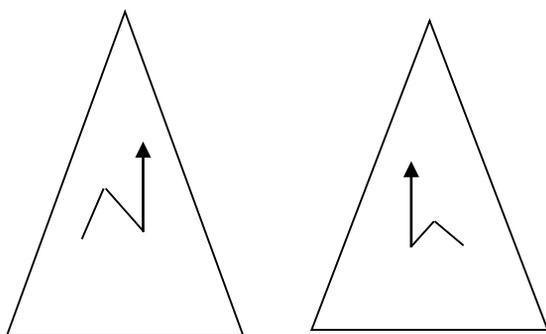
Analogue of form



Left hand curve

Gaa akaakpe

Analogue of form



Right

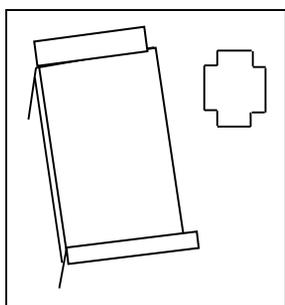
Left

← Reverse bend



Ụzọ gbagoro agbago

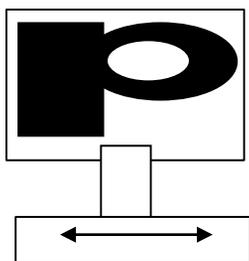
Composition



Hospital

Ụlọ ọgwụ

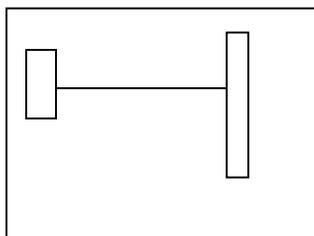
Composition



Park both sides

Dọwa n'akụkụ abụọ

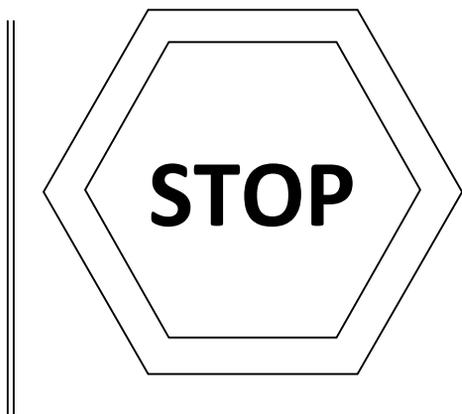
Analogue of form



No Road

Ụzọ agaghị

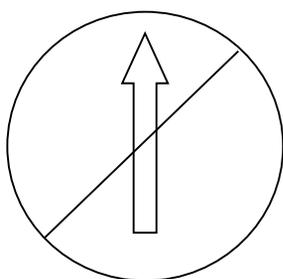
Analogue of form



Stop

Kwụsị

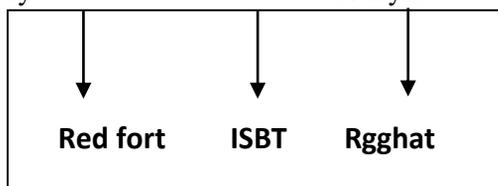
Analogue of formqq



No entry

Abanyela

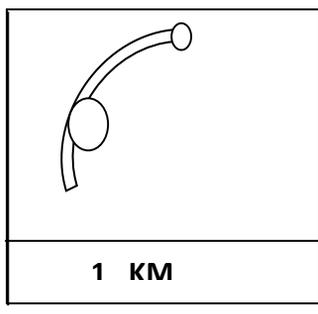
Analogue of form



Advance direction sign

Ngosi ụzọ dị n'ihu

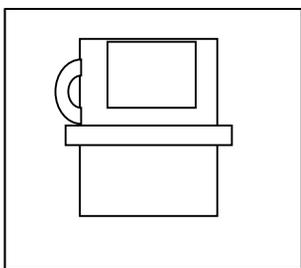
Composition



Public telephone

Ekwentị ọhanaeze

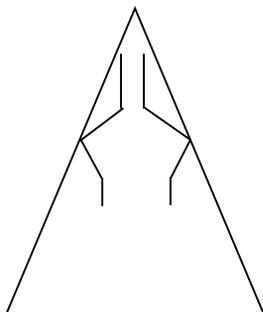
Analogue of form



Petrol pump

Ọdụ mmanụ ụgbọala

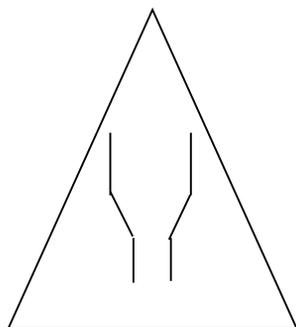
Composition/analogue of form



Narrow road ahead

Warawara ụzọ dị n'ihu

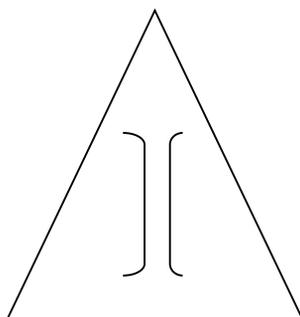
Analogue of form



Road widen ahead

Obosara ụzọ dị n'ihu

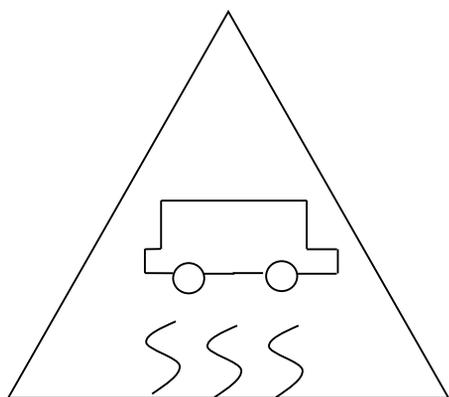
Analogue of form



Narrow bridge

Warawara akwa mmiri

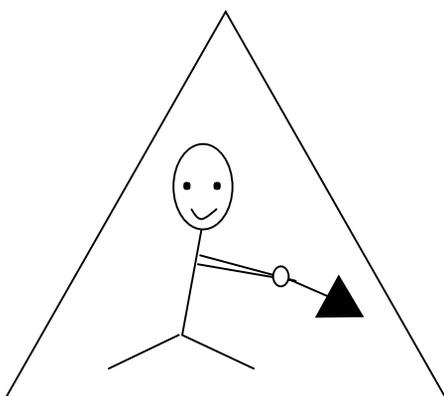
Composition



Slippery road

Ụzọ na-amị amị

Analogue of form



Men at work

A nọ ọrụ

Analogue of form

### Summary and Conclusion

This work has attempted to create about thirty-two Igbo road sign terms borne out of the researcher's understanding of the signs. The terms created are mere suggestions; they are subject to criticism by the appropriate standardization committees. Also investigated is the state of technical terms in the Igbo language. Nwanjoku, (1998:54), says terminology research in Igbo language is still in its infant stage, compared with what is obtains in many other languages, particularly languages of wider diffusion". The dearth of technological terms in Igbo language, impedes technological development and communication based on the language. He further affirms that technological inadequacy of the Igbo language is clearly manifest in the code-switching that has become a permanent feature of Igbo scientific and technical discourse among the educated Igbo.

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## TRANSLATING ACHEBE INTO IGBO LANGUAGE

By

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### Abstract

*During his life time, Chinua Achebe was not read in the Igbo language. His literary creation was limited to the English language. But his first and most popular novel, Things Fall Apart, has been translated into more than fifty languages of the world. Although he desired it, an Igbo translation of his novel did not materialize while he was still on this side of eternity. What reasons could be adduced for this absence? Did the novel resist re-expression in the author's own mother tongue? Or did Achebe's kinsmen fail to see what the rest of the world saw in the novel? This paper is a sample of an experience of an attempt to translate Things Fall Apart into Igbo language.*

### Introduction

Chinua Achebe requires no introduction, not in Africa nor in the rest of the world. His first novel, *Things Fall Apart*, (TFA), published in 1958, is now considered a world classic and a reference material and ...' one of the seminal moments in the history of African literature in English language'. (Gikandi 2009 ) His was not the first novel to be published in the continent; Amos Tutuola, Peter Abraham, Sol Plaatje and Cyprian Ekwensi had all published before him, but "Achebe's novel has become the starting point for many discussions of the African novel" (Gikandi 2009). To date, Achebe's first novel is not only the most known and widest read novel in Africa, it also the most translated work, having been translated into more than fifty world languages.

The theme of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, (TFA) and the later ones span the later period of institutionalized colonization of Africa and the first few decades of political independence and have been of tremendous interest in highlighting major characteristics of African culture. According to Emenyonu (2009), "Because of the important place his works occupy in the teaching of African literature, there is a sense in which Achebe has become the nexus for the history and the criticism of this tradition of letters". To corroborate this assertion, Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, has this to say about *Things Fall Apart* (TFA): the novel

... is a milestone in African Literature. It has come to be seen as the archetypal modern African novel in English and is read in Nigeria and throughout Africa. Of all Achebe's works, it is the one most read, and has generated the most critical response, examination and literary criticism. It is studied widely in Europe, India and North America, where it has spawned numerous second and tertiary analytical works. It has achieved a similar status in India, Australia and Oceania. Achebe's *magnum opus* has sold more than 8 million copies.

Achebe's work is appreciated as an important historical and cultural document. As a creative writer, he artistically represents and preserves the momentous encounters of the continent during and after colonialism. The encounters portray both the political and also the cultural ones.

The success which has greeted the translated versions of TFA has been due to the realism in the portrayal of the characters. I read somewhere that a reader of the work in an Asian language, probably Chinese or Japanese exclaimed: “Okonkwo is my father!” Such is the power of the realism of the work and that of accurate translation.

Thus, readers in lands far away from Achebe’s native land have had the privilege of ‘meeting’ Okonkwo, while the writer’s kith and kin in Igbo land remain ignorant of this character, who, in the German translation of the work, overthrew the original title to become simply, OKONKWO. Curiously, in the Igbo language, there is no translation of this work which has made the rounds of the literary world. One wonders why this is so. Is it that Achebe’s kinsmen have failed to see what the rest of the world has seen in the work? In this regard, one may not pass off this uncomfortable situation as a case of a prophet having no honour in his homeland. The absence of an Igbo translation of TFA may just be as a result of the fact that the culture of translation has not taken root among the Igbo speaking scholars, and especially where it has to do with translating into the indigenous languages.

Credit should be given to Yoruba speaking writers and scholars who have readily labored in writing and in translation of foreign works into the Yoruba language. Examples abound as may be ascertained from Timothy-Asobele’s work( 1987 ). According to this source, works by such authors of the antiquity as Plato, Crito, Plautus, Meronto, Sophocles, Vergil have been translated into the Yoruba language. Even Twentieth Century francophone writers like Sembene Ousmane and Beckett have equally been rendered in that Nigerian language.

Translation activities have been known to enrich the target language by way of new words and expressions that could be introduced into the target language from the source language text. The target language could also be constrained by the translation to coin new words and expressions, neologisms that hitherto were strange to its culture and world view, thus enriching itself.

If interest in working on the Igbo literature and language through translation had been imbibed by Igbo scholars over the years, probably most works by Achebe and by other writers would have had their Igbo versions by now; and with that, translation criticism of such translations would have developed and the readership of such (literary) works would have been encouraged, together with scholars and students, to make various kinds of academic enquiries in the Igbo language, thereby strengthening the language.

### **The language of TFA**

TFA was published in 1958 when the author was 28 years old, and a first degree holder. The high level of the language of the novel, the eloquence and brilliance of it are an eloquent testimony to the high standard of education of the day. Achebe, like others of his generation, was an exemplary product of the colonial education that alienated Africans from their roots and largely took away from them the ability of expressing themselves seriously in their God-given mother tongues. Thus, Achebe and those of his generation were more comfortable expressing their thoughts in the English language rather than in Igbo, Hausa or Yoruba.

This state of affairs has been considered a betrayal in some sense- the fact of Africans writing in English, French or Portuguese- the languages of the colonial masters of the continent. But nothing can be done now to reverse this fact; the works of Africans in these languages are living their lives in those languages. Thanks to them, the African voice has been and is still being heard all over the world. But more than fifty years after the ‘birth’ of TFA, it has no version in Igbo or in many other African languages to our knowledge. That is where the issue of translation comes in.

Achebe so possessed the English language to the point that he could constrain it to become a mold for his Igbo thoughts and idiom. He succeeded in rendering in English the thoughts of his characters in such a way that an Igbo reader feels that only a thin covering of the English language was thrown over the Igbo expressions. This feeling should have been enough to lead some scholar to undertake the re-expression of the novel into the Igbo language. That enterprise would have been laudable and would have enriched the body of literary works in the Igbo language in quality (the quality of the translation, that is) and in number.

### **Body of literature in Igbo**

The first generation of creative writings in Igbo language date back to 1933, with the publication of Pita Nwana’s *OMENUKO* by Longman Green of London, followed by D. N. Achara’s *Ala Bingo* in 1937, by the same publisher and Leopold Bellgam’s *Ije Odumodu Jere* in 1963, equally published by Longman’s. These authors published only one book each, with Pita Nwana being considered as the father of the modern Igbo literature.

After these classic works by these blaze trailers, other artistic productions in Igbo language have not rivaled TFA in reach or renown. The reason is simple; Igbo is a language of limited diffusion (LLD), spoken only in the south –eastern parts of Nigeria, parts of Rivers State and Delta State. But the fact that TFA is in English gave it a world- wide reach which the work would never have known if it was originally composed in Igbo. But now that the artistic production of Achebe has put Africa on the literary map of the world, it should be time now to let Achebe be read in Igbo.

### **Why translate TFA into Igbo**

The success story of Achebe’s book would come full cycle when it is translated into Igbo language. Hitherto, the fame of the work could be likened to the oil bean tree that flings its fruits far afield, away from the tree, for others to gather, while the person at its foot gets nothing. Not less than fifty world languages have seen reason to enrich their literatures with the translation of TFA into those languages, but sadly, up until now, the Igbo culture to which Achebe belonged and Igbo language which is his mother tongue cannot boast of their version of TFA.

The reason could not be that the Igbo language is not able to vehicle the ideas espoused in the novel. It certainly can. An Igbo version of TFA would increase the volume of literary works in the language with a title that has made a name all over the world. Igbo students and scholars alike would have a standard text to study and criticize. Such a version in the language of Ndi Igbo will encourage other scholars to undertake translations of other works into the language, thereby creating jobs and wealth both for the translators and their publishers. And of course, as has been the case in the West, secondary and tertiary works will emanate from the translation. When a translation into the Igbo language is taken seriously, it will impact on the perception of the Igbo person vis- a- vis his language. Taking pride in the language would probably come all by itself and

because the language would be further used in discussing serious things other than just the daily news on electronic media; the print media may find reason to produce newspapers in the language, taxing it to account for specialized terminology in various domains of knowledge.

### **Obstacles to an Igbo version of TFA**

A number of admirers of Achebe would have eagerly produced versions of TFA in Igbo. In fact, some manuscripts of the work in Igbo may even now be lying in drawers, awaiting publication. These manuscripts may stay long in waiting on account of a wish expressed by the author that any translation of the novel in question must first be preceded by a version in his native Ogidi dialect of the Igbo language. Since I heard this said at a conference some years ago, I had often reflected on what could have informed this embargo.

One thing that is clear, then, is that Achebe desired that TFA should be read in Igbo. So, if he could have appointed a translator of Ogidi extraction to do that job, he probably would have done so. But literary translators are usually not constrained to translate any work if they do not have any affinity with the work or with its author. Could it be assumed that not even in his home town did people appreciate the author and his classic work? Or could it be that no one has been enthusiastic enough to carry out the author's wish? Or is it that the Igbo language cannot carry such serious thoughts as expressed in TFA? These questions had been coming to my mind until I came across an interview that Achebe gave to a foreign newspaper who may have questioned him concerning the absence of a version of his most successful novel in his own mother tongue.

The interview was with the Paris Review in 1994 as recorded by Wikipedia, and Achebe opined that standard Igbo was created by combining various dialects, creating a stilted written form. In his words:

...The novel form seems to go with the English language. There is a problem with the Igbo language. It suffers from a very serious inheritance which it received from the Anglican mission. They sent out a missionary by the name of Dennis. Archdeacon Dennis. He was a scholar. He had this notion that the Igbo language which had very many different dialects should somehow manufacture a uniform dialect that would be used in writing to avoid all these different dialects. Because the missionaries were powerful ...This became law. But the standard version cannot sing. There is nothing you can do to make it sing. It is heavy. It is wooden. It doesn't go anywhere.

Such was Achebe's assessment of the Igbo language in 1994 when he granted the interview from which the above quotation was taken. His attitude to the language had not changed by 1999 when he delivered a lecture to a pan-Igbo audience; according to Emenyonu (2009), Achebe called for a total abolition of the standard in which Igbo literature had been created since 1973. Condemning the way and manner of the derivation of the form, he called that writers should write freely in their local dialects until a time when a completely acceptable standard was evolved and agreed upon by all Igbo speakers. Still according to Emenyonu, 'this intra-ethnic feuding' would throw production in Igbo literature into a prolonged blackout which it might not survive.

### **Gains from translating**

Among other things to be gained in translating TFA into Igbo, would include:

- A sense of fulfillment for Ndi Igbo that at last TFA has a version in Igbo language;
- increasing the volume of literature in Igbo with a classic work;
- enrichment of the language with neologisms;
- a possible increase in volume of readership in the language;
- provision of a good material for critical analyses and questioning in the language;
- provision of job for the translator(s)...

### **Reading TFA in Igbo**

Very recently, I read from the net that as far back as 2006, a certain Nigerian writer and award-winning journalist of Igbo extraction, Isaac Umunna .., sought and obtained permission from Chinua Achebe himself to translate TFA into Igbo. A tentative date was set for the commencement of the work in July 2006 and completion date was set for fifteen months from then. (<http://www.vanguardngr.com/articles/2002/features/arts/at623042006.html>). It would be pleasant news if the project was successful. But while waiting to read Umunna's translation, I present here a sample of part of my translation of the opening page of TFA, first in Standard Igbo and then in a dialect close to Achebe's Ogidi dialect. Which of the dialects 'sings' better? Which is more 'wooden'?

### **A personal experience**

I had read TFA a number of times and at each recent rereading, since I got interested in translation, I found pleasure rendering the thoughts and certain expressions mentally in Igbo. But to my utter surprise, it was a different situation when I sat up to do the actual translation. Where was the simplicity that I thought I saw in the mental enterprise? I spent long hours poring over just the first page. How does one deal with expressions such as 'solid personal achievements'? Is there not a single word in the Igbo language for the word "honour"? Do the words 'wrestling' and 'fight' refer to the same reality? A stickler for fidelity in translation, 'ne rien mettre, ne rien omettre', as the French recommendation to translators has it, do not add or omit anything, I found myself struggling with certain words whose equivalents in the Igbo language could not remotely come to mind. What possibly could be the adequate rendition for "a spirit of the wild", "sa wily craftsman", for example? Then how would the language express the words "nerves", "a severe look", "to walk on springs", "to pounce" in Igbo; what could that be the correct Igbo expression for... ? I really started to doubt my knowledge of my own mother tongue now that specific thoughts were to be expressed.'

I found that there was a struggle between theory and practice of translation. The admonition to translate meaning and not words has its limitations; at some points, the translator must re-express the text at the level of words so as to convey the details of the meaning of the original text. At other points, the translator interprets to translate. All told, the work has been tedious but worth it, being largely done for largely personal patriotic reasons. I would gladly compare my production with that of Umunna when I see his in print. At least, at last, the jinx of not having an Igbo language version of *Things Fall Apart* would have been broken.

Original text, page 3

Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond. His fame rested on solid personal achievements. As a young man of eighteen he had brought honour to his village by

throwing Amalinze the Cat. Amalinze was the great wrestler who for seven years was unbeaten, from Umofia to Mbaino. He was called the Cat because his back would never touch the earth. It was this man that Okonkwo threw in a fight the old man agreed was one of the fiercest since the founder of their clan engaged a spirit of the wild in for seven days and seven nights .

The drums beat and the flutes sang and the spectators held their breath. Amalinze was a wily craftsman, but Okonkwo was as slippery as a fish in water. Every nerve and every muscle stood out on their arms, on their backs and on their thighs, and one almost heard them stretching to breaking point. In the end, Okonkwo threw the Cat.

That was many years ago, twenty years or more, and during this time, Okonkwo's fame had grown like bush fire in the harmattan. He was tall and huge and his bushy eyebrows and wide nose gave him a very severe look. He breathed heavily, and it was said that, when he slept, his wives and children in their out- houses could hear him breathe. When he walked, his heels hardly touched the ground and he seemed to walk on springs, as if he was going to pounce on somebody. And he did pounce on people quite often. He had a slight stammer and whenever he was angry and could not get his words out quickly enough, he would use his fists. He had no patience with unsuccessful men. He had no patience with his father.

Unoka, for that was his father's name, had died ten years ago. In his day he was lazy and improvident and was quite incapable of thinking about tomorrow. If any money came his way, and it seldom did, he immediately bought gourds of palm-wine, called round his neighbours and made merry. He always said that whenever he saw a dead man's mouth he saw the folly of not eating what one had in one's lifetime. Unoka was, of course, a debtor, and he owed every neighbor some money, from a few coweries to quite substantial amounts.

### **Standard Igbo**

Okonkwo bụ nnọ onye a ma ama gburugburu obodo itolu ndị ahụ na kwa n'obodo ndị ọzọ di ha gburugburu. Ude ya dabeere n'ihe ndị di ọkpurukpu ọ rụputara n'onwe ya. Mgbe ọ bụ okorobia gbara afọ iri na asatọ, o wetaara obodo ya ugwu na nsọpuru mgbe o turu Amalinze, onye a na-akpo Nwamba, na mgba. Amalinze bụ okamgba onye nke, ogologo afọ asaa, o dihi onye turu ya n'ala na mgba site n'Umufia rue Mbaino. A na- akpo ya Nwamba n'hi azu ya emekatahi rue ala. Ọ bụ nwoke a ka Okonkwo turu na mgba nke ndi okenye kwekoritara na ọ bụ otu n'ime mgba sikachasiri ike site n'oge onye hiwere obodo ha ya na mmuo gbasiri mgba ogologo ubochi asaa na abali asaa.

A nọ na-akụ nkwa, na-egbukwa oja; ndi bjara ilere anya ejide ume ha. Amalinze di oke akọ, ma Okonkwo na-amiamị dika azu nọ na mmiri. Akwara nile di ha n'aka, ma nke di ha n'azu, nakwa nke di ha n'apata ukwu gbaputachara; ọ dika ana-anu ebe ha gbaticgara na-achọ idobi. N'ikpeazu Okonkwo turu Amalinze.

Nke a mere otutu afọ gara aga, ihe dika afọ iri-abuo maobu kari. N'oge a, ude Okonkwo dere ma gbasakwaa dika oku n'oge uguru. O toro eto ma gbaakwa agba; iku anya ya rujuru eruju na imi ya sara mbara mere ya ka ọ dika onye ihu-atọ-ochi. Iku ume ya na-ada uda; a na-ekwu na mgbe ọ na-arahu ura, na ndi nwunye ya na umu ya na-anu uda iku ume ya site n'ulo ha. Ọ na- aga ije, ikiri ukwu na afodu ka ha hara imetu n'ala, ya adi ka ọ na-aga ije n'elu igwe a kuko- akuko, dika ọ

na-aga imakwasị mmadu n'ahụ. O na-amakwasikwanu mmadu otutu mgbe. O na-agba nwobere nsu, ma mgbe o buła iwe were ya ma o nweghi ike ikwuputa okwu ngwangwa, o na-esu mmadu okpo. O naghị enwere ndi na- anaghị eme nk'oma ntachi obi o buła. O nwereghị nna ya ntachi obi.

Unoka, nke a bu aha nna ya, nwuru afo iri gara aga. Mgbe o no ndu, o bu onye umengwu nke na-anaghị eche echiche maka echi. O buru na ego o buła abata ya n'aka, nke na-anaghị eme mgbe nile, ngwangwa o na-aga zuo ite mmanya ole m'ole, kpokolata ndi agbataobi ya, bido inwe anuri. O nasị na mgbe o buła ya huru onu onye nwuru anwu, na ya na-ahu nzuzu di na mmadu erighi ihe o nwere mgbe o di ndu. Unoka bu nnoo onye na-eji ugwo. O ji ndi agbataobi ya nile ugwo, site n'ego ujari nta rue na nke di ezigbo ukwu. (My translation)

## OGIDI DIALECT

Okonkwo bu onye ama ofuma n'aka iteghite di n'obodiye ma na mba ndi ozo. Udiye bu maka oke mbọ ya na mmeli n'ime ndu ya. Nwokolobia a, mgbe o di arọ ili n'isato wetaalu obodiye ugwu na nsopulu site n'imeli Amalinze a na etu Nnanwuledede na mgba. Amalinze a bu onye a ma a ma na mgba; nsokwu nsokwu arọ isaa o nwenuro onye melii ya na mgba. A na etu Amalinze a Nnanwuledede maka na azu ya adeelu ani ma ncha. O Okonkwo a bu onye tuu ya naani na mgba fa gbaa melu ndi okenye ji wee kweta na fa afunuro idi mgbaa eri nna obodo fa na mmuo malu aka mbosi isaa na abani isaa.

Ekwe na oja wee n'ada. Ndi mmadu wee jide ume fa aka, Amalinze bu onye aghigho ma Okonkwo na-ani ka azu no n'ime mmili. Akwala fa kwusi oto n'aka fa, ma na azu na apata ukwu fa, nke bu na mmadu na-anu mgbatị akwala fa ka fa na- agbaji agbaji. N'ikpeazu Okonkwo wee tua Amalinze Nnanwuledede n'aani.

Ife a mee ututu arọ gala aga, ife dika ogu arọ ili na uma. Ma n'ime ubosi ndia ude Okonkwo agbasago ka oku bianwulu n'ofia n'oge ugulu. Okonkwo daa dimkpa, topu etopu; iku anyia dika oshia na imie dika imi ozo mee ya o na-atu egwu ine anya. O na-alaru ula, ume o na-eku na ada uda nke na ndi inyom ya na umu fa na-anu ya na mkpuka fa. O na-eje ije, ikili ukwu ya adaa emetusi ani ofuma, dika o na-amani enu enu, na-eme ka na-eje iti mmadu ife. O na-tikwo mmadu ife otutu oge. O na-asu nwobebe nsu. Iwe wee nya, o bulu na o wero ike ikwu ife o choo ikwu osiso, o tie mmadu ife. O deenwelu ndi nadaa agba mbọ na ndi nadaa aga n'iru ndidi. O nwerolu nniya ndidi ma ncha.

Unoka bu nniya nwuu n'aro ili gal'aaga. Unoka bu onye umengwu na-adaaakpata ife olii, o daa echedu echiche maka echi. Ego bataraniya n'aka, nke nadaabu oge nina, o welu ya golu ite mmanya ozugbo, kpokoo ndi agbatobiye, fa enwebe anuli. O na-asikalị na mgb'obuna o fuu onu onye nwuanwu, na o na-afu nzuzu di na mmadu eliro ife onwee mgbe o di ndu. Unoka bu ojii ugwo. O ji ndi agbataobiye nine ugwo ego ayolu, site n'obebe ego lue nnukwu ego, o nweru nke o na-akwukwu. (An Ogidi speaker's translation)

## Conclusion

In this paper, we tried to make enquiry into the reason for the continued absence of an Igbo translation of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Whatever other reasons that there may be outside Achebe's earlier insistence on any Igbo translation to be made, first and foremost, in his native Ogidi dialect of the language, this world classic which has been translated into more than fifty

world languages can very well be translated into Igbo. It is gratifying to note that there is hope for the appearance of an Igbo version of *Things Fall Apart* more than fifty years after the publication of the English original, the author himself having granted permission to one individual to undertake the translation, while acknowledging that other attempts to do the same were ongoing.

We presented a sample of our own experience of an attempt at the translation of Achebe's TFA into Standard Igbo and in the Ogidi dialect. Which dialect 'sings'? Which dialect is 'wooden'? TFA in an Igbo dialect that is wooden and cannot sing is better than a zero absence of the Igbo version when the roll call of the translations of the work is done. Since no one translation is definitive product, especially with regards to works of fiction, the prospect of retranslations keeps open the possibility of an adequate and universally acceptable translation in a day to come.

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## THE ROLE OF TRANSLATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*If the wealth of nations were to be measured in terms of the number of indigenous languages, Nigeria would be ranked as one of the richest in the world. Given this scenario and in view of the fact that both the government and the people pay lip service to the development and use of this rich cultural heritage, we have undertaken, in this study, to examine the role translation could play in enhancing the development of indigenous languages in Nigeria. We reviewed existing literature so as to place the two key concepts – translation and indigenous languages in their proper perspectives. It was discovered that translation could play much role not only in enriching and popularizing indigenous languages but also in making such languages more attractive. We therefore suggested that the potentials of translation should be harnessed for this purpose so as to reverse the dwindling fortunes of indigenous languages in Nigeria.*

**Key words:** *Translation, Indigenous language, Language development, Cultural heritage.*

### **Introduction**

Translation is a professional activity that makes it possible for a text written in one language to be read in another. This has made this human activity a rich source of knowledge for man. Through the instrumentality of translation, valuable ideas that would have remained hidden in foreign languages have been made available to different peoples of the world in their different languages. This invaluable contribution has led to unprecedented development in the economic, political, social, cultural, religious and educational fronts in many countries especially the developed ones. The developed countries of the world have since realized the potentials of translation in fast-tracking developments in different areas of human endeavour. Both the Soviet Union and United States of America made extensive use of translation in prosecuting the cold war that raged between them from 1945 to the late 1980s as vital documents from both sides were translated to gain clarity and fine tune strategies (Craciunescu Olivia, 2002:1). The fact that these two countries are ahead of others in all aspects of development could be traceable to their ability to know where to go at any given time for the answers to their questions.

Nigeria, however, is one country that is yet to realize the immense benefits derivable from translation (Anyabuike, 2015:2). This explains why she has not thought of harnessing the potentials of translation in resolving her numerous economic, political, religious, cultural and social challenges. We do feel, however, that Nigeria can maximize the potentials of translation in reversing the dwindling fortunes of her indigenous languages.

Nigeria has numerous indigenous languages, yet none has been elevated to the status of a national language. The most worrisome is that most of these local languages may soon go into extinction due to lack of native speakers. The Nigerian government seems not to know why and how these indigenous languages should be preserved for posterity. The parents who prefer English to their local languages are not keen on getting their children to speak these languages while most of the children would do anything to evade learning their mother tongues in schools. This is the unfortunate lot of indigenous languages in Nigeria today.

Given this scenario, we have undertaken, in this work, to examine the role of translation in the development of indigenous languages. We will examine the two concepts – translation and indigenous languages so as to place them in their proper perspectives. We will also examine the specific roles translation could play in the development of indigenous languages. There will be analysis of findings as well as recommendations and conclusion.

**The Concept of Translation:** The Chambers 21<sup>st</sup> Century Dictionary (Revised Edition) defines translation as “a word, speech, written text that has been put into one language from another”. The above definition highlights the product of the professional activity called translation. The act of translating involves a process that requires skill, training and experience (Morry Sofer, 2004:15). Many, especially the uninitiated only see translation as the passage from one language to another; however, most experts in this field of human endeavour also view the act of translating as the passage from one culture to another (Mounin, 1963:236, Sumner-Paulin, 1995:548, Cordonnier, 2002:1, Wuilmart, 1990:239). Valero-Garcés (2005:2) also shared the same view when he highlighted the mediatory role of translation as follows:

In some settings and under certain conditions translations participate more actively in the communication process, producing oral or written texts in which forms and words are manipulated to extend further understanding across cultures.

The aspect of the translation process highlighted in the above quotation is particularly important for this work. This is because we are examining the role of translation in the development of indigenous languages. Language is not only a cultural element but also an indispensable vehicle for the transmission of culture. Consequently, the knowledge that the translator could play a mediatory role across cultures is very reassuring as this portrays him as one that could positively influence language development since language, itself, is embedded in culture. The translator is not only conversant with the structure of his two working languages but he is fully aware of the two cultures from which the two languages evolved. This surely will facilitate any linguistic operation he may wish to carry out in both languages as the need arises. The exercise of his functions may necessitate his creating new terms in the target language. He consciously takes every step without injuring the sensibilities of the target culture.

From the foregoing, it becomes very clear that the translator is a skilled professional who has full mastery of his two working languages and who facilitates communication across linguistic and cultural lines. Having clarified the concept of translation, we shall now x-ray the meaning of indigenous language.

### **What is Indigenous Language?**

There is abundant literature on the meaning of indigenous language. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia defines it as follows:

An indigenous language or autochthonous language is a language that is native to a region and spoken by indigenous people, often reduced to the status of a minority language. This language would be from a linguistically distinct community that has been settled in the area for many generations.

Thesaurus Wikipedia also defines it as “a language that originated in a specified place and not brought to that place from elsewhere” Meta, a Wikimedia indigenous language project also made this contribution

An indigenous language” is a language that is native, or aboriginal to a region and spoken by indigenous people, but has been reduced to the status of a minority language. In some instances, this may include an island of speakers removed from their language communities by trauma and diaspora. Synonyms are “small languages”, “endangered languages: and “autochthonous languages”

The above definitions highlight the main features of an indigenous language. The first is that it is usually localized to a given place or region. The second is that the language must have survived many generations of speakers in the community in question. This perhaps explains why one’s native language serves as his first identity for as soon as one opens his mouth to utter such a language, he inadvertently reveals his place of origin to those who are familiar with the terrain. The twist added by Wikimedia should also be noted, that is, that if all or some members of a community relocate to a new settlement for any reason whatsoever, they usually move with that language that is indigenous to them. Though, they may constitute an “island of speakers” in their new environment, the language they use still remains their native language.

Another definition of indigenous language that is quite revealing especially as it affects Nigeria is the one given by Jibir-Daura (2014:11). According to him:

Indigenous languages are the tribal, native or local languages spoken. The language would be from a linguistically distinct community that has been settled in the area for many generations... There are about 400 indigenous languages spoken in Nigeria, and only few of these languages have written forms.

The above definition agrees with the previous ones in terms of identifiable features of an indigenous language, but differs from them by highlighting the unique attributes of indigenous languages in Nigeria. According to him, there are about four hundred indigenous languages in Nigeria and many of these languages do not have written forms. His first observation is debatable for there are some experts who opine that Nigeria has well over four hundred indigenous languages (Aziza, 2011:1, Ezeafulukwe, 2015:1). The second observation which has to do with most of these languages not having written forms raises a developmental issue for indigenous languages in Nigeria. Nigeria, no doubt, is a pluri-linguistic society. It, however, behoves on Nigerian linguists with necessary assistance from government to identify these indigenous languages without written forms. Serious efforts should be made to get them documented as soon as possible to save them from going into extinction for such languages usually disappear with the exit of their current speakers.

To end this segment of the work, it might be pertinent to stress that every indigenous language is a rich cultural heritage that should be preserved for posterity. This is why the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues highlighted that:

Saving indigenous languages is a matter of great urgency and is crucial to ensuring the protection of the cultural identity and dignity of indigenous peoples and safeguarding their traditional heritage. As a result of linguistic erosion, much of the encyclopedia of traditional indigenous knowledge that is usually passed down orally from generation to generation is in danger of being lost forever. This loss is irreplaceable and irreparable.

Having examined the essence as well as the significance of indigenous languages, people should appreciate why steps should be taken to ensure the survival and development of such languages. It is in the light of the above that we will now examine the role of translation in the development of indigenous languages.

### **Translation and the Development of Indigenous Languages**

Translation could facilitate the development of indigenous languages in several ways. Perhaps the most crucial contribution translation can make in the development of indigenous languages is in the area of enriching such languages through term creation. This idea was shared by Jibir-Daura (2014:14) who argued that:

Indigenous languages can be made richer by finding ways of including new science and technology terms in the languages. This will disabuse the minds of those who believe that it is only English that has means to explain such concepts.

This same author goes further to add that; “technological and scientific terms should be translated into the various languages to make teaching and learning easier”. Jibir-Daura was not the only person to recognize the ability of the translator to create terms as a means of enriching languages. The same idea was expressed by Bernacka (2012:1) when she said that:

I will stress the translator’s creative role, which often involves creating a new vocabulary in order to successfully convey the message of the source text. In doing this the interaction between the disciplines of translation studies and development education will become more apparent.

From the foregoing, it becomes obvious that translation can contribute to the development of languages especially indigenous languages - that are often lacking in these new terms – through the creation of new terminologies for the purpose of enriching the languages in question.

Indigenous languages are valuable because they convey the cultures of the different peoples of the world. Aspects of these cultures could be popularized through translation. The languages themselves also benefit from this popularization. This view is shared by Bernacka (2012:2) when she said that:

Officially African languages were supposed to be treated equally, but in practice nothing much was being done to popularize lesser known African languages. Currently, however, scholars such as Antje Krog, Rosalind C. Morris and Humphrey Tonkin are undertaking an initiative to promote the translation of

African languages – such as Zulu or Xhosa in order to spread a better knowledge of these cultures.

The above quotation highlights the role of translation in popularizing indigenous languages and cultures. Some Nigerian languages have benefited from this as our analysis will show later in this work. Through this way, the cultural values of languages going into extinction could be preserved. It is also known that translation can contribute in making indigenous languages more attractive. Similar view was expressed by Seth Kaplan (2013:2) when he opined that:

Investing in translating and circulating important foreign books will increase the attractiveness of local languages and allow a large number of people to access knowledge. The Arab world, for instance, needs to invest far greater resources in Arabic translations of science, technology and literature translation.

Though it would seem as if the Arab world was being addressed in the above quotation, it should not be forgotten that what is good for the goose is also good for the gander. Nigeria that would soon lose most of her indigenous languages because the young ones are finding them unattractive is in dire need of the above piece of advice more than the Arab world. Translating the popular literary and science books into the Nigerian indigenous languages is one sure way of making these languages very attractive to both the adult and young Nigerians who hold the wrong notion that materials in these disciplines can only be accessed in foreign languages.

Having seen the various ways translation facilitates the development of indigenous languages, we will proceed by analyzing each of these points very critically in the next segment of this work.

**Discussion on Findings:** This study has revealed that there are three major ways translation could contribute to the development of indigenous languages. These three ways include the enriching of the vocabulary of indigenous languages through the creation of new terminologies, popularization of indigenous languages as well as making such languages more attractive.

Translation has indeed contributed to the development of indigenous languages through the creation of new terms in the languages involved. The general feeling is that Nigerian indigenous languages do not have adequate vocabulary for the expression of all the concepts in all the areas of human endeavour. This is very true especially with the recent developments in science and technology which necessitated the use of novel concepts that are completely alien to the indigenous languages. Translations are known to have created new terms to fill such gaps observed in their target languages. This, no doubt, leads to the enrichment of the vocabulary of the language in question. Igbo language which is an indigenous language spoken in the south eastern part of Nigeria has benefited immensely from this as shown in the table below.

<b>English Language</b>	<b>Igbo Language</b>
Technology	nkanụzụ
Bomb	Ogbu n'igwe, bọmbụ
Computer	kọmputa
Atomic bomb	Ngwagha ogwuru mba
Aeroplane	Ugbo elu
Ship	Ugbo mmiri
Handset	ekwe ntị

Library  
Spectacles  
Missile

Oba akwukwo  
enyo anya  
Ogbu n'igwe n'efe efe

Translation also plays a great role in popularizing indigenous languages. The Igbo language has also benefited from this. The translation of Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart" into French has led to the popularization of Igbo language and culture in the francophone world. After reading the French version of the text, the reader could say so much about the Igbo culture. Such a reader could give almost all Igbo names, explain the mode of worship of the people, describe their mode of dressing and even the kinds of food they eat. He should also be able to describe the judicial system of the traditional Igbo society as well as the forms of occupation prevalent in the society. A careful reader could even discern the temperament of the average Igbo man. The above shows that almost all the aspects of the people's lives were captured in the story.

It should be noted that "Things Fall Apart" is one Nigerian novel that has been translated into well over fifty languages of the world. This means that all the pieces of information about Igbo people that have been made available to the French speaking public are also accessible to all the other fifty linguistic communities of the world. There can be no better way of popularizing some elements of culture than this.

It is also important to state here that cultural elements of any language that is going into extinction could be preserved through this method. Once the relevant aspects of the culture are captured through translation, they live in the target language for posterity.

It was also highlighted that translation could contribute to the development of indigenous languages by making such languages very attractive. When vital pieces of information are expressed in indigenous languages, lovers of knowledge would certainly seek out such information in the language in which they are expressed. The missionaries were quite aware of this, hence they made the content of the Bible available to people in their local languages. This perhaps explains why the Bible is the most widely read book in the world.

In view of the fact that young Nigerians do not find the study of their indigenous languages very appealing, translators and linguists should explore this opportunity as a way of making such languages very attractive to them. Very important foreign books that are not easily come by could be translated into the local languages so as to make these languages attractive to those who, ordinarily, would not have shown some interest. To make this work, the point has to be made that no one book can serve the purpose of all the indigenous languages in Nigeria. A team to carry out this assignment in each linguistic group should do a survey to ascertain what material will be appropriate for their own environment. The distinctive nature of the different peoples in Nigeria makes it absolutely unlikely that any one text or group of texts could serve the purpose of people in the North, the west, the East and the Southern part of the country. That is why serious efforts should be made to look for texts that would serve the diverse interests of the different peoples of these zones. From all that has been said, it becomes very clear that translation could contribute immensely towards the development of indigenous languages in Nigeria.

**Recommendations:** Having highlighted the positive role translation plays towards enhancing the development of indigenous languages, we wish to make the following recommendations.

- 1) Government at all levels should demonstrate genuine interest in and support every effort necessary to enhance the development of Nigerian indigenous languages.
- 2) Serious efforts should be made to ensure the proper documentation of the more than four hundred and fifty indigenous languages in Nigeria.
- 3) Success in this endeavour means that the Federal Government should give financial support while the six regional levels should implement actions needed to actualize the dream.
- 4) Each geographical zone should constitute a committee to identify all the distinct linguistic communities in its area of jurisdiction. This way, all the four hundred or more indigenous languages could be identified.
- 5) Another team made up of linguists and translators should also be constituted to verify which of these languages are properly documented and which ones are not.
- 6) The same team of experts should take necessary steps to ensure the proper documentation of those that are yet to be documented.
- 7) The translators should assess the strength and weaknesses of each of these indigenous languages so as to take appropriate steps to facilitate the development of each of them.
- 8) There should be adequate motivation for all those involved in this exercise so as to achieve maximum result.
- 9) Everyone involved in this project should realize that the development of all the indigenous languages is in the best interest of Nigeria and its people. It will reduce tension and bring about harmony in the polity.
- 10) At intervals, the various zonal teams could meet at the national level to assess the progress made and brainstorm on new strategies to achieve better results.
- 11) Where any of the indigenous languages could not be saved for one reason or the other, the translators should take appropriate measures to ensure that the relevant elements of the culture are preserved.
- 12) Given the popularity of information and communication technology, computer scientists could be engaged to design beautiful programmes in the indigenous languages for the attention of people especially the young ones that are always fascinated by these ICT programmes.

**Conclusion:** In this work, we examined the role of translation in the development of Nigerian indigenous languages. It was observed that Nigeria has well over four hundred and fifty indigenous languages, some of which are not properly documented while most Nigerian youths lack the motivation to learn the local languages. The work revealed that translation could have tremendous influence in the development of indigenous languages. Translation could contribute to the enrichment of the vocabulary of such languages. Translation could also help in making local languages popular as well as in making them more attractive to the young Nigerian learners. It was, therefore, suggested that the potentials of translation could be harnessed for the effective development of Nigerian indigenous languages.

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## TRANSLATION, A PANACEA TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION WITH REFERENCE TO INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

By

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### **Abstract**

*The Nigerian National Policy on Education Stipulates that the Mother-tongue (MT) and / or Language of Immediate Community (LIC) should be the language of initial literacy at the pre-primary, junior primary levels, and non formal education. This objective has not been implemented over the years. Bearing in mind the importance of mother-tongue in the development and understanding of a child, this situation could negatively influence our children educational performances in schools. The thrust of this research is to study the role of translation in the implementation of this noble policy. This work also tries to proffer solutions that will help in the implementation of the National Policy of Education.*

**Key words:** National policy on Education, Translation, Indigenous languages.

### **Introduction**

In Nigeria, as well as most West African nations, formal education is traceable to the advent of European missionaries who saw education as an important tool for the spreading of the gospel. To this effect, they established and ran schools with a curriculum drawn to suit their aims and objective. The following subjects were taught: English composition, English grammar, arithmetic, geography, reading and writing. Infact, education was interwoven with Christianity. The Methodist Church of England, the CMS and the Catholic Church were all involved in the early establishment of schools. Each of them ran schools based on their own personal curriculum hence there education lacked uniformity.

Today, education in Nigeria is a huge venture that has witnessed the intervention and active participation of the government. Hence, the contradictions, ambiguities and lack of uniformity in educational practices that were prevalent in the early stage of formal education have been corrected by the presence of government.

However, the British system of education inherited after the Nigerian independence was no longer able to satisfy the national aspiration of the nation. Hence in 1969, a national curriculum conference was organized. The inherited curriculum was reviewed and new national goals for education were identified. As a nation with higher educational aspiration, in 1973, another seminar comprising of distinguished experts in education and related domains chaired by Chief S.O. Adegbo, former Permanent Representative of Nigeria at the United Nations was summoned by the government. The outcome and recommendations from this seminar constituted a major part of the 1977 National policy on Education (N.P.E). This document cuts across all domains and levels of education: pre-

primary, primary, secondary and tertiary. Since the publication of the 1977 edition, four other editions have been published.

This paper tries to evaluate and proffer solutions to the effective implementation of the NPE that has to do with indigenous languages.

### 1.0 Research questions

- a. What are the factors militating against the implementation of indigenous language policy
- b. This lack of implementation, is it traceable to faulty planning or faulty implementation
- c. What is the way forward?

### 2.0 Indigenous languages and the National Policy on Education

It is pertinent to have a clear understanding of the concept “policy” for a better appreciation of our corpus. The Business dictionary defines policy as *the basic principles by which a government is guided or the declared objectives that a government or party seeks to achieve and preserve in the interest of the nation*. Terry (1977) goes further to posit that *it is an overall guide that gives the general limits and direction in which administrative actions will take place*. It can be said that a policy is the lamp that lightens and direct the actions of a nation. In the view of Hoy and Miskel (1978:125), *policies are not only formulated but are also programmed, communicated, monitored and evaluated*. Hoy and Miskel are trying to make us realize that it is not enough to promulgate a policy. It should be monitored and evaluated after a period of time. Hence there are different policies for different domains.

#### 2.1 Educational policy

Educational policies are initiatives mostly by the government that determine the direction of educational system Okoroma (2000:190). As it concerns education and indigenous languages, the NPE 1977 section 2 number 3 ... states that the objectives of the government is to:

- a. *ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother-tongue or the language of the immediate community; and to this end will*
- b. *develop the orthography for many more Nigerian languages and*
- c. *produce textbooks in Nigerian languages.*

In section 3 number 4 of the same document, it goes further to explain that, *the government will see to it that the medium of instruction in the primary school is initially the mother-tongue or the language of the immediate community and, at a later stage, English*

The sixth edition of the NPE 2013: section 1 number 8g has this to say *...every child shall be taught in the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community for the first four years of basic education. In addition, it is expected that every child shall learn one Nigerian language.*

Section 2 number 16j of the same document states that *...ensure that the medium of communication will be principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community; and to this end will:*

- a. *develop the orthography of more Nigerian languages*
- b. *and produce textbooks, supplementary reader and other instructional materials in Nigerian languages.*

A closer look at these two statements shows that both documents are saying the same thing but in the 2013 edition, there is an addition which the government is not ready to enforce. Hence the statement is loose without power and authority of implementation.

*In addition, it is **expected** that every child shall learn one Nigerian language.*

What is expected of someone may not be what he does. He cannot be reprimanded for not doing it because from the statement he has the choice to do or not to do what is expected of him. It is just a wish. The above statement lacks the power of *monitoring and evaluating advocated* by Hoy and Miskel (1978:125). In the course of this study, the researcher tried to evaluate the implementation status of the NPE in Aba metropolis. Eighteen schools were randomly selected from both private and state schools. Most of the schools have primary and secondary. Data for this work was collected via oral interview from both staff and students of the selected schools.

## Data

Table 1

Selected schools	No students in SS3	indigenous language students SS3	Percentage
1	40	5	12.5%
2	88	10	11.4%
3	40	5	12.5%
4	60	12	20%
5	100	17	17%
6	95	13	13%
7	45	6	13%
8	25	0	0%
9	35	5	14%
10	39	0	0%

Total number of students = 567

Total number of students offering Igbo = 73 Total percentage 13%

Table 2

Question – Which language (s) is your medium of instruction?

schools	Teachers response
1	English
2	English of course. We need our pupils to be fluent in English practice makes perfect
3	English and a little of the language of immediate community
4	English .vernacular is not spoken in the school except during Igbo studies
5	English and Igbo are used concurrently
6	English. We consider other tribes in our school.
7	English
8	Personally, I can't speak fluently the local language. I think most of us have the same problem

## 2.2 Our findings

From the above tables, we can deduce the following:

- a. In schools where they offer indigenous languages, majority of the students drop indigenous by the end of SS1. They manage to offer it in SS1 because every subject is compulsory at that level. They quickly thereafter.
- b. 13% of the students in SSCE offer indigenous languages in their WAEC/ GCE examination where it is expected that every child must offer a Nigerian languages.
- c. In some schools, Nigerian languages are not offered even at the junior WAEC level. In most schools indigenous languages are prohibited. Children are made to pay fine for speaking local languages in the school.
- d. In their pre-nursery and early primary schools, English is the medium of instruction.
- e. In one of the primary schools, Ogbor-hill Primary School II, a teacher stated that one cannot teach in the language of the immediate community with instructional materials such as books written in English. According to her, there should be a correlation between what the pupils are hearing and what they are reading. Hence for it to be implemented, books written in the mother tongue should be made available.
- f. Another teacher informed the researcher that even if they want to explain the topics in the mother tongue there are many concepts and terms in the primary science and other related subject which they are not familiar with in the mother tongue.

Based on the above result, the national policy on education as it concerns indigenous languages is not adhered to basically due to the following.

- Poor societal value for indigenous languages
- Lack of qualified teachers
- Lack of adequate instructional materials
- Lack of terminology in the indigenous languages.

This is in agreement to an earlier research by Okoroma (2003) cited in Okoroma (2006:251) who identified the following as the constraints that impede effective implementation of the NPE.

- inadequate qualified teachers
- insufficiency of funds
- inadequate teaching and learning facilities
- poor motivation of teachers, and
- lack of guidance and counseling services.

We must not fail to bring to our notice that this situation is principally not the fault of the planning but the poor adherence to what was planned. Hence, the production of qualified teachers which was why the National Institute of Nigerian Languages was instituted is been suffocated by politics. The development the orthography for many more Nigerian languages and production of textbooks in Nigerian languages advocated in the policy saw the light of the day and died immediately after birth.

## 3.0 The way forward

There is no problem without a solution hence, the researcher is of the opinion that translation can be of help in the effective implementation of the NPE. We are advocating the translation of the existing texts because most of the science teachers who could have written the needed instructional materials in the local languages are not familiar with the local languages in speech and in writing.

### 3.1 The concept of translation

The term translation has been defined differently by many translators and linguists, each of them supporting their point of view and the school of thought they belong. To the interpretative theorists of translation, translation has to be interpreted and the message therein is what should be translated (Lederer 1994:17) hence translation is not transcoding. In this process, a text has to be deverbaised; the deverbaisation will lead to comprehension. It is at this stage that the text is translated to achieve a positive and acceptable result. To the linguistic theorist, translation is a process of substitution (Catford 1965:95) that is why he sees translation as the replacement of textual materials in one language by equivalent textual materials into another language. On the other hand, the propagators of the semiotic theory are of the opinion that whatever is said in one language could be said in another. It is important to note that all these processes are involved in the act of translation. No one theory is able to cater for all the processes needed. There are other theories which we did not mention here. For the purpose of this work we define translation as *“the transposition as faithful as possible the message of a written text from one language to another.”* Transposition here does not imply one of the translation strategy propagated by Vinay and Darbelnet (1967:48-50). It involves an indebt study of the text which handles all the above mentioned processes of translation. It will take into consideration the culture of the language involved, the nature of the text, the style of the author, the domain of the text, the pragmatics information in the text and everything that surrounds the text. The purpose of the work is to make available the needed teaching material in Nigerian languages through the process of translation. Our main target is the preprimary and the first three years in the primary school which the NPE stipulates that their medium of instruction should be the mother tongue and/or the language of the immediate community.

As a case study we have chosen to translate a text for Basic Science two pupils titled Evans Modular Primary Science and Technology written by A.T Hassam, D.A. Maxwell and A.S. Falaiye

### 3.2 Lesson 7 Air Flotation

<p>Air floatation Air flotation is the process whereby some objects move about in the air before dropping on the ground. In this chapter, we shall learn about things that float in the air, and how to make things float in the air.</p> <p>We have learnt in book 1 that air has weight and occupy space When an object is thrown into the air, it displaces some volume of air from the space it was occupying. The volume of air displaced has weight.</p> <p>When the weight of the air displaced is equal to the weight of the object, the object floats in the air. Also, If the weight of the air displaced is greater than the weight of the object, the object does not only float but continues rising in the air. If however, the weight of the air displaced is less than that of the object, the object does not float: It drops to the ground immediately.</p>	<p>Nrùghàrí íhé n'ìkùkùr Nrùghàrí íhé n'ìkùkùr bụ úsoro íhé jì èjéghàrí n'ìkùkùr òtáakírí ogè túpú ọ dàá n'àlà. Nà àgbà nkà, ànyí gà- àmú gbàsàrá íhé ndí nà - érugàrí n'ìkùkùr, n' àkwà òtù èsì èmé kà há rùghàríá n'ìkùkùr. N' àkwùkwọ nké m bụ ànyí màtàrà nà n'ìkùkùr nwèrè árú na- éwèkwa ọnọdu. Á tùlìé íhé n'élú é were ógó ìkùkùr íhé áhu nà - ènúpù nà ọnọdu yá. Ìkùkùr áhu é núpùrú nwèrè áru. Mgbe árú ìkùkùr é núpùrú n' ọnọdu. yá dì nhàtàhà yà nà áru íhé áhu á tùlìrì élu, íhé áhu á tùlìrì élu gà ná-érughàrí n'ìkùkùr. Ọzọ, ọ buru nà áru ìkùkùr é núpùrú kàrìrì áru íhé áhu á tùlìrì. Ọgbúghì nàáni nà íhé áhu gà nà- érugàrí n'ìkùkùr ọ gàkwà ná àbágo élu élu ìkùkùr. Ọzọkwa ọ buru nà áru ìkùkùr é núpùrú dì ntà má á átùyéré yá nà íhé áhu á tùlìrì élu. íhé áhu á tùlìrì élu ágàghí érugàrí n'ìkùkùr ọ gà ádà òzùbgo òzùbgo.</p>
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NB. Some of the diacritics in the Igbo version are not included because they can't be found in the conventional keyboard. (Igbo scholars take note).

### 3.3 Commentary on the translation

- a. **Air floatation.** A word for word translation (literal translation) of the title of the topic will send a wrong message to the readers of the target text. To arrive at the intention of the writer or the message, the method of explanation was employed. From the text it is not the air that is floating but the object thrown into the air. Hence for air floatation, we have “*Ńrughàrí íhé n'ìkùkù*”. another option would have been “*Íhé irughàrí n'ìkùkù*”
- b. The terms “**space**” “displace” was a little difficult to find. But a qualified translator is capable of creating a new term in a situation where he could not excavate the needed term in the target language. For these terms we had the following options:  
 Space - *ohere* , *onodu* *Ohere* could mean space as in *nyetu m ohere* (give me space) which is somehow figurative.  
*Ohere* : Time as in *e weghi m ohere* ( I don't have time)  
*onudu* : position as in *onudu m dirim* (let my position be for me)  
*onudu*: condition- *onudu adigi mma* ( my condition is not good)  
 We preferred to choose *onudu* because it is closer in meaning to the message. This is so because something that has a position is also occupying a space
- c. **Displace:** In this context, the term displace implies the removal of an object from its position with a push. The Igbo term “*nwepu*” will not produce the same effect as in the target language. It will mean taken an object and putting it in another position. The effect of push will not be felt. This will result to a great loss in meaning. Hence the word “*inupu*” was chosen. Many other translation procedures were employed to arrive at an acceptable translation

### 4.0 General analysis

A closer look at the translated text shows that

- a. A text is provided in the mother tongue within a short space of time
- b. Terms that were not familiar to the pupils have been provided
- c. The reading of such text in the indigenous language will awake the nostalgia for our mother tongue.
- d. By reading texts in the indigenous languages, our children will unconsciously and effortlessly learn to speak, read and write in the indigenous languages.

### Conclusion

Based on the above stipulated observation from our corpus, it is not an over statement to say that the availability of reference or instructional materials via translation attracts multiple benefits. In the book of proverbs 22:6 the Bible says “Train up a child in the way he/she should go and when he/she is old they will not depart from it” if these advantages are harnessed and inculcated into the life of our children, we will not be facing the near extinction of most of our indigenous languages which stares at us. It is important to note that all hands must be on deck. Translators, linguists, lexicographers, technicians, professionals from all woks of life should all come together and speak with one voice to salvage our mother tongue.

The government should inaugurate committees which are made up of the above mentioned class of people. The committee should be financed and mandated to translate some of the already existing books for onward usage for teaching and learning. The National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) which stands as the melting pot of Nigerian languages should arise and take such responsibilities also because they have qualified translators that could handle this problem and move the indigenous languages forwards. People who studied indigenous languages in their bachelor degree should be encourage to study translation at the PdG and Master's level. This will make available enough hands to handle this problem. It is also important to note that good bilingual and monolingual dictionaries are very necessary. The government should also look into that direction if they really want to implement what is stipulated in the NPE.

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## DEVELOPING NIGERIAN LANGUAGES THROUGH TRANSLATION OF SPECIALIZED TERMS

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### **Abstract**

*Translation, a complex but essential human process, is the transfer of message from one language to another. Without translation, people will be confined to their own enclave and will not have access to information and discoveries from other nations. In this era of globalization, there is need to reach out to other people. English language is developed, while Igbo language is in the process of development. There is a wide gap between the two, both linguistically and culturally. In the area of specialized terms, the English language has terms for all concepts. The Igbo language is constrained in this aspect. This work tries to translate into Igbo some specialized terms with a view to promoting, enriching and developing the Igbo language.*

**Key Words:** Translation, specialized terms, language and culture

### **Introduction**

Languages are in constant state of evolution. The rate of change has plummeted due to globalization in every sphere of life: economy, political, science and technology. etc. To cue in to this wave of change, there is need for evolution of terms in specialized areas in Igbo language. Technical translation has a huge market; hence, technical terms are required to meet its demands. Language is closely tied to economic power, and any country that controls the economy, controls the world. Igbo language should not be left out in this era of communication explosion. We have earlier noted that the English language is well developed, while the Igbo language is lagging behind. Most times, we resort to borrowing when there are no equivalent terms in Igbo to match the foreign concept. Loaning is one of the translation techniques. We should go beyond that and develop our language. If other languages have specialized terms, Igbo language can. Bellos (2011) is of the opinion that, "... anything which can be expressed in one language can also be expressed in another". Anyaehie (1995) stressing the importance of specialized terms in Nigerian indigenous languages states that, the issue of translating scientific concepts in Nigerian languages is one that should be viewed with grave concern by every Nigerian language speaker who is constantly constrained to switch from his first language in order to express certain basic concepts of science and technology.

Specialized terms in Igbo will enhance communication and information flow especially through the media.

### **State of Igbo Specialized Terms**

Efforts have been made by some researchers in the area of specialized terminology. These include: Ezeuko (1997); Nwanjoku (1997); Ijioma (2011); Uhuegbu and Ijioma (2010); Ijioma and Ezafulukwe (2015b), Ijioma (2016) and Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC (1991) etc.

### Source of Data Collection

The specialized terms used in this work were collected from the book, *Nigeria and the World Trade Organization* by Eze, Osita C. (2004). It is a unique book in the sense that it is multidisciplinary in nature. The different domains include: commerce, economy, health, politics, and different aspects of law that govern international trade. etc.

### Differences between English and Igbo Languages

The English and Igbo languages belong to two different families and as such are not close together. The translator should take cognizance of the structural and lexical differences between the two languages as this could constitute a bottle neck during the translation process. Baker (1992) is of the same opinion that, *the structural and lexical differences between languages could be one of the major problems in translation*". Pratima (2012) on his part posits that,

there are structural, surface differences between languages that result in the lack of one to one correspondence between them at different levels. Phenomena like inflections, affixes, word order differences, and disparity in number, tense, gender, etc. result in significant problems of translation.

English and Igbo languages have many structural differences, but we shall discuss only the differences that are relevant to our work.

### Tone Language

Igbo is a tone language. This implies that in the language, the pitch of the voice can make a difference to the meaning of an element, word, phrase or sentence when the vowels and consonants are all the same. Here are a few examples, *okè-boundry; òke-a rat; òkè-share* (Onukawa, 2011). Tones are important structures of Igbo language. Dots are equally important because they bring out the differences in words which are otherwise alike. Such examples include: *izu-to steal; ìzù-to buy; ísí-head; ísì-smell; ìsì-blindness; ùkwù-leg; ukwu-waist etc.* (Ijioma, 2016).

### Generic Language

English and Igbo languages belong to two different families and as such, do not share much in common. While English has terms for all concepts, Igbo, on the other hand, because of its generic nature is very limited. Most times, one term is used to translate many related concepts. For example, *law*, is translated with one term, *iwu* irrespective of the type. On the generic nature of Igbo language, Uhuegbu and Ijioma (2010) observe that, *“the Igbo linguistic community makes no distinction between the different forms of legislation as found in the English language”*. We know that different languages encode meaning in different forms.

### Sentential and Descriptive

Igbo is a sentential language. According to Ijioma and Ezeafulukwe (2015b), *Igbo language, most often, uses longish, paraphrasing, excessive dilution and description to express foreign concepts*". This is due to the low level development of technical and specialized terms. Also, in a bid to avoid borrowing and the use of generic terms, the translator resorts to description and explanation.

### Repetition

Igbo language in certain instances, resort to repetition of words. Here are some examples.

Ọsọ ọsọ	quickly
Mmiri mmiri	watery
Édó édó	yellowish

Uhie uhie	reddish
ọbara ọbara	reddish
ndụ ndụ	greenish
nwaayọ nwaayọ	slowly

### Translation Technique

There are various procedures of translation depending on the text typology. Vinay and Darbelnet (1977) proposed technical procedures which include: literal translation, calque and loaning and the indirect method: transposition, modulation, adaptation and equivalence; non-technical: amplification, stuffing, lexical economy, explication, dilution, shedding and concentration. We will present the techniques encountered in our work.

### Equivalence

Equivalence does not mean identical. It is the procedure by which the translator uses completely different wordings to express the same situation in the receptor language. Anything which can be expressed in one language can also be expressed in another. This is because translation is the enemy of ineffable. Bellos (op.cit). This is often common with proverbs and idioms. For example:

English	Igbo
Hypocrite	onye ihu abụọ
To beat someone black and blue	ịkụ mmadụ isi abaa okpu

### Explanation/Explication

Some languages lack specific terms for a concept. This gives rise to the use of explanation to express the concept. This is very common with the developing languages. We have already noted that explanation is one of the characteristics of the Igbo language where a concept is explained through its function, association or analogy.

### Lexical economy/concentration

This involves the use of a single word to express a concept originally expressed in many words. This is not common in Igbo language, but in our work we encountered some. This buttresses the fact that languages evolve. The lexical economy will be discussed in details in our commentary.

### Loan

No language exists in isolation. Languages come in contact. This results in loaning or borrowing. Every language is guilty of loaning. Bellos (op. cit) posits that, "... *borrowing between cultures in contact with each other is a fundamental fact of intercultural communication- and that is the very field of translation*". Here are some examples cited from Ijioma and Ezeafulukwe (2015a).

English	Igbo
Wire	waya
Hour	awa
French	Nigerian Languages
Beaucoup	bọkwu
Espagne	pagna etc

### Calque

Calque is a form of loaning where the constituent elements are translated word for word: *white lie* is translated as *asị ọcha*.

## Terms and Igbo Translation

The table below shows the English specialized terms translated into Igbo.

S/N	ENGLISH	IGBO	TECHNIQUE
1.	Agricultural goods	Ihe ubi	Equivalence
2.	Aims and objectives	mbunuche	Equivalence/lexical economy
3.	Annual budget	Ihazi mkpata na mmefu nke afọ	Explanation
4.	Arbitration	Usoro ime udo	Explanation
5.	Border trade	ahịa a na-azu na oke obodo	Explanation
6.	Capital economy	Ọnọdụ akụ na ụba obodo di n'aka ndi ji ego	Explanation
7.	Cash crops	Ihe okukụ eji akpata ego/ihe mmeputa a na ere ere	Explanation
8.	Cash flow	Ego na-abata na-apu	Explanation
9.	Contracting parties	Ndi otu iwu jikokotara	Explanation
10.	Code of conduct	Iwu akparamagwa	Explanation
11.	Copyright	ikike imeputa ihe	Explanation
12.	Copyright law	Iwu ikike imeputa ihe	Explanation
13.	Copyright piracy	Ohi ikike nke mmeputa ihe	Explanation
14.	Currency policy	Iwu ihazi ego	Equivalence
15.	Custom duties	Utu taksị kọtom	Loan
16.	Custom union	Otu kọtom	Loan
17.	Developed countries	Obodo mepere emepe	Equivalence
18.	Developing countries	Obodo na-emepe emepe	Equivalence
19.	Disease carrying organisms	Nje na-ebu orja	Description
20.	Disease causing organisms	Nje na akpalite orja	Description
21.	Dispute settlement	Ime udo	Equivalence
22.	Dispute settlement body	Ngalaba na-ahụ maka ime udo	Explanation
23.	Dispute settlement procedure	Usoro ime udo	Equivalence
24.	Division of labour	Biri ka m biri	Equivalence (Idiom)
25.	Domestic currency	Ego obodo	Equivalence
26.	Domestic goods	Ngwa ahịa obodo	Explanation
27.	Domestic law	Iwu obodo	Equivalence
28.	Domestic products	Ngwa ahịa obodo	Explanation
29.	Economy	akụ na- ụba obodo	Explanation
30.	Economic conditionalities	Usoro obodo ji agbazi ego na ulọ akụ/oba ego mba ụwa	Explanation
31.	Economic growth	Ikwalita akụ n'ụba	Explanation
32.	Economic power	Ikike akụ n'ụba	Equivalence
33.	Economic reform	Ihazigharị akụ n'ụba	Explanation
34.	Enabling clause	Iwu ikike nnabata	Explanation
35.	Environmental degradation	mmetọ gburugburu ebe obibi	Explanation
36.	Export competition	ịsọ mpi mbupu ngwa ahịa	Explanation
37.	Export restrictions	igbochi mbupu ngwa ahịa	Explanation
38.	Export duties	Utu ibupu ngwa ahịa	Explanation
39.	Financial policies	Usoro ikpata na mmefu ego	Explanation
40.	Foreign exchange	Mgbawe ego mba ozọ	Explanation
41.	Foreign exchange market	ahịa mgbawe ego mba ozọ	Explanation

42.	Free trade areas	Ogba izu ahị diiri ọha	Explanation
43.	Free trade agreements	Iwu jigidere ahia ọha na eze	Explanation
44.	Geographical indications	Njirimara okè obodo	Explanation
45.	Global economy	Usoro ego mba ụwa	Explanation
46.	Global economic policies	atumatu usoro ego mba ụwa	Explanation
47.	Global family	Otu ụwa	Equivalence
48.	Ground rules	Iwu ntu anị	Equivalence
49.	Human rights	I nwe ikike onwe	Explanation
50.	Human rights abuses	mmeto i nwe ikike onwe	Explanation
51.	Human rights law	Iwu na- echekwa i nwe ikike onwe	Explanation
52.	Importers	Ndi na-atubata ngwa ahia	Explanation
53.	Import duties	Utu itubata ngwa ahia	Explanation
54.	Industrialized countries	Obodo na-emeputa ngwa ahia	Explanation
55.	Industrial savings	Ego nriita ngwa ahia	Explanation
56.	Infant industries	ndostiri ohuru	Calque
57.	International law	Iwu jikoro uwa/iwu ozurumba	Explanation
58.	International relations	mmekorita mba na mba	Explanation
59.	International trade	ahia mekotara mba ụwa	Explanation
60.	Just and equitable	ikwado ndamiwu	Equivalence
61.	Labour standards	Iwu na-echekwa oru	Explanation
62.	Legal document	akwukwo iwu	Calque
63.	Manufacturing companies	Ulo oru na-emeputa ihe	Explanation
64.	Market access	Iwe onu okwu n'ahia	Explanation
65.	Market forces	Ikike na-akwado ahia	Explanation
66.	Monetary treason	mpu megidere ego obodo	Explanation
67.	Multilateral trade	Ahia jikotara otutu obodo	Explanation
68.	Multilateral trade agreements	Iwu ahia jikotara otutu obodo	Explanation
69.	National boundaries	Okere jikotara obodo na obodo	Explanation
70.	Null and void	adighiire; enweghisi	Equivalence/lexical economy
71.	Patent law	Iwu na-echedo onye meputara ihe	Explanation
72.	Pirated goods	Ngwa akuruaku	Equivalence
73.	Private sector	Ulo oru nke onye	Explanation
74.	Public sector	Ulo oru obodo /goomenti	Explanation
75.	Raw materials	Ngwa eji emeputa ihe	Explanation
76.	Rights and obligations	Ikike na-iwu jigidere	Explanation
77.	Rights and privileges	Ihenrite	Equivalence//lexical economy
78.	Rule of law	nsopuru iwu obodo	Explanation
79.	Safeguard measures	Usoro ichekwa aku, uba n'ahu ike	Explanation
80.	Service sector	Ngalaba na-ahazi ulo oru na-emeputa ngwa ahia	Explanation
81.	Stakeholders	ndi were onu okwu na oke n'ihe	Explanation
82.	Tarified products	utu ngwa ahia	Explanation
83.	Terms and conditions	Usoro	Equivalence/lexical economy
84.	Textile firms	Ulo oru na-emeputa akwa	Explanation
85.	Trade barriers	Mgbochi ahia	Equivalence

86.	Trademarks	Akara njirimara ngwa ahja	Explanation
87.	Trade secrets	Ihe nzizo azumahja	Explanation
88.	Treaty law	Iwu tiriiti	Loan
89.	Unemployment	Ọnọdu enweghi ọrụ	Explanation
90.	Waivers	ị wepu ụfọdu ụtụ ga-eme ntụbata ahja nfe.	Explanation

### Commentary

Our commentary is based on the nature of Igbo language. A look at the specialized terms shows that, in most cases, we resorted to explanation. This is because of the nature of the Igbo language. We give below some examples from the table.

### Sentential and descriptive language

Annual budget	Ihazi mkpata na mmefu nke afọ (no. 3).
Capital economy	Ọnọdu akụ na ụba obodo di n'aka ndi ji ego (no. 6).
Cash crops	Ihe ọkụkụ eji akpata ego/ihe mmepụta a na ere ere (no. 7).
Industrialized countries	Obodo na-emepụta ngwa ahja (no. 54).
Service sector	Ngalaba na-ahazi ụlọ ọrụ na-emepụta ngwa ahja (no. 80).
Stakeholders	ndi were ọnụ okwu na oke n'ihe (no. 81)
Waivers	ị wepu ụfọdu ụtụ ga-eme ntụbata ahja nfe. (no. 90).

From the few examples cited, we can see the use of many words to explain the English terms. Igbo is a sentential language. This is due to the low level development of technical and specialized terms. Also, in a bid to avoid borrowing and the use of generic terms, the translator resorts to description or explanation.

### Generic nature of Igbo Language

The generic nature of Igbo language played out in the course of our work where a concept is used to translate many concepts. Here are some examples from our work.

Arbitration	usoro ime udo (no. 4).
Dispute settlement procedure	usoro ime udo (no. 23).
Code of conduct	iwu akparamagwa (no. 10).
Domestic law	iwu obodo (no. 27).
Enabling clause	iwu ikike nnabata (no. 34).
Ground rules	iwu ntụ anị (no. 48).
Labour standards	iwu na-echekwa ọrụ (no. 65).
Legal document	akwụkwọ iwu no. 62).
Cash flow	ego na-abata na-apụ (no. 8).
Capital economy	ọnọdu akụ na-uba obodo di n'aka ndi ji ego (no. 6)
Currency policy	iwu ihazi ego (no. 14).

Looking at the examples above, it is observed that the same concept is used to translate 'Arbitration' and 'Dispute settlement procedure', *usoro ime udo*. Also in the case of any form of law as seen in the examples above, the term *iwu* is used to translate *law, clause, code, rules, standards and legal document*. In the same vein, *ego* is used in translating *cash, economy and currency*. The problem arises when you do a back translation of the translated terms. We have to note that context is very crucial in every translation process.

### Lexical economy

Contrary to the generic nature of the Igbo language, we encountered the use of a term to translate two or more words. This is the case of doublets in legal field. Doublets are among the most common redundancies in legal drafting. How will these terms be Igbo translated into Igbo language? They are closely related in meaning. Below are examples of doublets encountered in our work.

Aims and objectives	mbunuche (no. 2)
Rights and privileges	ihenrite (no. 77)
Terms and conditions	usoro (no. 83)
Null and void	adighiire//enweghisi (no. 70)

We can see from the above examples that the pairs are closely related. The Igbo language has one concept for each pair. The issue of back translation comes into question here. The result of the back translation will give either of the terms not the pair. There lies the problem. This is when the issue context and the domain are taken into account.

### Loan

There are a few incidences of loan in the translated terms. Here are some examples.

Custom duties	utu <u>taksi kostom</u> (no. 15)
Custom union	otu <u>kostom</u> (no. 16)
Treaty law	iwu <u>tiriiti</u> (no.88)

### Calque

We also have a few cases of calque. The following examples are cited below.

Infant industries	industiri oħuru (no. 56)
Legal document	akwukwo iwu (no. 62)

It has earlier been noted that calque is another form of loan. In the case of loan, the borrowed word is adapted to the phonology or syntax of the target language. It can also be observed that in the calque, there is a loan word. At times, it is difficult to separate them.

### Conclusion

Languages evolve to cope with the changing world. No language exists in isolation. Hence when languages come in contact, new ideas, and words are learned. In the face of globalization, there is need to project one's language to the global society. This is evident in the specialized terms in the domain of international trade encountered in our work. These terms will help in the development, promotion of our indigenous languages. We should avoid borrowing where possible. Ijioma and Ezeafulukwe (2015a) are of the view that, "*loanwords could be the only way out for a translator when faced with a word that has no equivalent in the receiving culture*". The developed languages passed through what we are going through now. With concerted efforts, we shall take our language to a higher level. We have not claimed to have done the final job on this. There is need for more research and creation of terms. Equally, where our translations are not accepted, we welcome constructive criticisms as a way forward. We should work as a team to see to the development of our languages and ensure that our languages do not go into extinction.

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## IGBO VERBS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

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### **Abstract**

*Far from being an entirely textual engagement, translation is a completely intellectual enterprise. Some translation practitioners and theorists have perhaps erroneously tended to postulate that translation involves mere replacement of lexicons in one language with lexicons in another. This position has led to the concept of source language text (SLT) and target language text (TLT). In this write-up, we are not in any way condemning the idea of translation constituting a linguistic movement from one culture to another. All we intend to demonstrate here is that our research so far shows that translating between languages of little or no cultural affinity is not as simple as people may think. The Igbo language has no cultural affinity with English and French. This singular fact makes translation between them an up-hill task. The Igbo verb especially presents a difficult problem to translators working between Igbo and foreign languages especially English.*

### **1.0 Introduction**

It was Catford (1961:1) who rightly postulated that translation is ‘an operation performed on language, a process of substituting a text in one language with a text in another’. This postulate summarizes the translating act, a question of finding equivalents. The process of substitution as postulated by Catford in this definition entails an overhaul of the entire linguistics of the message. The term ‘operation’ refers to the linguistics analysis to which the text is subjected. The Catfordian postulate, as this position is popularly called betrays Catford as a linguist. He however went further to assert that for there to be translation *stricto sensu*, there must be phonetical and morphological correspondences.

Mc Guire (1980:13) seeming to give support to Catford, postulates that ‘No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality’. This lends credence to our observation about translating between languages without cultural affinity. We venture to assert further that if no two languages of the world could be said to be similar, then languages without lingua-cultural affinity can by no means be translated easily either way.

### **2.0 Linguistic and cultural affinity**

Languages that belong to the same cultural backgrounds are said to have affinity. That is to say, that there might not be a lot of differences in their phonology, morphology and syntax.

Maduka-Durunze (1998:72) citing Bamgbose (1992) and Blench (1991) identifies two major linguistic groups (language families) in Nigeria: ‘Niger Congo for languages spoken below 12<sup>0</sup> latitude North (approximately, Afro-Asiatic for those North of this latitude. This precludes the Nilo-Saharan family of languages eg kamuri. Maduka-Durunze mentioned Ffulde or Fula (languages

of the Fulbe or Fulani people which could be found above this latitude, and yet belongs to the Niger Congo as do Igbo, Yoruba and Efik (1998:72). This analysis shows that position above or below the equator should not be seen as a criterion for the grouping of languages. On the one hand, English belongs to the Indo-European languages with German a co-group member. French belongs to the Latin languages of Europe. A casual observer might consider the factor of geographical proximity and group French and English together as cultural partners. Practical linguistic enterprise like translation will prove such a person wrong. If translation between English and French, neighbouring European languages could prove so irksome, what then will be the fate of a translator working between any of them and Igbo, or Yoruba or even Hasua? This explains why in this essay, we are concerned with the Igbo verbs in contact situation with foreign languages, especially English, to drive this point home.

### 3.0 Peculiarity of the Igbo Verbs

It is a generally accepted idea that a verb is the action word in a sentence. Betty KirPatrick contends that:

In simple terms the verb is known as a doing word... Nevertheless, the verb is usually the word in a sentence that is most concerned with the action and it is usually essential to the structure of the sentence.

There is no gain saying that the verb is perhaps the most important part of the predicate in every language. What differs from language to language is the form or structure of the verbs. The Igbo language has many areas of peculiarities in its verbs. These peculiarities will be discussed one after the other.

### 3.1 Agglutination

The Igbo language presents a case of agglutinated verb forms. What this means is that a translator working between it and English should drink a full dose of linguistics in order to identify each independent Igbo morpheme and translate it with a word. This is so because each morpheme in an agglutinated Igbo verb has a semantic change (J.K Okeke 1993). When the translator is working from English to Igbo he is expected to lump together different words (especially verbs and adverbs) to form a single verb. Let us demonstrate this with Igbo sentence.

- (i) Akịka *ripiachara* ákwà ahụ  
(Termites ate completely the whole cloth).  
The word in italics “*ripiachara*” is the agglutinated verb. An analysis of the verb shows:  
Ri: eat (main verb)  
Pịa: up (adverb of manner)  
Cha: completely (adverb of manner)  
Ra: past tense marker (rv, depicting vowel harmony).  
Other examples are:
- (ii) Okụ *repiachara* ụlọ ya  
(fire burnt down his house completely)  
Repiachara – verbal group.  
Re: burnt (main verb)  
Pia: down (adverb in suffixal position)  
Cha: completely (adverb of manner)  
Ra: past tense marker (rv, showing vowel harmony)

- (iii) Nk̄ta *tachara* an̄u ah̄u  
 (A dog ate up the whole meat).  
 Ta: eat (main verb)  
 Cha: up (completely).  
 Ra: (rv, past tense marker, demonstrating vowel harmony).
- (iv) Ide *bupuchara* àkwà ah̄u  
 (Flood carried away the bridge) completely  
 Bupuchara – the verbal group.  
 Bu: carry (main verb)  
 Pu: away (adverbs in suffixal position)  
 Cha: completely (suffixal adverb of manner)  
 Ra: (rv) past tense marker.  
 Perhaps the analysis of a fifth verb will drive home further the point about dissolving the agglutinated Igbo verb and according to each morpheme a merited semantic charge.  
 Ozegidigidi *kwatuchara* ụlọ ya.  
 (A caterpillar pushed down completely his house)  
 Verb: kwatuchara  
 Kwa: push (main verb)  
 Tu: (suffixal morpheme)  
 Cha: completely (suffixal adverbial morpheme)  
 Ra: past tense marker (rv)

### 3.2 Case of Igbo verbs with inherent complements

Certain Igbo verbs have particles which are, at the same time, inherent complements. These complements look like direct object of these verbs. But Igbo scholars are in consensus about their function in each structure where they appear. One test of their function in the structure is that if they are removed or deleted from the structure, the sentence becomes lingua-culturally incomplete. Examples of such problematic verbs are as follows linguistically:

- (i) ile anya: to look (-)  
 O lere anya: He looked  
 (He looked eye) literally.

If the inherent complement ‘anya’ is suppressed, a casual translator will have the natural tendency to translate the above structure as: He looked eye which is its structurally acceptable, but culturally unacceptable as English Language.

- (ii) Ichī ọchī: to laugh (-)  
 Ọ chirī ọchī; He/She laughed,  
 (He/She laughed laugh) literally

A translator who is not conversant with the English structural linguistics will tend to transliterate here and write; He laughed laugh (sic). It becomes more tempting when the translator discovers that even in Hausa language; the Igbo structure about laughter lends itself to a structural literalism as in:

- (iii) Ọ chirī ọchī: Ya yi daria (Hausa) S+V+O  
 Ibe akwa: to weep (-)  
 O bere akwa: He wept

(He wept weeping) (sic) Ya yi kuka (He did cry) Hausa. (S+V+O) In Igbo, akwa or weeping is the inherent complement. The inherent particle which serves as a verb complement (weeping) is suppressed leaving the structure in current English as He wept. A real English translation of the Igbo structure will give us, “He wept.” The fanatic adherent of Igbo structural linguistics will ask: “what did he weep?” ( O bere gini?).

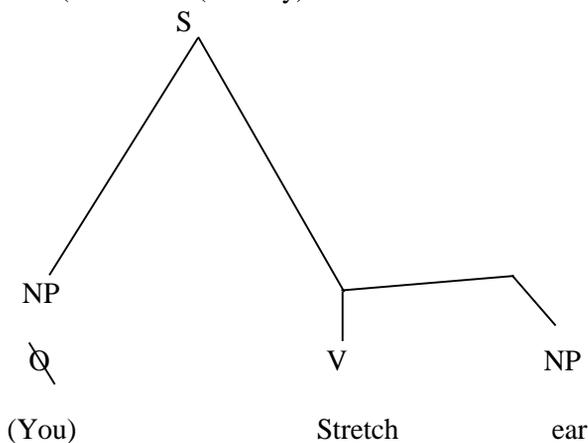
(iv) Ikwá ụkwara: to cough (-)

This is another case where the question of inherent verb complement looking every inch the object of the sentence, introduces confusion into the Igbo/English translation.

(v) Gee nti (imperative): Listen  
(stretch ear). Literally.

This structure seems to possess a direct object complement (ear) even though it is the imperative. A structural analysis of the sentence gives us

(a) Gee nti (imperative)  
(stretch ear (literally))

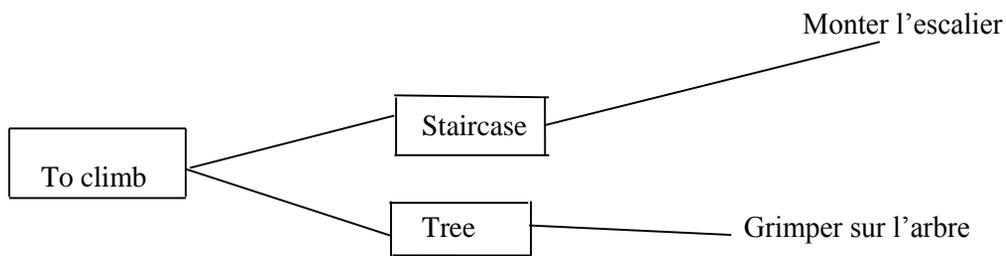


From the above analysis, there is no way *listen* alone could translate Gee nti, to the amateur translator. This explains why we insist that a translator should study very well the linguistics of his two languages of operation. Otherwise, he could be thrown overboard by little facts, such as the morphology of Igbo verbs.

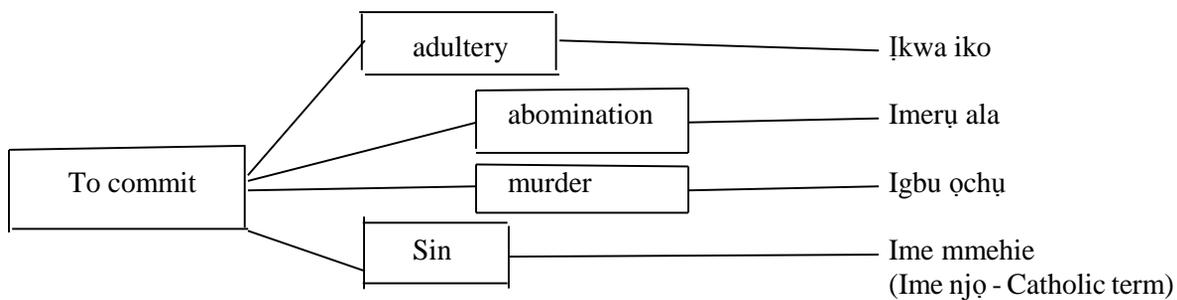
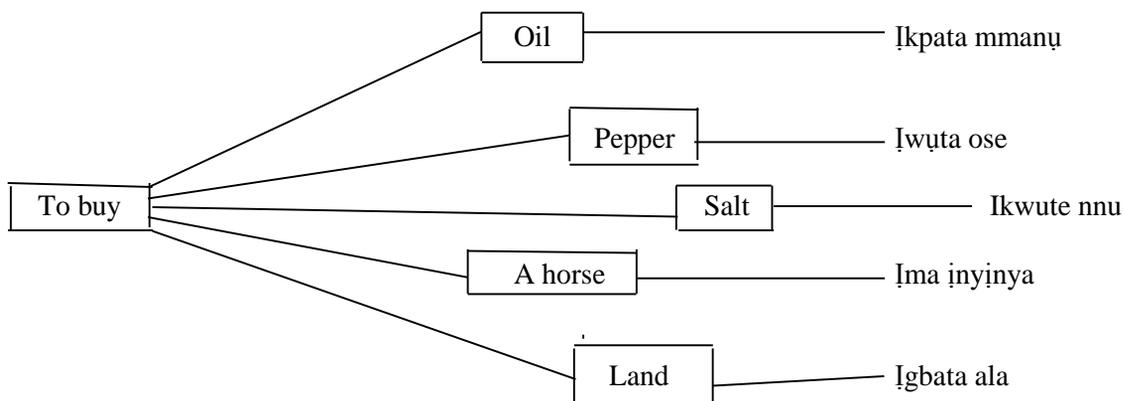
#### 4.0 The terminological tree

This is another area of difficulty to the Igbo verb translator. It is common to find in dictionaries words indicating the domain of each entry. The domain of each word in dictionary confection determines its translation in a given document. Igbo verbs show this difference due to domains where they belong. This is why the translator is advised not to translate each English or French word with a commonly known Igbo verb. He would first consider the domain in question before choosing the appropriate verb. Let us demonstrate with these lexicons.

## (a) English - French



## English – Igbo



## 5.0 Conclusion

Infact translating verbs with natural complements is one area that confuses the Igbo English translator. This is why in the beginning of this essay we talk of cultural affinity in translatology. It will be a serious mistake to think that because we were colonized by the English, translation between our language and theirs will always run literally. Ab initio we have demonstrated that English belongs to a different linguistic culture from Igbo. Translation between them is a serpentine journey, never straight. The translation of verbs introduces a kind of linguistic circumnavigation. Areas where the verb poses problems in Igbo/English or English/Igbo translations are many. We have dwelt on agglutination and structuralism in this paper. We hold no doubts that these verbal problems inherent in translating between English and Igbo or French and any other African language (Hausa, Yoruba, Efik, Ibibio, Fulfude, Ga, Ewe etc) especially among the languages in the coastal plains of the West African sub-region.

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# THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL CONSTRAINTS ON COMPREHENSION AMONG SECOND LANGUAGE (L<sub>2</sub>) LEARNERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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## **Abstract**

*Very many factors have been found to influence second language learning. For instance, affective factors such as attitude, motivation and personality have usually been acknowledged to play important role in second language learning. Other factors include environmental factors which could be geographical and/or cultural. This discourse will review the various ways in which cultural constraints and cultural differences impede comprehension among second language (L<sub>2</sub>) learners. Emphasis will be on listening, reading pragmatics and viewing comprehension.*

## **Introduction**

Second language acquisition is the process by which people learn languages in addition to their native language(s). The term second language is used to describe any language whose acquisition starts after early childhood (including what may be the third or subsequent language learned). Second language is often referred to as (L<sub>2</sub>) in comparison with the first language (L<sub>1</sub>) (Krashen, 1982).

Second language acquisition attracts a lot of difficulties arising from learner factors (external and internal); affective factors, individual variation, cultural variation etc.

The learner external factors include social disposition, input and intake, interaction; internal factors have to do with the learners' pattern or order of language learning. The affective factors include anxiety, personality or self-concept and motivation; individual variation includes language aptitude, age and strategy use and then cultural variation connote differences in background.

All the factors addressed above make second language acquisition a unique but error bound-endeavor. However, whatever roles these factors play in second language acquisition, comprehension is critical to language learning and usage.

Here we shall concern ourselves with how cultural variations affect comprehension at various levels among second language learners.

### **1. The influence of cultural constraints on Listening comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users.**

Listening comprehension depends most on acoustic and auditory clarity. It has to do with decoding and acting out of verbal information whether first hand or recorded in a tape. The decoding and positive reaction envisaged from an L<sub>2</sub> user may be delayed or non-existent owing to cultural constraints. This is one of the reasons interlocutors laugh over non funny issues or frown over non serious matters. Again, it is common knowledge that L<sub>2</sub> users transfer some language elements in their L<sub>1</sub> into their L<sub>2</sub> learning and usage. As a result when some fossilized elements or sounds are

applied in speech, listening comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users is hampered especially when the fossilized sounds or elements are not existent in the linguistic background of the listener.

Fancy the following examples of fossilized language elements;

- Yoruba fossilized ‘ead’, ‘and’, ‘heat’ etc relative to English ‘head’, ‘hand’ and ‘eat’. This apparently distorts the meanings of the above English words and make comprehension difficult for non Yoruba listener.
- Yoruba Igbo L<sub>2</sub> learners’ fossilization of the /z/ sound relative to the Igbo /s/ sound in the sentence ‘ezi’ m Oyo instead of ‘esi m Oyo’ (I hail from Oyo).
- The Yoruba Arabic speaker’s fossilization of ‘Sapter’ relative to English ‘chapter’ etc.
- Hausa speaker’s fossilization of ‘Pilip’, ‘friend’, ‘feter’ relative to English ‘Philip’, ‘friend’ ‘Peter’ respectively. Anambra (Igbo) speakers’ fossilization of ‘rawlence’, ‘Rondon’ relative to English ‘Lawrence’, ‘London’ etc.
- Further on this issue, a Yoruba speaker perceived Igbo greeting ‘kedu?, o di mma (how are you? Fine) as ‘Gedu’ o du njee (wood/timber? It is good edible).
- I had a personal experience when I took lectures on research method with a Yoruba lecturer at University of Ibadan who fossilized the word ‘mayor’ relative to the word ‘measure’, I continued to take meaningless notes until he released his note to the class.

Also, unfamiliar supra-segmental elements like tones, intonation, ascent, stress etc. cause hitch in listening comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users.

The fact I am making is that fossilization hampers listening comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users. Fossilization being ‘linguistic phenomena, items, rules, subsystem which speakers of a particular native language (NL) will tend to keep in his inter language (IL) relative to a particular target language (TL), no matter what age of the learner, or amount of explanation and instruction he receives in TL. (Selinker, 1969), these constitute a sample of cultural constraints to listening comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users.

## **2. The Influence of cultural constraints on reading comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users:**

Reading has to do with decoding of written text. It has to do with making of meaning out of the print. Comprehension is fundamental and critical to reading. For mature readers, reading has no meaning and a sheer waste of time if comprehension does not occur.

However, comprehension can be hindered by cultural constraints in various ways. For instance, it is only natural that people write the way they speak. For one who speaks using language lore like idioms, proverbs most likely applies such in his written discourse. For instance Wole Soyinka, Ola Rotimi and Chinua Achebe to mention but a few are adept in the use of linguistic aphorisms. These give second language users who come from a different background extra processing load before comprehension takes place.

Again, apart from use of linguistic aphorisms, there are certain concepts that are customized or indigenous to the writer which when reflected in the discourse affect comprehension adversely. In the Igbo acculturation programme organized for the Igbo L<sub>2</sub> learners from Nigerian Colleges of Education, there are some concepts that are used crude because they are customized Igbo concepts without English equivalent. At such classes, comprehension is delayed. The L<sub>2</sub> learners may or may

not have name for such concepts in their native language. For instance, ‘Ukpo’, ‘achi’, ‘ofo’ etc. (soup thickeners) constitute a sample. That is where visual communication becomes pertinent in L<sub>2</sub> teaching and learning. Furthermore, research has shown that cultural constraints or variation affects examination performance. Alastair et al (2000) reveal this when they conducted a multicultural educational assessment on mathematics using a foreign student, Pakistan who immigrated to England and seemed to be under-performing in mathematics. The researchers analyzed using discrete piont approach ten (10) different questions drawing samples from questions he performed very well in and samples from the questions he performed below expectation. Their analysis revealed that he under performed in questions that are culture specific or bound but did well in other questions.

### **3. Influence of cultural constraints on pragmatics comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users.**

Comprehension of pragmatics is strong evidence of increasing language competence among L<sub>2</sub> users. The ability to understand words when used in different situations and contexts brings L<sub>2</sub> learners near native speakers’ competence. And here is another language level where culture affects comprehension adversely. For instance, the second language users need to understand the language use and rules governing language use in the target language. In Yoruba, for a birds eye view, there is a difference in the use of the word ‘ose’ and ‘ese’’. Sometimes, they are alternated. In the case of ‘ese’ the ‘e’ is a plural marker that applies to elders as a mark of respect. Again, it is most unlikely to hear a young one asking an elderly ‘bawoni’, or ‘kedu’ in the case of Igbo. Also such expressions as ‘ota mi de, ada mi do in Ibira language (Yoruba) can be misinterpreted as ‘father bring knife my enemy is here’ by an L<sub>2</sub> user because of cultural difference.

Collocations are interpreted differently ie literally by L<sub>2</sub> users. For instance, an old man who captures the hash economic condition with an expression, ‘Amu akughaala ikpere’ can be misunderstood to actually mean that ‘penis has grown beyond the knee’. Also in pragmatic contexts, an L<sub>2</sub> user may fail to understand such principles as ‘anaghi agu nwa onu (children are not counted) in Igbo culture.

In pragmatic discussions, there are taboo words or expressions that are confined to a special group (language of the cult) etc which are permissible to ones culture. Such words or expressions attract code switching when the need for their use arises but the L<sub>2</sub> users may not understand the reason for the avoidance and consequently fall short of expectation of usage or experience communication freeze when the expected expression is skipped by the native speakers. Cultural constraints make L<sub>2</sub> users not appreciate euphemistic applications in the target language. For instance, the term ‘agwo’ (snake) is not mentioned in the night in core Igbo setting, instead it is tagged ‘eriri (rope)’. Elucidating on this point, second language users of multi dialectal languages have problems of meta language i.e one concept is called different things in as many dialects as existent in the target language. For instance, in Ngwa Igbo, elderly people may refer to ‘money’ as ‘Nwa Ohuu’ (New Baby) or Ojomma’ whereas the standard form is ‘Ego’. The same Ngwa-Igbo refer to fifty naira note as ‘Baby Note’. These expressions that deviate from the standard forms would certainly create comprehension gap for L<sub>2</sub> learners. Mode of settlement in Igbo land certainly differ widely from that of the Yoruba and the Hausa. Discussions centering on rural habitation and architectural structure of any of these tribes may not attract full comprehension to an L<sub>2</sub> learner. The Yoruba do not masquerade in their culture. Masquerading is a peculiar cultural event for the South East and South South people of Nigeria. A non indigene of these ethnic groups may not appreciate certain

roads are deserted at certain times whereas the indigene are able to interpret the routes, warnings, signs and signals of advancing masquerade.

In the same vein, second language user may not appreciate that items are priced in descending order in Yoruba setting but in ascending order in other cultures. All these have to be taken into account while teaching pragmatics to L<sub>2</sub> learners in order to facilitate comprehension.

#### **4. The influence of cultural constraints on viewing comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users.**

The concept of viewing comprehension is a recent phenomenon. The fact that communication transcends oral and written medium lends credence to the emerging perception of viewing comprehension (Hoven 1999). In her analysis of listening and viewing comprehension in multimedia environment saw intimate relationship between viewing comprehension (V.C.) and listening comprehension (L.C.) as it applies particularly in L<sub>2</sub> situation. Cross cultural researchers are focusing on the meanings conveyed by gesture, expression and body language leading to viewing comprehension among L<sub>2</sub> users. More often than not, second language learners make use of gestures and other forms of body language to comprehend linguistic information which ordinarily would have eluded them.

However the culture differences also bring about hitches in viewing comprehension. For instance, the gesture that signifies ‘come’ in Nigerian context is a sign of ‘goodbye’ in Western context. The gesture that means ‘I warned you’, ‘serves you right’ in the Igbo context may either be nonexistent in other ethnic groups or conveys a different meaning all together. My little nephew use to run away from other children whenever he visited the village from the city. No one could fathom why he had phobia getting close to his mates in the village until the he asked my mother if the children in the village were all lunatics. My mother answered that none of them was indeed. The poor boy asked, ‘then why are they always naked? To the little boy born and groomed in the city, only lunatics appear naked.

Again, the sound a core Northerner produces during conversation to show gross attention and comprehension is interpreted as resentment and indifference in the Igbo setting and audience.

#### **Conclusion**

Comprehension is the fundamental target in any mode of communication; oral, print or gesture among native speakers as well as L<sub>2</sub> users. This has implications for L<sub>2</sub> teaching and learning in a multilingual and multicultural society as ours. This challenges the L<sub>2</sub> teachers to use visual and real live objects when they can to concretize their lessons especially culture-specific concepts. The language lessons would have to be infantilized in order to reduce stress for the learners and help them keep their affective filter low enough for optimal language intake. A lot of improvisations are needed from the teacher who would gently guide the learners through the development and usage of new vocabulary in a pragmatic sense. Excursions and acting out roles are inevitable in this situation. Also, to bridge the cultural constraints in second language comprehension, the need for acculturation programme is not only pertinent but imperative for L<sub>2</sub> learners. This will ensure greater and deeper immersion into the target language and its culture.

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## CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AS A TOOL FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION: A PROPOSAL

By

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### **Abstract**

*The Chambers English Dictionary defines the word "nation" as a "body of people marked off by common descent, language, culture or historical tradition". If this definition is anything to go by, then what is known today as Nigeria can hardly be called a nation. This assertion is true of most West African countries, be they francophone or anglophone. In these countries, the presence of divers ethnic groups possessing different languages and distinct cultures immediately tells of 'tribal-nations' brought together by the accident of history to become so-called nations. Ever so often, incidents especially on the political scenes of these pseudo-nations have sparked off such deep negative reactions from opposing ethnic groups that there is hardly any doubt that there are no common links that bind them together. The Nigerian situation that led to the civil war of 1967 - 1970 is a case in view. Other examples abound in West and Central Africa. But since these different ethnic nations must live together as single political entities called nations, it is necessary that efforts be made to reduce to the barest minimum the differences, of whatever nature, that make real nationhood difficult. This article proposes children's literature as a means to begin to eliminate tribal sentiments in the future generations of Nigerians.*

### **Introduction**

According to Synder (1954: 14), in the formation of modern nations "the exigencies of historical development caused peoples to be thrown together by factors other than ethnic relationships He further states that what constitutes a nation "is not speaking the same tongue or belonging to the same ethnic group, but having accomplished great things in common in the past and wishing to accomplish them in the future". In Synder's view, and in the minds of people, the concepts of nation and race are taken to mean the same thing, the reason being that most people find it difficult to conceive a close social unity without physical bond and that they cannot think of common mentality without common blood. Thus, we see that the concept of a nation is not necessarily limited to common descent and sameness of culture and among the individuals that make up the geopolitical called nation.

From history, it is evident that the geopolitical creation called Nigeria, according to Post and Vickers (1973) had been formed by the gradual incorporation of different contiguous areas and peoples into the British Empire from 1861 onwards and to its final shape in 1914 with the unification of the Coastal Colonies and a Protectorate by Lord Lugard. In practice though, there existed a polarization between the northern and southern divisions of the country. The next major administrative shift only came in 1939 with the creation of the three regions - the North, the East and the West.

These regional divisions were made almost along linguistic, cultural lines. Much later in the history of Nigeria, a no less important figure than Chief Obafemi Awolowo, who understood the cleavage patterns in Nigeria, advocated for the creation of states along linguistic lines. As Peter Eke (1975: 89) notes, "Language has emerged as a controversial primordial principle in Nigeria", and according to this author, "Language and ethnicity varying in many ways ... ethnicity is an important principle in Nigeria.

Researchers have used such terms as ethnicity and tribalism somewhat loosely, without much attempt at systematizing their meaning. They are, nevertheless, understood to refer to relationships and identification among peoples. In the judgment of Post and Vickers (1973: 5),

So important (are) these identifications that they could override loyalty to Nigeria as a whole or to one of its regions; dedication to the parliamentary process, respect for law and order and even for the sanctity of life.

It is in this sense that the authors speak of "primordial loyalties" as something demanding a total commitment transcending any other groups. Post and Vickers, in their research work, employed a model which distinguishes primordial group loyalties from any other social identification in Nigeria.

### **A New Beginning**

No matter what the Nigerian elite and other groups in Nigeria declare about perceived ideals for the Nigerian nation, it is a well known fact that ethnic loyalties have always been stronger than national loyalties. Is it any wonder then that for more than four decades after Independence Nigeria is still weak as a nation? We cannot but agree with Micheal Udomo in Peter Abraham's *A Wreath for Udomo*, (1954: page) when he says that "we need to build up national loyalties as against tribal loyalties - otherwise we'll never build a strong African state that is as modern as any of the European states".

Writing in the same vein, Mann (1991: 92) observes that, "Nigeria can most appropriately be regarded as a multinational- exoglossic state and should be categorized under the classification ... a state made up of diverse nations in the process of forging a nationality ..."

It is in recognition of the above facts that this writer proposes a new plan for the achievement of national integration in Nigeria. The plan is based in part on the model developed by Post and Vickers, cited above, that distinguishes primordial group loyalties from any other social identification in Nigeria.

The identification of such group loyalties that transcend national loyalties demands a total commitment that transcends those to any other groups. This would mean the identification of Nigeria's number one enemy to national unity. Once the enemy and the dynamics of its working are highlighted, it would remain for a strategy to be formulated that would ultimately neutralize the evil.

The strategy that is proposed here is the use of literature, children's literature, to counteract the group loyalties that are identified as inimical to national integration. Through their art, writers of

children's books can focus their efforts at pulling down divisive attitudes, notions and concepts while creating, propagating and highlighting those ones that gather and unify us.

As future generation of Nigerians imbibe and become imbued with such nationalistic and unifying ideals, we can then hope to produce generations of detribalized Nigerians who see themselves first as Nigerians and not firstly as Igbos, Yorubas, Hausas, Ibibios or Ijaws, and who would put the national interests above all else. This is the main thrust of this paper.

### **Present Day Nigeria - A Mosaic**

With her 250 to 400 different linguistic groups (researcher's give varying figures), Nigeria as it exists today can at best be termed a conglomerate society, a mosaic of a country. Thirteen years before independence, Chief Obafemi Awolowo had argued that what was known as Nigeria was a mere geographical expression, at best an agglomeration of tribal nations... Schwarz Walters, 1968: 5). Yet, in 1960 Nigeria became an independent country. The tribal groupings in Nigeria are sharply divided more by language, culture and history than by anything else.

As Schwarz observed,

... the end of the anti-colonial struggle was the beginning of politics ... and what was politics if not tribalising. Tribes were more sharply differentiated than social classes ... Nigeria has some 400 languages groups — therefore 400 nations.

In his book, *My Command*, General Olusegun Obasanjo (1980: 1) noted that "until 1900, the land mass known as Nigeria existed as a number of independent and sometimes hostile nation states with linguistic and cultural differences". When the 1966/67 crises set in and Nigeria for the first time since 1953 was ruled effectively from Lagos, the new supreme commander declared that rigid adherence to regionalizing was the bane of the last regime and one of the many factors which contributed to its downfall.

Thus, it is clear that the negative forces of tribalism and clannishness have been militating against the unity of the various tribes, major and minor, in the geopolitical entity called Nigeria. Instead of the constituent groups working together for unity, in the midst of such diversity, as Nzerem (1975) observed, "the promotion of sectoral and ethnic agendas in the form of sectoral tribal nationhood inimical to our sovereign national independence were pursued".

### **The Function of Literature**

It is a common saying that the pen is more powerful than the sword. In fighting the good cause of forging a real national integration in Nigeria, the pen of the writers of children's books may have a great role to play.

Rene and Warren (1956. p.135) in their classic work titled *THEORY OF LITERATURE* examined, among other things, the function of literature. The point was made that literature is at once "useful" and "sweet" - where "useful" means 'not a waste of time', 'not a form of passing the time,' 'something deserving of serious attention', and 'sweet' is 'equivalent to not a bore', 'not a duty', 'its own reward'. They viewed art as discovery or insight into the truth and espoused the view that art-specifically, literature - is propaganda". For them, the writer is not "the discoverer" but the purveyor of the truth."

In popular speech, the word propaganda has a negative connotation. But the term actually implies the spreading of a particular doctrine or programme. For Rene and Warren, the word could be stretched to mean "effort, whether conscious or not, to influence readers to share ones' attitude towards life." To the extent that this view is true, then it can be said that all artists are and should be propagandists. In the words of these authors, "all sincere, responsible artists (especially literary artists) are morally obligated to be propagandists."

### **Characteristics of West African literature**

Through their literary works West African writers have traced the history of their peoples before the coming of the Europeans to the painful clash of cultures as the Western powers imposed their way of life on Africans.

These authors, writing in English or in French, have documented events of the post-colonial, colonial, pre-independence and post-independence eras. These backward glances at the past hardly revealed anything that rejoiced the heart but Chinua Achebe, a foremost writer on these four distinct eras had no regrets at all for that. Writing about his novels *THINGS FALL APART* and *ARROW OF GOD* which are entirely set in the past, Achebe (1965: page) states that:

I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past, with all its imperfections - was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them.

Also showing the social documentary value of some works, the author of "*That Africa*" (*Cette Afrique-là*) (Ikelle-Matiba, 1965) writes, "This book is a document (...). The era of colonization is over. Now is the time for stock-taking, for reports, for pro-domo pleas; all that is necessary to enlighten the general public and to facilitate the work of researchers". (Our translation).

But today, West African literature is taking a look at the present, and some writers, conscious of their duty of being their society's conscience, are pointing the way to a better future. They denounce social ills and look for indications of grains of life in their fellows that would give hope for the survival of their society. We agree with them in this venture as we see a ray of hope in the role of Nigerian literature in preparing future generations of Nigerian children in the task of national integration.

### **Children's literature as a tool for national integration**

The benefits of introducing literature to children as soon as they can read cannot be ignored. The exciting world of literature opens a large window to the world to the child while helping him to develop a large vocabulary. Because words rule the world, children can be helped to gradually embrace the words and the characters that they meet in their reading, from the very early stages of pictorial stories of the 'look and read' type, where words accompanying pictures.

Gradually, as the child develops, words are strung into sentences and later, the sentences into paragraphs and thus, by an imperceptible increase in the level of difficulty, the child learns to read. This progression can be followed no matter the language that is involved. It is a known fact that interest in reading once created, the child should be helped to maintain it until he attains the age of fourteen and above when this habit would have become second nature to him.

Writing on the early stages of child development, a psychologist, J.A Hadfield (1962) states that:

“The first three years of life are concerned with the organization of the child's personality. Of these, the first two years are engaged in the emergence of the primitive biological impulses necessary to the pursuit of life, such as curiosity, assertiveness, and fear; the third and fourth years are engaged in the organization and harmonization of these various impulses under the control of the will. The foundations of the personality are thus laid down in those early years.

We are proposing in this paper that the concept of tolerance of people from other tribes of the country can be built into a child in the crucial formative period of his personality, as soon as he can come into meaningful contact with printed matter.

Our position is that if from the time a child is initiated into the world of literature, he is presented with simple elements of facts from his culture and those of tribes other than his own, that the child would grow up accepting all these facts as natural to him, without making any distinctions between them.

With the objective of forging national integration in mind, writers of children's literature, who must be individuals with a clear vision of this mission, would begin to introduce, in small doses, ideas that foster acceptance of Nigeria's diverse peoples to the child. This can be achieved by a careful choice of characters and objects from different parts of the country, evidenced by their names. Even at the "look and say", "look and read", stages, this can be done.

Later, at the sentence and full story level, situations could be created depicting cordial co-existence of characters from different tribes as friends, neighbours, work mates and even as spouses. Thus a Nigerian child grows up knowing that Okoro and Ahmed can be very close friends because their parents are good neighbours. Thus he knows that Iyabo and Akpan can marry and build a happy home; he gets to know, too, that they can learn one another's ethnic language and so have no secrets from one another. In this way, very early in life, mutual respect and understanding, instead of suspicion, are inculcated into children from different parts of the country because of a favourable disposition towards one another.

### **Not an Easy Task**

This type of literature committed to the mission of ethnic harmonization cannot be an easy one to write. D.I Nwoga (1978), in his introduction to the book, *LITERATURE AND MODERN WEST AFRICAN CULTURE*, remarks that "It is oppressive to demand of writers that they produce to the prescription of ideological or national theories. We do this at the risk of stifling that interior vision which is the mark of great literature". However true this may be, we are not propounding an ideology or a theory in this work but only suggesting a more natural way of attaining a much needed ingredient in our quest for nationhood-integration.

Hitherto, the Yoruba writer who is writing in Yoruba or English for Yoruba speaking children could take certain pieces of information for granted because his target readers come from the same cultural background. But henceforth, conscious that he has the intention of engraving in his young readers' minds the notion of true nationhood; he would need to write about the Ibibio child in a way that the Hausa boy can appreciate him. A lot of research would be called for. He would need

to study more closely the way of life of the Ibibios, Igbos, Ijaws, Fulanis and Kanuris, as the case may be, so as to transmit positive impressions to his readership. Sensitive issues like religion must be treated with understanding, wisdom and integrity. Attempt should be made in this literature to properly expose the perceived weaknesses and sensitive aspects of the lives of the various ethnic groups so that there would exist no mysteries about them. In other words, stereotyping of the different constituent tribes should be presented as responsibly and as innocuously as possible so that we can laugh at ourselves without bitterness or resentment. When the weaknesses and strengths of the different tribes are out in the open, biases, suspicious, prejudices would disappear, disarming every group of its sacred, touchy fancies.

The children of the generation for whom this literature is meant, after imbibing it for many years, would be more tolerant of one another than their parents. By the third and fourth generations of these children imbued with this kind of literature, this country would be wearing a friendlier look. This could be a more natural and gradual way to bring about the brotherhood of the diverse peoples of Nigeria.

The National Youth Service Corps, as it is organized today, cannot accomplish the task of national integration for the reason that the ethnic personalities of the corps members have been formed. Real national development can only take place in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect. The children literature can lead the way, if properly guided.

### **Conclusion**

Of the three levels of relationships distinguished by Post and Vickers (1973), those of kinship, traditional political systems and cultural sections, the third of these was designated "primordial" since, according to them, 'it provides the broadest range of criteria by which a group might distinguish itself from others, and in determining action subsumes and transcends the other two. The cultural sections refer to grouping such as Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa etc. It is the identification and commitment to these groups that could override loyalty to Nigeria as a whole or to one of its regions or dedication to the respect for law and order and even for the sanctity of life. It is this loyalty to cultural section that 'is the number one enemy of Nigeria's national unity. It is against this enemy, therefore, that the writers of children's books must target, with a view to eroding and finally dismantling it.

This paper proposes a plan for the realization of national integration in Nigeria. The plan is a long-term one, needing commitment and sincerity, if the effect is to run deeper than the ethnic misunderstandings and suspicions that have hitherto divided Nigeria. This strategy does not have the ambition of harmonizing or integrating the present generation of Nigerians but targets the generations of Nigerians yet unborn who have not, as their parents, imbibed the prejudices and biases of their ethnic groups.

In order to build a strong nation, the tribal and ethnic walls separating the different peoples that make up our country must be brought down. They have continued to cause much pain to the country. Without them, our country would have developed much more. If there is the will, we can chart a new and better course for our country. The unborn generation could lead the way and children's literature could be the instrument.

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## LANGUAGE AND FUNCTIONALITY: THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN NATION BUILDING

By

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined Language and functionality: the strategic role of Language education in nation building, poor funding, inadequate language education teachers, and inadequate infrastructural facilities, among others has contributed immensely to strategic roles of language functionality in Nation building. Two research questions guided the study. The sample of the study was 80 head of departments (lecturers) in language education departments in federal universities in South-East Nigeria. A-20 item questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was validated by two experts in Language education and one from measurement and Evaluation from university of Nigeria Nsukka. The instrument yielded 0.84 using Cronbach Alpha method. The results were analysed using mean scores. The findings of this study on the roles of language education in Nation-building indicates that, language functionality enhances nation cohesion and stability, reduce social unrest and conflict in the nation, reduction of terrorists attack, enhances cultural integration of the multi-ethnic groups in Nigeria. The findings of the study also showed that the problems hindering the strategic roles of language education in Nation-building in Nigeria include poor funding of language education programme, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate language education teachers, non-existing language laboratories among others. However it was recommended among others that the resource persons on language education and Nation-building should be invited to schools to talk to students on the importance of language education in Nation-building, all the stakeholders in education sector should take synergic approach to enhance the enviable roles of language functionality in Nation-building.*

### **Introduction**

Language is considered as a veritable human endowment due to its unique role in capturing the breath of human thought and endeavours. Language constitutes that quality of human peculiarity, that unique attribute of man's distinctiveness and that priceless mandate of superiority over the entire creation of God (Baba, 2010). Hopkins (2010) defines language as the system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of a place or race. The theory of language determination and linguistic relatively shows that there exists a relationship between language and thought (Jacobs, 2011). Harris (2013) opined that language is the key to the heart of a people. By this, language conceived as a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. This functional knowledge of language shows that human experience has achieved in the way of dealing with situation and can be communicated through language. This implies that language does not operate independently of culture. Also language helps in the performance of social roles and determination of social relationship in a given society (Jones, 2013).

### **Functions of language**

The functions of language have received scholarly attention due to its impact in human organization. Margann (2011) asserts that language functions include the emotive function (express inner feelings of individuals), conative functions (use of vocatives and imperatives to compel one to acts), the phatic functions (opening and checking a channel or way to verify its operation for social reasons, poetic function, metalistic functions, which are developed as elements of communication. In the opinion of Hall (2010), language performs three basic functions, which are ideational, interpersonal and textual in nature. To Broun (2011) language performs two major functions, transactional and interactional; the transactional functions relating to passing information across, giving instructions and socialization purposes whereas interactional function helps in establishing and sustaining social relationships. Apart from the above definitions, linguists like Hillson (2012) outlines the roles of language as the communication of ideas, for emotional expression, for social interaction, for the sheer power of reality, for recording facts, as the instrument of thought and for the expression of identity.

The communication function of language is stressed by Austin (2011), as adaptive process by which grammar is tailored to serve communicative needs of its users. This view of language is associated with the study of language in pragmatic, cognitive and interactional framework, as well as in socio-linguistic and linguistic anthropology. Adedineji (2010) explained functions of language as language forms, language informs, language reforms, and language transforms.

Furthermore, language is used to care, heal and motivate people in a given society. The reformative function of language concerns using language to greet, to console, to condole, to sympathize with, persuade, to correct wrong, to remediate, to advise (Adedineji, 2013). The reformation function is mediated by formation and information systems. The agents of reformation are the family, the school, the mosque, the church, the media, and the government, all which are supposed to have been adequately formed and informed by language. The reformative function of language enables people to influence (positively) other people's behavior in a way that makes cooperation possible and conflict difficult (Ibrahim, 2012).

The next function of language is expressed inform of information age. Here, language is used for communication purposes; medium to transmit messages and knowledge. While the formation function of language gives life as language is used here to form ideas, develop character, and to make attitude positively or negatively, the information function of language keeps man alive. This function is performed on the view that man needs news always to survive, to function, to attain sanity and the submission that education is life and life is education, entailing that an uneducated person is dead (Jacob, 2011).

The transformational functions of language hinge on its use for change and revolution. Marris (2013) asserts that language is used to make new things happen. To assert that what differentiates world of today and that of our forefathers is attributed to the roles of language, available to us through a global family. Language has practically informed the changes in living, administration, science and technology, making the modern world possible.

The role of language in a given society cannot be over emphasized as it plays multi-dimensional functions which range from social, economic, and cultural, to communicative purposes. Awoniyi (2009) observed that language in a given society plays several roles which include:

- Interpersonal communication; for instance, after a tragedy, there is a pattern of speech with appropriate pitch and role. The same rules apply at time giving tension or conflict.
- Connection with culture; the best way to understand African culture is simply to study the language.
- Transmission of knowledge from one generation to another which is done through the help of Nigerian languages.
- Language as a means for co-operation; Nigerian languages especially Hausa, Ìgbò and Yorùbá are spoken across many communities.
- Function within economic programmes; especially in the buying and selling of all sorts of communities.
- Language and child bearing; through examples, precepts and reinforcement, children are gradually initiated into their linguistic community.
- Language and music; Nigerian languages are very melodious and they have given rise to nice songs, often accompanied by rhythmic drumming and dancing.

Thus, the integration of language and education will definitely enhance to a greater extent of Nation-building and development. The role of language in educational process is complex especially, when the individual and the community in which he lives use more than one language as the case of Nigeria as a multi-ethnic society. According to Elias (2014), education has remained an instrument of change, national building and development. It is a social process and the medium for the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes for survival in a changing world.

In a case, knowledge and skill acquisition which education is all about cannot be over emphasized. According to World Bank (2014), “successful development entails more than investing in physical capital, or closing the gap in capital. It also entails acquiring and using knowledge”. This, to successfully confront the challenges of development and nation building, a developing country must undertake three major tasks.

- Acquired and adapt global knowledge and create knowledge locally through language education.
- Invest in human capital to increase the ability to absorb and use knowledge; and
- Invest in technologies to facilitate both acquisition and the absorption of knowledge.

Similarly, Fafunwa (1979) defines education as “the aggregate of all behavior which is of positive value to the society in which the child lives. Hence, is a process of disseminating knowledge either to ensure social control or to guarantee rational direction of the society or both. It is then expedient that language education should be made more functional in order to attain the stipulated objectives of education in Nigeria in Nigeria as it is in the National Policy on Education (2004).

The functionality of education and language exists where it is used to ensure the effectiveness of individuals in the society and its general development. Language education refers to the institution of language studies in schools. The language will be studied by the students to enhance the general development of the society. Tupas (2015) asserts that the complex relationships between language,

education and national building focus on how language policies are used by states and government as instruments of control, assimilation and empowerment.

### **Unique properties of language**

Naturally, language has many unique properties among which are the dual role it plays in most known formal educational systems. Thus its features on one hand, as a subject in the school curriculum accordingly permits one to talk of language education in much the same way that one would talk of physics education, science education, economics education and the like (Bamgbose, 2014). On the other hand and completely unlike any other subjects on the curriculum, it also serves all over the world as the means or medium of instruction in all subjects (Brann, 2014). Thus, language education and language are interwoven and it is a vital medium through which all subjects are taught in schools and greater attention should be given to its study by the government and other stakeholders.

The early effort in language education was introduced in Nigeria by the Christian missionaries just before the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For about four decades after that, both the nature and main thrust of language education in Nigeria were completely left out in the hands of the missionaries (Idris, 2014). However, not everybody liked or approved of the products of such system of education. Thus the products of the educational system were dysfunctional in the society. This singular defect made the government find other stakeholder in education to look for a viable language education that will serve Nigeria's purpose especially the functional adoption of individuals in the society.

The birth of national policy on education emerged after the attainment of political independence in Nigeria. According to Bularidi (2013), some people felt and openly canvassed twenty years back in the parliament for English to be replaced with one of our indigenous languages as official language. Bularidi further argued that others who were particularly worried by the problem most people in the country encountered in understanding English and communicating well in it, advised that more effort should be put in to the teaching of major indigenous languages to enable them to serve as an alternative to English as official means of communication in government and business (Osaji, 2014).

The overall effect of these suggestions and pressures brought about an important shift in the attitude of government, particularly at the Federal level. According to Ibrahim (2014), the shift took off as an admission by government of what had long been known to linguists and anthropologists, that a language is simultaneously a vehicle for a people's culture and a means of maintaining and indefinitely preserving culture. Hence, more attention should be given not only to the study of indigenous languages; it should also be used in all the spheres of human endeavours. Morris (2014) argued that in addition to seeing the relationship between language and culture, the government also came to see the indigenous knowledge and languages more clearly for what they had all along been viz, a veritable and practical means of communication.

Thus in an official document first published in 1977, revised in 1981, 2004 and titled Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education (NPE), the federal government for the first time laid it down as a policy that:

- In primary school, which lasts six years, each child must study two languages, namely:

- i. His mother-tongue (if available for study) or an indigenous language of wider communication in his area of domicile, and
  - ii. English language.
- In junior secondary school (JSS), which is of three years duration, the child must study three languages, viz (a) his mother-tongue (available for study) or an indigenous language of wide communication in his area of domicile, and
  - Just any one of the three major indigenous languages in the country, namely Hausa, Ìgbò and Yorùbá provided the language chosen is distinct from the child's mother-tongue.
  - In senior schools (SSS), which also last three years, the child must study two languages, viz. (a) an indigenous languages and (b) English language. French and Arabic exist under the policy as language options at both the junior and senior secondary school levels, (NPE), PGE, 2004). It is pertinent that, indigenous languages in Nigeria should be given a pride of place in Nigeria's education system (Ibrahim, 2014).

Nigeria as a nation-state has multiple ethnic groups with varying ethnic languages. As each of the languages in by definition a mother-tongue in theory they all qualify to be taught as school subjects under the NPE policy on language education in primary and junior secondary schools. However, because most of them have small numbers of speakers, it would not be practical to teach them as school subjects. According to Brann (2015), the former National Language Center, now the current Language Development Center (LDC), placed under Nigeria Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) in 1976 suggested thus: in addition to three major languages, Hausa, Ìgbò and Yorùbá and nine other indigenous languages in the country should be allowed to feature in the country's formal school system. They are: Edo, Fulfulde, Ibibio, Idoma, Igala, Ijo, Kanuri, Nupe and Tiv.

Tilly (2014) argued that Nation-building is an architectural metaphor which, strictly speaking implies the existence of consciously acting agents such as architects, engineers, carpenters, and the like. However, as used by political scientists, the term covers, not only conscious strategies initiated by state leaders but also unplanned societal change. In the apt phase of Oyvind (2015), the concept of Nation-building became for political science what industrialization was to social economy: an indispensable tool for detecting, describing and analyzing the macrostructural and sociological dynamics that have produced the modern state.

From the above discussion, in many multi-ethnic (proto) societies like Nigeria, the impetus for pushing through social integration and creating a nation-state came and comes from the state apparatus itself, using methods like material incentives (financial, economic, public service, employment and like) or cultural means (languages policy, education system policy in religion) or compulsion. Hence, language has an essential role in ensuring Nation-building. But there seems to be some problems in the use of language education in Nation-building. The greatest problem of language education to Nation-building in Nigeria is that of responsibility and control. In this exercise, the various agencies of education are actively involved at times the unhealthy pattern of this rivalry or competition is often determined by the nature and problems of development itself. In this connections Castle (2015) sees underdevelopment as a constellation of circumstances, physical, social and political, which contribute to the deprivation of the minds as well as the body. It involves the poverty that debilitates health, the ignorance and superstition which depress the

human spirit, the conservation that resists college, the social privileges which inhibit the fruition and proper use of talent and skill (Castle, 2015).

### **Factors inhibiting the use of Language for Nation building**

Apart from the above, other visible problem of the use of language education may be poor staffing of schools in Nigeria. Obododimma (2014) argued that the hub of any teaching and learning center depends on the quality of teachers employed to implement the curriculum. Other problems are poor funding of schools and divergences on the level of entrance into the teaching profession among others.

Another problem inhibiting the use of language education to enhance Nation-building is Language Conflict. Musteysha (2015), claims that this is a natural occurrence among languages and/or language speakers that compete for dominance and/or survival. According to Webb (2013), conflict linguistics deal with situations in which two or more languages or varieties of languages that are in contact with each other and (used in the same communities) are also in a state of competition that is, in a relationship of tension. This singular situation does not give room for national cohesion and building and this affects national development in all its ramifications (Abolaji, 2015).

Studies on the language education situation in Nigeria also report that there is competition among the local languages especially between the languages of the majority ethnic groups and languages of the minority ethnic groups on the other hand. Abu (2015) observed that this singular situation has greatly affected the functionality of language in relation to its role to Nation-building.

Generally, language education as it is geared towards self-realization, better human relationship, individual national efficiency and national-building as well as towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific progress. In order to achieve the above, there must be an effective means of ensuring the functionality of language education in Nigeria to enhance Nation-building which ultimately ensure national development.

It is against this background the researcher embarks on this study. The study is guided by two research questions:

1. What are the roles of language education in enhancing Nation-building in South-east Nigeria?
2. What are the problems hindering the strategic roles of language education in Nation-building in South-east Nigeria?

### **Method**

The design adopted for this study was descriptive survey, which was used to obtain information from the respondents. The design was chosen because the study seeks to collect data on the particular features of a given population in a systematic manner such that the findings are expected to be generalized to the entire population (Nwogu, 2006). The area of the study was all the federal universities in southern-east Nigeria. The population of the study was the head of departments (lecturers) in language education departments in the federal universities in South-east Nigeria. The sample of the study constituted 80 language education lecturers drawn through stratified simple random sampling technique. A-20 item questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Items 1-10 were based on the roles of language education in Nation-building in

Southern-east Nigeria. Items 11-20 were based on the problems hindering the strategic roles of language education in Nation-building in South-east Nigeria. The instrument was structured on a 4-point likert scale on which the respondents acted on. The items in the questionnaire were weighted as follows: strongly Agree (SA) – 4 points, Agree (A) – 3 points, Disagree (D) – 2 points and Strong Disagree (SD) – 1 point. The criteria mean was 2.50. The instrument was face validated by two senior lecturers in language education and one in measurement and evaluation all from University of Nigeria Nsukka. The Cronback Alpha co-efficient method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. It yielded a co-efficient of 0.83 with overall reliability of 0.84. A total of 80 copies of the instrument were administered and retrieved. The data was analyzed using mean scores. Any item with a rating of 2.50 and above was accepted value while item with a mean rating below 2.50 was rejected.

## Results

The results of the data collected from the study are presented in table 1 and 2 according to the research questions.

### Research Question One

What are the roles of language education in Nation-building in South-east Nigeria?

**Table 1: Rules of language educations in Nation-building in South-east Nigeria**

S/N	Statement	Mean	St,D	Decision
1	Language education functionality enhances national cohesion.	3.50	1.018	Accepted
2	It also helps to reduce social unrest like riots in the nation.	2.50	1.153	Accepted
3	Language education helps to reduce conflict in Nigeria.	2.60	1.666	Accepted
4	The tapping of the potentials of language education helps to reduce terrorist attacks as all understand the language spoken.	3.00	1.778	Accepted
5	The terrorist of language education enhance political cohesion and stability.	2.50	0.529	Accepted
6	The study of language education helps to train manpower that will help tap the nation's abundant resources for economic development.	3.10	0.632	Accepted
7	It also enhances cultural integration of the multi-ethnic groups in Nigeria for Nation-building.	3.00	0.129	Accepted
8	Language education will enhance or promote intermarriage through interaction among the different cultures in Nigeria.	2.50	1.211	Accepted
9	Language education will help in strengthening mother-tongue education in line with the current language policy in Nigeria.	2.65	1.016	Accepted
10	Language education gives room for parallel recognition and popularization of local languages alongside second language (L <sub>2</sub> ) so that they can gain respectability.	2.55	0.723	Accepted
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.80</b>		

Data presented above in table 1 shows that the respondents agreed that all these items are the major or strategic functional role of language education in nation-building in South-east Nigeria. All the items have mean scores above 2.50 which is the criterion mean of acceptance. The grand mean is 2.80.

## Research Question Two

What are the problems hindering the strategic roles of language education in nation-building in South-east Nigeria?

**Table 1: Problems hindering the strategic roles of language education in nation-building in South-east Nigeria**

S/N	Statement	Mean	St,D	Decision
11	Poor funding of language education programme in Nigeria.	2.53	0.351	Accepted
12	Inadequate infrastructure facilities for teaching language education in schools.	2.56	0.214	Accepted
13	Inadequate language education teacher in schools.	2.56	0.532	Accepted
14	Non-existing functional language laboratories in schools that show case Nation-building	2.71	0.241	Accepted
15	Inability of language education teachers, to improvise instructional materials while teaching.	2.82	0.541	Accepted
16	Non-integration of Nation-building idea in the programme of language education.	2.56	0.572	Accepted
17	Non-integration of local languages in the school curriculum at all levels with emphasis on Nation-building.	2.79	0.524	Accepted
18	Non-provision of language education programme in schools.	2.75	0.632	Accepted
19	Poor research habit in language education programme in schools.	2.51	0.631	Accepted
20	The existence of language conflict in language education programme.	2.50	0.523	Accepted
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.83</b>		

Table 2 revealed that the teachers agreed that all the above are the problems hindering the strategic roles of language education in nation-building, hence, the grand mean of 2.83 is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50.

## Discussion

The findings of this study on the roles of language education in Nation-building shows that language functionality enhances nation-building cohesion, it helps to reduce social unrest and conflict in the nation, reduction of terrorists attack when people understand themselves not minding linguistic difference. The tenets or programmes of language education enhances national cohesion and stability; language manpower help to tap the nations resource for development, it enhances cultural, integration of the multi-ethnic groups in Nigeria, it enhances intermarriage through interaction among different centers in Nigeria, language education strengthen mother-tongue education in line with the current language policy in Nigeria. Language education helps for parallel recognition and popularization of local languages alongside the second language and the like. The role of language education to Nation-building was highlighted by Tupas (2015), thus “the complex relationships between language, education and nation-building focuses on how language policies are used by states and governments as instrument of control, assimilation, and empowerment of her citizens”.

By this, language education plays an enviable role in ensuring nation-building as it helps to articulate the political, economic, socio-cultural and religious life of the people in a given nation like Nigeria. When positively used, it will ultimately give unquantifiable room for the long search for national development, peace and stability. In line with the above, Brann (2014) observed that language is the vehicle through which all education processes are articulated. Thus, he argued that it is the tool which is used to teach all subjects in all levels of a nation's education sector. Hence, it plays an enviable role in Nation-building. Also, Oyvind (2015) argued that language education promotes nation-building through cultural means which comprise language policy and education system operational in a given society like Nigeria. All these roles accrue to Nigeria in her bid for accelerated nation-building through language education. This will be made functional or realistic if the identified hindrances are tackled as they arise.

The findings of the study also showed that if all the problems hindering the strategic roles of language education in Nation-building in Nigeria are adhere to, the pace of development in all spheres of life will be accelerated. The problems include poor funding of language education programmed in Nigeria, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate language education teachers, non-existing language laboratories, the inability of language teachers to improvise instructional materials that referent national integration traits while teaching, non-integration of National values in the programme of language education in Nigeria, non-integration of local languages that reflect Nation-building ideas in language curriculum in Nigeria, non-provision of language centers, poor research habit in language education that reflect Nation-building, the existence of language conflict in language education programme.

Based on the above responses from the teachers of language education, it can be inferred that the use of language education to enhance Nation-building in South-east, Nigeria has been stalled by these problems. In line with the above, Castle (2015) emphasized that unhealthy rivalry among languages in language education programme hinders the aim of attaining Nation-building through language. Obododimma (2014) further argued that quality teachers and non-existence of those facilities that aid teaching and learning will make it very difficult to produce the manpower. Furthermore, Webb (2013) asserts that language conflict also affects the role of language education in Nation-building. This is due to the fact that when one language is preferred to the other, it does not give room for national cohesion. Thus, if language education is to take its place in Nation-building, all the stakeholders in the education sector should take a synergic approach to enhance the role of language education in Nation-building.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The use of language education for National development is a welcome development. This is because it will enhance the needed development of the South-east, Nigeria in the political, economic, socio-cultural and religious life of the Nigerian. This will also help to make our learners in all areas of life to be functional in the society. Based on the foregoing, the researchers recommended as follows:

1. Resource persons on language and Nation-building should be invited to schools to talk to students on the importance of language education in Nation-building.
2. All the stakeholders in education sector should take synergy approach to enhance the enviable roles of language functionality in Nation-building.

3. Qualified teachers in language education should be recreated with the tenets of Nation-building as a bias to realize the development of the Nation.
4. The government should establish language laboratories and centers which will show care the National values for indelible integration among the more than 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria.
5. The planners in education sector should streamline the dialectical differences in tune with Nation-building.
6. The language curriculum in like with nation-building aspirations should be integrated by the educational planners.
7. The integration of local languages in the curriculum for our primary, secondary and tertiary education as a school subject in line with the Nation-building aspirations for development purposes.
8. Language education teachers should be exposed to sensitization programmes like seminars, workshops to broaden their intellectual horizon on the importance of Nation-building for the development of Nigeria state.
9. Authors in language education should incorporate Nation-building in their texts to keep the people abreast on the essence of Nation-building through language to enable the individuals to be functional in the society.
10. The government and other stakeholders in language education should provide instructional materials that have nation-building bias to enhance a holistic approach to Nation-building.

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## ENHANCING LANGUAGE USAGE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

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### **Abstract**

*This paper dwells on “enhancing language usage of secondary school students through guidance and counselling”. The paper addressed the following - language and language usage, meaning of guidance and counselling, different guidance and counselling services as well as how guidance and counselling can help to enhance the language usage of secondary school students. The paper noted that the seeming inability of secondary school students to use language as expected and as stipulated in the NPE could pose serious threats to their performance and achievement in their academic pursuits. Poor language development and usage among our students as indicated in the paper distort not only students’ interests but also undermine their academic performances. It is suggested among others that every student should be encouraged to visit and make use of the services provided by guidance counsellors so as to enhance their language usage for optimum positive achievement.*

### **Introduction**

The national policy on Education has come a long way. It envisaged a widespread change in nearly all the facets of our education and language is one of them. It recognized the language of the environment (mother tongue) and English as mediums of instruction NPE (2004: 9).

Language according to Muhd (2009) is a vehicle for communicating messages and meanings. Language is a tool that enables human beings to express their thoughts and feelings and gives the sense of belongingness and security. In another view, Madukwe & Ehinze (2012) stated that language is not only a means of communication and instruction but also a mark of life, identity, dignity and a means of controlling reality.

But how do our students acquire language and make effective use of it? Lamidi (2008) stresses that it happens through Language Acquisition Device (LAD), a biological endowment of humans which makes it easy for each person to acquire the language of his environment. This makes the writers wonder why our students’ use of language is very poor. The seeming inability of our secondary school students to use language appropriately and as stipulated in the NPE has raised critical questions on the standard of education which people say has fallen, credibility of teachers, the natural presence of LAD and even the efforts of government towards education.

For some time now, poor language usage among students has assumed a worrisome dimension. The consequences especially as regards academic performance of these students cannot be quantified. The pattern of ill-use of language by students has assumed an alarming proportion especially with current issues of modern technology – in the use of mobile phones, SMS, e-mail,

whatsapp etc to the extent that students' interactions, learning modes and communication generally are faulty.

Before now, (later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> c), a primary six child could write letters and interpret language but now many students of our tertiary institutions can hardly make meaningful, correct sentences. They are neither good in the mother tongue nor in the second language. So what is wrong with students' language acquisition and usage? These make the writers believe that students' language usage can be enhanced through guidance and counselling hence this paper.

### **Language and Language Usage:**

Language is a crucial issue in the education of every individual. The major languages in Nigeria include the mother tongue, the English language (official language) and a foreign language (French). Language emanates from the culture of a given society.

Rose, Stella and Angela (2012) defined language as a complex and arbitrary system of vocal sound used by man for communication in a given community. They further emphasized that language is viewed as instrument of communication irrespective of the smallness of the language community. Language provides a medium for a student to express his/her notions. The importance of language in education cannot be over emphasized as it serves as the instrument of thought.

Muhd (2009) is of the view that language is the unique property of human beings and that any sustainable development of man be it intellectual, moral, political, social or economical depends largely on the instrumentality of language hence the need for students to improve on their language usage.

According to Bloom (1988), use of language refers to the reason why individuals speak and the ways they construct conversations, depending upon what they know about the listener and the context. For effective language usage the writers highlighted the following strategies to be adopted:

- Use of communicative behaviours
- Establishing an interactive environment which involves generation of peer interaction via play or group activities and use of intelligent peers as role models.
- Develop opportunities and motivation to communicate and provision of choice.
- Social interaction.

Based on the above assertions, language usage seems to occur most effectively when students have opportunity to use language for real purpose or activity.

The school should provide opportunities or activities that will help students develop and use language appropriately because poor language development and usage will not only distort students interest but also undermine their academic performances.

### **Meaning of Guidance and Counselling**

**Counselling:** – Yahaya (2002) defines counselling as an important activity that basically assists people to understand themselves and the environment in which they find themselves, and helps them take effective decisions necessary for their personal growth and development. Okon (1984) defines counselling as collaborative intimate relationship between a counsellor and a client which allows the counsellee to freely express himself and the problem he is experiencing. Counselling

therefore as part of guidance is an interaction that involves the counsellor and the client with the sole aim of resolving problems.

**Guidance:** Zera in Omebe (2005) defined guidance as a process, developmental in nature by which an individual is assisted to understand, accept and utilize his attitude, interests and attitudinal patterns in relation to his aspirations. Guidance serves as a vehicle to download individual potentialities.

What could be deduced from the definitions above is that guidance and counselling could be defined as a process that caters for the need of the individual with the focus on assisting him/her explore and understand his potential. Such counselling services should be designed to guide students through improved means of communication in relation to solving their emotional problems. This is executed via the effort of a counsellor.

Anagbogu (2002) defines the counsellor as a professional, who via diagnosis, planning, predicting, interpretation and evaluation, provides educational, personal and vocational assistance to the clients in such a way that it would reflect their interest, objectives, potentialities and needs for effective adjustments. The definition above outlined the basic operational functions and roles of the school counsellors in their bid to enhance the well-being of students including improvement of good command of language.

Furthermore, in support of the above comment, Okeke (2003) highlighted the major guidance services/aids conducted in schools to include orientation, counselling, information, appraisal, placement, referrals, evaluation, follow-up and research. As earlier stated, language is the instrument for rendering these aforementioned services. For effective counselling services, the counsellor handles dissimilar issues under individual counselling and similar issues in groups. The students in groups are further streamlined into: individual to group, and group to individual.

### **The Role of Guidance and Counselling in the Enhancement of Language Usage**

Rose et al (2012) opines that language is an important means of communication and communication leads to a better understanding of the subject matter; a child must understand and use the language of instruction properly. It is not a gainsaying, that guidance and counselling contributes immensely to the promotion of successful communication both in the classroom and outside the classroom. They defined communication as the process of transmitting information, messages, thoughts, feelings, emotion from one person to another either verbally (spoken words) or non verbally (body language).

The main aim of counselling is to solve problems through proper dissemination of information. Without proper language usage counselling, the whole purpose of communication is endangered. During guidance programme there is usually a network for communication. The counsellor may communicate with the whole class or a group or an individual. Students communicate with fellow students on one-on-one basis, in pairs or in groups. These activities enhance communication skills which include listening, reading, speaking and writing (Rose et al, 2012).

Onyemerekeya & Ugwuegbulam (2005) discussed different services of guidance programmes in secondary schools which among others are information, referral, counselling and orientation services. Through these services, language usage is enhanced as discussed below:

### **Information Services**

Counsellors via information services educate students on proper language usage. Students are encouraged on the need to listen to radio and television as vital modern media of communication and be able to discuss in groups, some current events or issues. Guidance and counselling expose students to ideas that will enable them improve their language usage in relation to their levels of education.

### **Counselling Service**

Iwuama (2007) described counselling as a relationship between a professionally trained competent counsellor and an individual seeking help in gaining greater self understanding, improved decision making and behaviour changing skills for problem resolution and developmental growth. Students (clients) need to redress the challenge of ineffectiveness in communication and interactions as a result of poor language usage. The counsellor analyses and interprets the rate or level of individual's language usage and proffer solution to improve students who fall below standard in expression. The counsellor allows free expression of notions and establishes conducive environment of willingness and readiness to listen to students. Moreover, the counsellors can also have a counselling session with teachers on how to improve students' language usage, giving the teachers strategies and skills to adopt.

### **Orientation Service:**

Students are assisted to select and make use of available opportunity within their new environment. Counsellors acquaint new students with the language of the new environment. Information necessary for them to adapt well in their environment is given to them. The students through orientation services are made to understand early enough the need for them to use language appropriately so as to enhance their personality, acceptance and academic performance.

### **Referral Service**

The objective of any guidance programme is to enable all students, regardless of individual differences to acquire the educational, occupational and social competences necessary to function in a changing society (Onyemerekeya et al, 2005). Counsellors play the role of referring students who are impeded language wise to the appropriate facilitator for proper guidance. Other techniques employed by counsellors in the enhancement of language include Group Guidance, vocational counselling technology or career counselling, seminar and workshops.

**Group Counselling:** Group counselling according to Ekwe, Iwuama and Nwamuois seen as a "collection of two or more persons who interact with one another in a way that each person influences and is influenced by the others." (p. 36). The counsellor and members of the group share ideas, feelings and experience together. Social interaction is imperative for language improvement. Counsellors help students to improve in the use of language via strong group cohesiveness. Members of individuals share ideas among group and involve in group discussion, brain storming, writing and speech competition. Through these, group members use of language is enhanced.

**Vocational counselling/ Career day or week:** Counselling in this regard exposes students to know their abilities and interest in the selection of subjects and activities that will lead to the attainment of engaging in the right career. Brown and Denga (2010) posit that counselling stands to take necessary care of individual in respect of vocational choice. Vocational information is carried out through oral or written language between the counsellor and the student. Hence it is another channel for circulating proper use of language, which will enable students to fit into the world of work later in life.

**Seminars and Workshops:** Through seminars and workshops students get to be endowed with knowledge from different facets of study. Resource persons on language enhancement and development are invited to deliver papers. Students are encouraged to ask questions for clarity of purpose and through such processes improve on their oral presentation and language usage.

### **Conclusion**

Basically, language is needed by any nation for education, communication and economic activities. Language is seen as the vehicle to transmit culture from one generation to another. Meanwhile the issue of language usage has posed a host of problems among youngsters especially those in secondary school. Therefore, the need for effective communication and interaction in society calls for language usage enhancement. Furthermore, using guidance and counselling services in schools will contribute in no small measure to the treatment of this problem of wrong use of language by applying different strategies.

### **Recommendations**

The writers recommend the following so as to enhance students' language usage through guidance and counselling.

1. The home and school should encourage students to visit guidance counsellors and make use of their services so as to enhance their language usage.
2. Students who distinguished themselves in the use of appropriate language should be rewarded by parents, school administrators and even the government.
3. Professional counsellors should try and give an all embracing counselling using all the guidance services instead of giving selective counselling.
4. Counsellors should encourage students to enroll into co-curricular activities like debate and quiz clubs so as to enhance their language usage.
5. Leadership positions should be given to students by the schools and opportunities created to allow them address staff and students; this will help to enhance their language usage.
6. Teachers should encourage the speaking of correct language (whether mother tongue or English) by the students.

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## THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY – PERSPECTIVE OF IJAW LANGUAGE

By

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### **Abstract**

*Language is an indispensable tool for keeping and transmitting a people's culture. Language is the basic factor in communication. To be communicative is to be understood. Every aspect of human behavior or endeavour can be expressed through language. Human language is culturally transmitted so long as children are exposed to the language of their parents. This paper presents 'the role of language in society; perspective of Ijaw language'. Ijoid is a language family spoken only in the Niger Delta in Nigeria consisting of Defaka, a tiny endangered language, and Ijo, a language cluster, Bender – Samuel (1989). The aim of this paper is to determine the language spread and the prospects of the language for the speakers. We made a sample selection of four dialects of Ijaw to demonstrate the word order paradigm. We collected data from the native speakers of the language. Results provide insights into the negligence and lack of interest by the youths in the language. Most of the Ijaw students do not know the orthographic, phonological, morphological, syntactic and the semantic features of their mother tongue. There is a need for a pragmatic approach to the medium of instruction whereby mother tongue and foreign languages will be on an equal basis and prevent the creation of a psychological gap in the development of the child.*

### **1.0 Introduction**

This paper presents the role of language in society. The perspective is on Ijaw language spoken in the Niger Delta of southern Nigeria. Many Nigerian students believe so much in English as a superior language more than their mother tongues. This is a psychological barrier to the mother tongue literacy in Nigerian language. Personally I have interviewed many students in my class in relation to the orthography, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics of their mother tongues. We prepared a list of English sentences which was shared to some Ijaw students to write out the sentences in Ijaw language. The response we got from the students was very poor. This is the reason why we decided to write this paper.

The paper has four parts. The first part discusses what Language is, and language contact in colonial Nigeria. The second part presents the identification of the role of first language (mother-tongue or language one L1) in Nigeria. The third part exhibits the role of English in Nigeria. The last part presents the Ijaw languages in Nigeria.

### **2.0 What Language is and Language Contact in Colonial Nigeria**

According to the International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English language (2003), language is defined as: "The expression and communication of emotions or ideas between human beings by means of speech and hearing the sounds spoken or heard being systematized and confirmed by usage among a given people over a period of time".

In his essay on language, Hall (1968:158), tells us that language is, “The Institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral – auditory arbitrary symbols”. According to Chomsky (1957), “A language is a set ( finite or infinite ) of sentences , each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements.” According to Chomsky, all natural languages, in either their spoken or their written form, are languages in the sense of his definition: since

- (a) Each natural language has a finite number of sounds in it (and a finite number of letters in its alphabet – on the assumption that it has an alphabetic writing system); and
- (b) Although there may be infinitely many distinct sentences in the language, each sentence can be represented as a finite sequence of these sounds (or letters). It is the task of the linguist describing some particular natural language to determine which of the finite sequences of elements in that language sentences are and which non-sentences are.

Chomsky’s definition of language focused attention upon the purely structural properties of languages (structure – dependence) i.e, the processes whereby sentences are constructed in natural languages. Language, however, is distinctively a human system of communication, based on oral and written symbols.

Nigeria existed before the formation of the political space called Nigeria in 1914 through the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorate by Lord Lugard, Martin, (2013). The English language also existed in this geographical space before the political entity was created. Prior to the colonial era and long before the amalgamation, these different ethnic nationalities existed as empires, kingdoms, or nations with their own languages, customs and territorial boundaries. They had contacts in form of trade, intermarriages etc. The earliest contact between the indigenous nationalities and the European explorers was at about 1469. The earliest contact was made with the coastal people of the Niger Delta where the visitors found rivers through which they navigated a little inland Elugbe (1991). From the 17thC, the British people became the major traders with the people of the coastal areas and had many trade posts. In 1884, at Berlin, in Germany, Nigeria was partitioned to the British empire to administer. From this came fully the contact between the English language and the indigenous Nigerian languages. From trade to missionary activities and to colonialism, there arose the urgent need to communicate with the natives to facilitate their missions. Language became the prime factor to achieve all these.

Society is a group of people related to each other through persistent relations or a large social grouping of humans sharing some geographical location or territory. Human societies are usually characterized by patterns of relations between and among individuals who share a distinctive culture and institutions. In this paper the Niger Delta refer to a body of individuals bound together by such characteristics of national or cultural identity, social solidarity, language or hierarchical organization.

Ijaw (also known by the subgroups “Ijo” or “Izon”) are a collection of people mostly in the forest regions of the Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers States within the Niger Delta in Nigeria Martin (2013). Some are resident in Akwa-Ibom, Edo, and Ondo states also in Nigeria. Many are found as migrant fishermen in camps as far west as Sierra Leone and as far east as Gabon along the Western Africa coastline Kouwenberg, (1994).

The Ijo people number about an estimated 3.4 million Kari, (2004). They have long lived in locations near many sea trade routes, and they were well connected to other areas by trade as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The immediate past President of Nigeria, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, is an Ijaw person.

## 2.1 The Identification of the Roles of First Language in Nigeria

Mother-tongue is one's language at birth, the language of the native community into which the child is born. First language is also known as the mother-tongue or language one. It is called mother tongue because a child acquires it from the parents who are culturally bound to speak their native languages. A child who grows up in his or her village is expected to speak the language of the immediate environment, which is the mother-tongue. We present some major roles of first language below:

1. First language is used as a means for getting things done – for functional purposes such as for expressing one's emotion, feelings, thought and needs
2. First language is used for controlling other behaviour through such practices as warning, advising, persuading, encouraging, correcting and directing through various forms of control like:
  - (a) Prohibition, "You should not take things that do not belong to you".  
You should not fight with people rather you should be at peace with one another. This will make you to be a good citizen of your society. You should never insult anybody. "Do not urinate here".
  - (b) Threat of reprisal if behaviour is not discontinued e.g. "I will punish you if you do that again".
  - (c). Emotional blackmail, e.g. "You will give your mother hypertension if you continue with your bad behaviour".
3. First language is used for inter- personal purposes like getting along with others, for social interaction such as greeting, praising, sympathizing, joking etc.,
4. First language is used for the exploration of the child's own identity. It is regarded as language of awareness as a form of the child's own individuality. With the normal child, awareness of oneself is closely tied up with speech.
5. Representational Function - First language is described as symbolic because it can convey messages or information or even express proposition. Counting or numeracy is usually begun in mother-tongue. Mathematical symbols and formula are representational language, Olaoye (2007).

Mother-tongue is different from the school language. The school language is 'language two' – the English language which is characterized with the pupil/student – teacher relationship which functions at the official level. Mother-tongue is characterized with the mother/father – child relationship which functions at the informal level where the child is free to express himself or herself at any length. Without first language, the development and transmission of shared values and traditions would be impossible within a given community. This is one of the reasons why an indigene of a particular place would enjoy the jokes, comprehend the idiomatic expressions and interpret correctly even the non-verbal signs that make up the totality of that community's language.

Every parent should discourage the children from using the second language to greet elders in the villages like: "Fubara say hi to uncle, grandma, and grandpa", Kombotari how you de? "hello to

you all". The children should be encouraged to use their indigenous languages at home. If we love our local languages, it will help to maintain peace and unity in our society.

## 2.2 The Role of English in Nigeria

English is the official language in Nigeria. It is our lingua franca. It is used for the purposes of government and administration for instance, Nigeria Constitution, government records, administrative instructions or directives, legislative procedures, court proceeding and minutes of official meetings etc, are all in English.

English is a language for specialized education. It is used as the medium of instruction from elementary to the university level. This means that the Nigerian learner's access to the cultural and scientific knowledge of the world is largely through English. English is a language for the mass media. For instance, most National Newspapers are published in English. Over the radio most of the non-musical programmes such as feature talks, news items, lectures and other educational programmes as well as advertisements are in English. Television programmes are also done in English.

Another role of English in Nigeria is as a medium of social communication. Nigeria has more than four hundred and fifty local languages in Nigeria. We are a multilingual society where many indigenous languages are used. English is therefore the only effective medium of interpersonal communication between Nigerians from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds, and also between literate Nigerians and foreigners who speak English. English is in a predominant position in business and commerce in Nigeria. Business records, contract tenders, business advertisements, accounts and certificates are generally in English.

In language education, goals are usually determined by the role which a particular language is expected to play in and outside the school curriculum Olaoye, (2007). In pursuance of the objectives of the new National Policy on Education, especially Mother-Tongue Education, the role of English is being slightly de-emphasized at the early stage of the child's primary education. According to the language policy, the language of the immediate community is to be used as the medium of instruction for classes one to three in the primary school. English is to be taught as a subject throughout the primary school course, and used as medium of instruction only from classes 4 to 6. The National Policy on education was first published in 1977, the second and third editions were published in 1981 and 1998 respectively in keeping with the dynamics of social change and the demands on education. The fourth edition was necessitated by some policy innovations and changes, this was published in 2004. When, the National Policy was first enunciated in 1977 the educational system was 'manual' –driven, while almost 39 years on, education has become electronically/globally ICT-driven and Nigeria cannot be an exception. That is why we now have such concepts as e-education, e-classrooms, e-library etc. We can extend this e-education to our local languages. Today Nigeria operates on a 9-3-4 system:

- Primary School                      6 years
  - Junior Secondary School      3 years
  - Senior Secondary School      3 years
  - University First Degree        4 years
- Scope of Universal Basic Education (UBE).  
Source: Federal Ministry of Education

### 3.0 Ijaw Languages

Human language is a unique system of communication. The most important function of language is for individuals to pass on information from one person to another. Language serves as a means of understanding ourselves and our society. The Ijaw language is the language spoken by the Ijaw people in southern Nigeria. The Ijaw speak nine closely related Niger-Congo languages, all of which belong to the Ijoid branch of the Niger-Congo tree. The primary division between the Ijo languages is that between Eastern Ijo and Western Ijo Martins (2013).

Western Ijaw speakers are: Ekeremor, Sagbama (Mein), Bassan, Apoi, Arogbo, Boma (Bumo), Kabo (Kabouwei), Ogboin, Tarakiri, and Kololuma-Opokuma (Yenagoa). Nembe, Brass and Akassa (Akaha) dialects represent Southeast Ijo (Izon). Buseni and Okordia dialects are considered Inland Ijo.

Eastern Ijaw speakers are: Kalabari, the name of one of the Ijaw clans that reside on the eastern side of the Niger-Delta (Abonnema, Buguma, Bakana, Degema etc.) who form a major group in Rivers State. Other “Eastern” Ijaw clans are the Okrika, Ibani (the natives of Bonny, Finima and Opobo) and Nkoroo. They are neighbours to the Kalabari people in present day Rivers State, Nigeria.

The Ijaw ethnic group consists of 50 loosely affiliated tribes. These clans are based along kinship lines and/ or shared cultural and religious traditions. The Ijaw ethnic group is represented below.

<b>Name</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Alternate Names</b>
Akassa	Bayelsa	Akaha, Akasa
Andoni	Rivers, Akwa Ibom	Obolo
Apoi (Eastern)	Bayelsa	
Apoi (Western)	Ondo	
Arogbo	Ondo	
Bassan	Bayelsa	Basan
Bille	Rivers	Bile, Bili
Bumo	Bayelsa	Boma, Bomo
Bonny	Rivers	Ibani, Ubani
Buseni	Bayelsa	Biseni
Egbema	Delta, Edo	
Ekeremor	Bayelsa	Operemor, Ekeremo
Ekpetiama	Bayelsa	
Engenni	Rivers	Ngeni
Epie-Atissa	Bayelsa	
Furupagha	Edo	
Gbaranmatu	Delta	Gbaranmatu
Gbaran	Bayelsa	Gbarain
Iduwini	Delta	
Isaba	Delta	
Kabo	Delta	Kabouwei, Kabou
Kalabari	Rivers	
Kolokuma	Bayelsa	
Kula	Rivers	

Kumbo	Delta	Kumbowei
Mein	Delta	
Nembe	Bayelsa	
Nkoro	Rivers	Kala Kirika
Obotebe	Delta	
Odimodi	Delta	
Ogbe	Delta	Ogbe-Ijoh
Ogbia	Bayelsa	
Ogboin	Bayelsa	
Ogulagha	Delta	Ogula
Okordia	Bayelsa	Okodia, Akita
Okrika	Rivers	Wakirike
Olodiana (East)	Bayelsa	
Olodiana (West)	Edo	
Opobo	Rivers	
Opokuma	Bayelsa	
Oporoma	Bayelsa	Oporomo
Oruma	Bayelsa	Tugbene
Oyakiri	Bayelsa	Beni
Seimbiri	Delta	
Tarakiri (East)	Bayelsa	
Tarakiri (West)	Delta	
Tungbo	Bayelsa	
Tuomo	Delta	
Ukomu	Edo	
Zarama	Bayelsa	

**Martin, (2013)**

Results reveal that the speakers of Ijaw language are located in different states such as Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Edo, and Ondo. From the data, Bayelsa has the highest number of Ijaw speakers, followed by Delta and River states.

We collected data on some Ijaw languages on parts of the human body. The lexical items that we collected have physical resemblance, phonological, morphological and semantic relationship except the Ogbia dialect which is different from the other dialects. They are from one language family. The data is presented below.

<b>Amasoma (Southern Ijaw)</b>	<b>Bolu Toru</b>	<b>Otakeme Ogbia</b>	<b>Okirika</b>	<b>English</b>
1. Nini	Nini	Izon	Nini	Nose
2. Tebe	Tibi	Emu	Tilot	Head
3. Bebe	Bibi	Onu	Bipi	Mouth
4. Toru	Toru	Adien	Tomgbolu	Eye
5. Miliyei	Mulou	Anem	Bele	Tongue
6. Aka	Aka	Akai	Aka	Teeth
7. Coi	Kun	Orum	Kongo	Neck
8. Abele	Apele	Emuobhargua		Shoulder
9. Bira	Bira	Aguo	Bara	Hand

10. Mimi	Bira-esangbala	kparsala-guo	Baratungali	finger
11. Biri	Biri	Ewunu	Buo	Stomach
12. Agbobu	Agbobu	Ikpokpolgi	Ekpe	Chest
13. Mbu	Ombu	bubulu		Naval
14. Bowo	Buwou	Alike	Buo	Legs
15. Igbele	Emgbele	Edurumalike	Buoikpuku	Knee
16. Beri	Beri	Ato		Ear
17. Konutu	Konu	Egum	Kanju	Waist
18. Inido	Endou	Amamam		Breast

From the data above the lexical structures of Ogbia are different from the other dialects of Ijaw in phonology, morphology and semantic features. The reason might be that Ogbia must have diverged earlier from the family language tree.

#### 4.0 Solutions to the Neglect of Mother Tongue in Nigeria

Government should view investments on mother tongue literacy in Nigerian languages as long term affairs. The government should provide instructional materials and facilities in primary and secondary schools. The e-education should be introduced in our different schools. The government should encourage and provide trained Nigerian languages teachers in schools. Allowances should be given to language teachers by the state and Federal governments.

Students should have interest on the mother tongue literacy in Nigerian languages. Today many students are not competent in English and their mother tongues. They are not good in L1 and L2, this is a ridiculous situation.

Parents should also be proud of their languages because they are in a better position to advise their children/wards at home. Language teachers should help to encourage pupils and students to use L1 both in spoken and in written forms. Teachers should not harass their students who use their L1 in communication as some teachers always use this quotation to put fear on the children, 'If you speak your mother tongue I will flog you'. This will always bring fear in the minds of the children.

However, aggressive and steady work on the mother tongue literacy in Nigerian languages would liberate and sensitize the masses. Moreover qualitative and quantitative mother tongue literacy in Nigerian languages would harmonize and sharpen Nigerians impressions of themselves; they would become culturally aware of our society.

#### 5.0 Conclusion

We have demonstrated in this paper the role of language in society – perspective on Ijaw language. Basically, all languages perform certain functions – communication, emotional expression, social interaction, entertainment, logical, critical, or prepositional thinking and learning functions. The lack of use of L1 in the educational domain means that a wealth of knowledge is being locked away, and is gradually being lost. It is only by using our L1 that they will become the key resources for empowering communities to combat poverty, impoverishment and illiteracy. Our basic assumption is that the students of Ijaw have not given time and interest to their L1 in putting it into writing. The youths of today are leaders of tomorrow. The success of tomorrow is the preparation of today. This success could be achieved through the help of families, schools, government (local,

state and federal levels), communities, churches and individuals respectively for the promotion and development of our local languages.

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**NLEGHARA ANYA NKE IJI ASIISI EPUM MAOBU NKE OGBE AKIIZI IHE  
N'ULOAKWUKWO OATAAKARA NA NKE PRAIMARI: ITOGBU ASIISI  
NA OMENALA IGBO**

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**Imjedemede**

*Mkpa asusu epum di n'awa bu aja di n'ala. Aka mgba cheere ndi mbiarachwa na ndi mgbasa ozioma mgbe ha biara mba Afrika bu asulighi na aghotalighi asusu ndi nwe obodo ha biara. Nke a mere ha ji gbaa mbo niile ha nwere ike imuta asusu ndi ha biara n'obodo ha, nke nyeere ha nnukwu aka ichikwa na itoghata ndi mmadu. N'igbaso ukpuru ndi mbiarachwa na sitekwa n'ihuta mkpa na uru asusu ala anyi bara, iwu na-achikwa asusu ala anyi kwuru na a ga-eji asusu nne maobu nke ogbe kuziwere ndi otaakara na ndi praimari ihe n'uloakwukwo. Nchocha nke Fafunwa nke a kporo 'Ife Six Year Primary Project' gosiri kpomkwem na nwanta na aka aghota ihe n'asusu ya karia n'asusu mba ozo. Ka o di taa, nchocha anyi mere n'ufodu uloakwukwo otaakara na praimari ndi di n'okpuru ochichi Umuhia North nke steeti Abia gosiri na ma uloakwukwo goomenti ma nke ndi nkiti nwe, onweghi nke na-agbaso iwu a n'ozuzu oke. Nke a na-ebute itogbu asusu na omenala Igbo, aru na mpu ijuputa n'obodo, enweghi oganihu na enweghi nwanwa tote otokwuru n'ihie enyefeghi asusu na omenala Igbo n'aka umu na umuumu anyi ha. Edemede a ga-eleba anya n'ihe kpatara nleghara anya iji asusu nne akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari, oghom si ya n'ime aputa na usoro a ga-agbaso iji kwalite iji asusu nne maobu nke ogbe akuzi ihe n'ulo akwukwo ndi a.*

*The importance of language, especially mother tongue need not be over-emphasized. One of the greatest challenges faced by the colonial masters and the missionaries when they came to Africa was language barrier. This led to the extra effort made by the colonial masters and missionaries in learning the language of the host states/communities. This indeed aided them a lot in ruling and converting the people. In line with the emphasis on the importance of mother tongue (MT) or language of the immediate community (LIC) and the overall importance of the mother tongue over foreign languages, the Language Policy of the National Policy on Education stipulates that the child be taught in his/her mother tongue or language of the immediate community in the pre-primary and lower primary schools. The Ife Six Year Primary Project confirms that a child understands better when taught in his/her mother tongue As it stands today, the research we are carrying out in some primary schools in Umuhia North Local Government of Abia State, neither the government schools nor the private owned schools adhere to the above policy. This leads to annihilation of our language and culture, abundant ills in the society, lack of progress and inter-generational transfer of our language and culture. This paper x-rays the reasons for not adhering to the use of MT/LIC in the pre/primary schools, the negative influences on the society and proposes ways of encouraging the use of MT/LIC in the pre/primary schools.*

## 1.0 Mmalite

Obodo ọbụla nwere asụsụ ala ha nke e jiri mara ha. Asụsụ ha a na-apụta ihe n'ihe niile ha na-eme ma dịkwa ezi mkpa. Gọọmenti ala anyi matara ma kweta n'asụsụ bara ezi uru n'obodo ọbụla. Ọ bu nkea mere gọọmenti etiti ala Naijiria jiri weputa ebunnauche ya maka ihe niile gbasara agumakwukwọ n'ala anyi. Ọ ziputakwara onọdu asụsụ n'amumamu. Na nkea, gọọmenti n'atumaatụ ya anabatala asụsụ ala anyi ma nye nke ọbụla onọdu kwesiri ya.

- a. Asụsụ a na-asụ n'ala maọbu mba onye
- b. Asụsụ a na-asụ na gburugburu onye
- ch. Asụsụ bekee
- d. Asụsụ atọ ndi ahụ bu ọkaibe ha, bu ndi gọọmenti hoputarala ka ha buru asụsụ ala Naijiria niile (Hausa, Igbo na Yoruba).

Gọọmenti etiti n'atumatu agumakwukwọ na mmuta ya nke 1977 e biputaghiriila ugboro ugboro mara iwu na ọ bu asụsụ nne/ogbe ka a ga-eji na-akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwọ ọtaakara na nke praịmarị nta (pri 1-3). N'ogo a, ọ bu asụsụ Igbo ka a ga-eji na-akuzi ihe niile e wepu asụsụ bekee nke a ga na-akuzi di ka sobjekti. A ga-abjazi werezie nwayo nwayo webata iji bekee akuzi ihe na praịmarị ukwu (pri 3-6). Uru asụsụ bara n'ụwa niile gbaa gburugburu enweghi ngwucha. Ihe niile hiwere isi n'asụsụ. Ebe ọ bu na gọọmenti amatala oke uru di n'asụsụ ala anyi ma nye ntuziaka idi na-eji ya akuzi ihe n'ulo akwukwọ ọtaakara na nke praịmarị nta, gini buteziri nleghara anya na ntuzi aka a gọọmenti nyere? Edemede a ga-eleba anya n'ihe kpatara nleghara anya a, oghom si n'ime ya aputa, uru mgbaso ya ga-ebutere anyi. Ọ ga-agakwa n'ihu ichoputa usoro a ga-agbaso iji kwalite iji asụsụ nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwọ ndia, nke ga-enye aka ikwalite asụsụ na omenala Igbo.

## 2.0 Asụsụ - ihe ọ bu na uru ọ bara

Asụsụ bu ụzo mmadu na ibe ya si enwe mmekorita. Ọ bu asụsụ bu nnukwu ihe putara ihe na ndiche mmadu na anumanu. Anagbogu, Mbah na Eme (2001:1) kowara asụsụ di ka ụzo mmadu weputara iji na-enwe mmekorita, echiche, mmetuta, iziputa otu obi di ha na ebunnauche ha site n'okwu onu maobu ederede. Nkwa ha a na-egosiputa mkpa asụsụ di na uru ọ bara. Makinde (2006:1) hukwara asụsụ di ka ugbo e ji ebu ako na uche na obibi ndu ndi mmadu. Onye obula di ndu nwere asụsụ ọ na-asu. Obodo obula maobu mba obula nwere asụsụ e ji mara ha. Ofomata (2002:7) kowara asụsụ di ka ihe na-eweta mmekorita n'etiti mmadu na ibe ya, obodo na obodo, mba na mba. Ọ bu asụsụ mmadu na-asu ka o si mata ihe gbara ya gburugburu nakwa uwa ọ bi n'ime ya.

### 2.1 Uru asụsụ bara

Ọ bu aghotaghi uru asụsụ bara kpatara otutu ji eleghara asụsụ ha anya. Uru asụsụ bara gunyere. e ji asụsụ enwe mmekorita  
asụsụ bu njirimara  
ọ na-eziputa uche mmadu  
e ji ya akuzi ihe  
a na-esi na ya enweta mmuta  
e ji ya agwa ohaneze okwu  
e ji ya ebiputa akwukwọ  
ọ na-egosi omenala na nkwenye ndi  
e ji ya enweta oganihu  
ọ na-eweta udo  
ọ na-eweta enyemaka

o na-akwalite nkanuzu  
e ji ya agbalahu odachi  
o na-akwalite akunuba.

## 2.2 Onodu asusu Igbo n'ezinulo anyi

Asusu Igbo bu asusu ahu e ji mara ndi Igbo. O bu ya bu asusu mbu onye Igbo obula nwere, ma burukwa asusu e ji azulite mmadu n'ala Igbo. Mgbe obula a kporo ndi Igbo, ihe ozo ga-esote ya aburu asusu Igbo makana ndi Igbo bu asusu Igbo, asusu Igbo aburu ndi Igbo. Mana ka o di taa, otutu ndi Igbo, okacha ndi nne na nna ogbaraohuru, anaghi ekwe asuru umu ha Igbo nke ha ji ekwe onye ozo isuru ha Igbo. Otu aka ahukwa, i gaa n'ulo ha juo umu ha aha ha, nne ha ga-ebu uzo gwa gi na ha anaghi anu Igbo. Ihe ozo i ga-anu bu "greet uncle/anti and tell him/her your name". Otutu ndi nne na nna na-aga n'uloakwukwo umu ha ma doo onye nkuzi Igbo aka na nti ka o hapu ikuziri umu ha Igbo. Ha na-echefu na asusu bu ukwu omenala ji aga ije nke putara na ikuziri nwatakiri asusu Igbo bu ikuziri ya ihe niile gbasara usoro obibi ndu na ihe niile gbara ya gburugburu. Ndi nne na-achio uloakwukwo na-anaghi asu na anaghikwa akuzi Igbo, tinye umu ha. Udiri agwa a ga-akpoa azu atumatu goomenti etiti gbasara iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari ma togbuokwa asusu na omenala Igbo.

## 3.0 Ajuju nchocha

Ajuju ndia ka anyi gbadoro ukwu were mee nchocha anyi:

- Goomenti o na-ezite ndi oru ya ibia nyochaa ogo ntinye n'oru iji asusu nne maobu nke ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari?
- A na-eji naani Igbo akuziri ndi otaakara na ndi praimari nta ihe?
- A na-akuzi Igbo di ka sobjekti n'ogo praimari?
- A na-eji Igbo akuzi sobjekti ndi ozo n'ogo otaakara na pramari nta?

## 3.1 Nlegbara anya iji asusu Igbo akuzi ihe n'ulo akwukwo otaakara na nke praimari nta: nchoputa anyi.

N'ichoputa ogo nlegbara anya iji asusu Igbo akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari nta, anyi gara n'uloakwukwo praimari di itoolu ndi no n'okpuru ochichi Umuahia North di na steeti Abia. Atu n'ime ha bu nke ndi goomenti nwe ebe isii n'ime ha bu nke ndi nkiti nwe. Ha gunyere.

### Ndi goomenti nwe

Amuzukwu primary school I  
Amuzukwu primary school II  
Okwuta primary school

### Ndi ndi nkiti nwe

Britarch Schools  
Living Word Magnet Schools  
Kingdom Heritage Model Schools  
Mayfair Academy  
We Care International Primary Schools  
Chidiadi Primary School

### 3.2 Ajuju anyi gbara n'uloakwukwo

#### Uloakwukwo ndi goomenti nwe

	Ee	Mba	Mgbe ufodu
Goomenti o na-ezita ndi ory ya ima maka ntinye oru iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari.		✓	
O bu asusu Igbo ka e ji akuziri ndi otaakara na ndi praimari nta ihe.	✓		
A na-akuzi Igbo di ka sobjekti n'uloakwukwo unu	✓		
A na-eji Igbo akuzi sobjekti ndi ozo n'ogo otaakara na praimari nta n'uloakwukwo unu		✓	

#### Uloakwukwo ndi nkiti nwe

	Ee	Mba	Mgbe ufodu
Goomenti o na-ezita ndi ory ya ima maka ntinye oru iji asusu uunne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari.		✓	
O bu asusu Igbo ka e ji akuziri ndi otaakara na ndi praimari nta ihe.		✓	
A na-akuzi Igbo di ka sobjekti n'uloakwukwo unu			✓
A na-eji Igbo akuzi sobjekti ndi ozo n'ogo otaakara na praimari nta n'uloakwukwo unu		✓	

### 3.3 Ntule ajuju onu anyi gbara

Anyi sonyetuchara uloakwukwo ndi a muo ihe iji mata kpokwem otu ha si akuzi ihe.

N'igba ndi nkuzi ajuju onu ma ndi goomenti o na-ezite ndi na-abia eleba anya gbasara iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'ogo otaakara na praimari nta, ha sirj na onwebeghi onye ha huru bira udiri ije ahụ. Uloakwukwo ndi goomenti nwe na-akuzi Igbo di ka sobjekti site n'otaakara ruo na praimari nke isii. N'ikuzi sobjekti ndi ozo, ha na-eji bekee ma were Igbo akowa ufodu ihe ha na-akuzi. Edeghi ihe omumu ndi ozo a n'Igbo maobu tugharia ha n'Igbo Nkuzi ihe omumu ndia na nkowa ha n'Igbo diiri ha mfe n'ih na otutu umu aka no na klasi ndi ahụ bucha ndi nne na nna ha ji asusu Igbo zulite. Nke a mere ka nkuzi na nghota diiri ma nwata akwukwo ma onye nkuzi mfe. N'ichikota nchoputa anyi n'uloakwukwo ndi nkiti nwe, ikuzi Igbo di ka sobjekti na-eme ndaputa. Taam obula ha nwetara onye nkuzi Igbo, umuaka amuo Igbo taam ahụ, ya bu n'ogo praimari, ma na nkuzi Igbo anaghi eruru ndi nke otaakara. Ozokwa, otutu umuaka no n'uloakwukwo ndi nkiti nwe bu ndi nne na nna ha jiri bekee muoro okwu.

Naani Chidiadi primary school bu ndi si na ha na-akuzi Igbo ma n'ogo otaakara ma n'ogo praimari kemgbe uloakwukwo ha bidoro mana ha etinyeghi n'oru atumatu goomenti gbasara iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'ogo otaakara na nke praimari. Uloakwukwo ndi a kwuputakwara na onwebeghi ndi si na ministri keedukeshion bialala juo ha maobu choputa gbasara itinye n'oru atumatu goomenti gbasara iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'ogo otaakara ya na nke praimari nta.

### 3.4 Nchoputa anyi

N'ichikota nchoputa anyi niile onu, goomenti ejighi iwu ha mara maka iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari nta kporo ihe, ebe o na-enweghi otu ha si achoputa ma e tinyere iwu a n'oru ka o bu etinyeghi ya.

Enweghi ndi nkuzi Igbo a zuru nke oma n'ihe omumu ndi ozo so akponyere atumatu a ukwu. Ejighi asusu Igbo kporo ihe n'etiti nne na nna ufodu nakwa n'uloakwukwo ndi nkiti nwe bu aka mgbe cheere atumaatu a n'ihu. Otutu nne na nna enyeghi umu ha ozuzu ha kwesiri inye ha n'Igbo n'ulo tupa ha ebido akwukwo.

#### **4.0 Oghom di n'ejighi asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke prajimari nta.**

Nwadike (2002) siru na okwesiri na onye obula bu onye Igbo ga na-aghota ma na-asukwa asusu Igbo nke oma. Ndi obula nwere asusu ha bukwa nke ha na-agba mbu na-ehekwa ka o ghara inwu n'ihina na ndi obula asusu ha nwuru, anwukwala n'onwe ha. Ebe o bu n'asusu na omenala na-agakorita, akuzighiri nwata asusu na omenala Igbo n'ulo nakwa n'uloakwukwo ga-ebute onwu asusu na omenala Igbo n'ihina onweghizi onye anyi ga-enyefe asusu na omenala Igbo n'aka. Kuziere nwata ihe mgbe o di na nwata o too ogaghi echefu ya.

Nwata ga-abu obia n'ala nna ya n'ihina amaghi asusu na omenala ya (enyeghi ya ozuzu kwesiri inye ya n'ezinulo a muru ya tupu ya ebido gawa uloakwukwo). N'ihina enweghi ntala n'asusu na omenala Igbo, nkwalite nkanuzu ga na-agba onyupaa. Akuzighiri nwata asusu na omenala na-ebute enweghi nsopuru, amaghi aka nri na aka ekpe, ime aru na mpu, ogu na mgba, ejighi ihe kporo ihe na ihapu omenala mewe omenaelu. Nwata a na-azughi nke oma n'asusu na omenala ya na-abukari ofeke. Azusighi nwata ike n'imata aha ihe ndi no n'ogbe ya maobu gburugburu ya na-eme ka nkuzi na nghota siwakwuo ike n'ulo akwukwo.

Otutu mgbe nwata na-amutachebeghi ikwu okwu etinye ya n'uloakwukwo e ji bekee akuziri ya ihe nke ga-eme ka asusu ya, omenala, ewumewu na ihe niile gbara ya gburugburu buru ya obia.

#### **4.1 Uru di n'iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'ogo otaakara na nke prajimari nta**

- a. Nwatakiri na-aka aghota ihe ma e were asusu nne/ogbe kuziere ya ihe. Lee Ife Six Year Primary Project (ISYPP).
- b. o na-akwalite asusu na omenala
- ch. Nwata anaghi eme ihere iju ajuju na klasi
- d. o na-akwakite nkanuzu (lee China, Japan, Germany dgz).
- e. o na-eme ka nwata nweta ebe o di okporokpo nka ogugu na odide, nwepu, mgbakon na mmba.
- f. o na-eme ka nwata nwee ogugu isi ichemi echiche ime.
- g. o na-eme ka nwata mata na nke m bu nke m, nke anyi bu nke anyi, mana igwe bu ike.
- gb. o na-eme ka nwata mata na agwa nwe ndi a na-akpa akpa na ndi a na-aso aso.
- gh. o na-eme ka nwata mata n'uwu na agbanwe agbanwe ma na-atugharika atughari.
- gw. o na-eme ka nwata mata nka digasi ichiche na aka oru ga-enyere ya aka bie ndu ya.
- h. o na-eme ka nwata muta ma nweta omumu ndi ga-enyere ya aka gakuwo n'ihu n'agumakwukwo.

#### **4.2 Nsoibu di n'iji Igbo kuzie ihe n'ogo otaakara na nke prajimari nta.**

- ❖ Nghotahie ndi mmadu okacha ndi nne na nna maka onodu asusu Igbo na ejighi ya kporo ihe
- ❖ Nkwenye otutu nne na nna na isuru umu ha bekee ga-aka eme ka ha muta ihe n'uloakwukwo
- ❖ Enweghi akwukwo Igbo a ga-eji akuzi ihe
- ❖ Enwechaghi taimtabulu dabara adaba n'uloakwukwo.
- ❖ Korikulum Igbo adabaghi adaba n'iji akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo.
- ❖ Inyochaghari aka nka nkuzi

- ❖ ụkọ ndị nkuzi Igbo
- ❖ NINLAN ime ihe ha kwesiri ime

## 5. Ntụputa aro

- ❖ Ndị nne na nna, na-asurunu ụmụ unu asụsụ Igbo. Selatanu aka n'asụsụ na omenala ndị ozo.
- ❖ Gọmentị ihu na ụloakwukwo ha na nke ndi nkiti nwe na-agbaso atumatu iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo site n'idi na-eziga ndi oru ya n'uloakwukwo ndi a site n'oge ruo n'oge.
- ❖ O bughị naanị iziga ndi mmadu, ezigbo ntaramahuhu ga-adiri ndi na-enupu isi n'atumatu a.
- ❖ Ndi odee ijisi ike deputa ma biputa akwukwo ndi a ga-eji akuzi amumamu niile n'Igbo
- ❖ Gọmentị ikwado itughari sobjketi ndi ozo n'Igbo.
- ❖ Ihazi korikulum ga-adaba adaba n'iji asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe.
- ❖ Ndi Igbo ihapu ileda asusu na omenala ha anya.
- ❖ Imachiri uloakwukwo ndi nkiti nwe idi na-ata nwata akwukwo suru Igbo ahuhu
- ❖ NINLAN iru oru diiri ya site n'ikwalite na ime nchocha n'asusu na omenala ala anyi.
- ❖ Izuputa ndi nkuzi Igbo maara akuzi n'ogo otaakara na praimari nta.
- ❖ Nzughari ndi nkuzi Igbo enwebu.
- ❖ Ihaziri ndi nkuzi Igbo ogbakwo site n'oge ruo n'oge.
- ❖ Inye ndi nkuzi na umuakwukwo mere nke oma ihe nrita

## 6. Nchikota na mmechi

Onye kpo nkata ya nkirika, agbataobi ewere ya kpoo ihe. Nleghara asusu Igbo anya n'ihe niile bu ndi Igbo igho nte ji ukwu gbafuo onwe ya afu. O bu oke na oru diiri nwaafu Igbo obula ikwalite asusu na omenala Igbo, ka echi anyi ka taa anyi mma. Gọmentị turu ezigbo atumatu n'inye iwu ka e were asusu nne/ogbe akuzi ihe n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari mana iwu ha enweghi isi ebe onweghi ukpuru ha turu a ga-eji tnye iwu ahụ n'oru. Nkea butere oke nleghara anya n'ebe iwu ahụ nọ okacha n'ebe uloakwukwo ndi nkiti nwe no. Nne na nna bu ndi nkuzi mbu umuaka nwere, ebe ezinulo bu uloakwukwo mbu ha. O bu ihe igba anya mmiri na otutu ndi nne na nna anaghi ekwe asuru umu ha Igbo nke ha ji ekwe onye ozo isuru ha, biazie tnyere gọmentị elezighi ndi nkuzi na uloakwukwo ha anya nke mere otutu nne na nna ji etinye umu ha n'uloakwukwo ndi nkiti nwe ndi na anaghi asu nke ha ji akuzi asusu Igbo, ebe o bu na onweghi onye na-aju ha ase ihe ha na-eme, ihe ha na-akuzi maobu otu ha si akuzi ya. Ndi nne na nna na gọmentị ileghara asusu na omenala Igbo (okacha site n'ulo ruo n'oge praimari) anya ga-ebute itogbu asusu na omenala Igbo, aru, mpu, enweghi oganihu, enweghi nnwa nwa tote otekwuru n'ihy enyefeghi asusu na omenala Igbo n'aka umu na umumumu anyi ha. Umuka a no n'uloakwukwo otaakara na nke praimari taa bukwanu ha bu olile anya anyi echi. Ka anyi niile (nne na nna, ndi nkuzi, gọmentị na ohaneze) chetakwa n'odinihu, na umu na umumumu anyi ha ga-aju anyi ase ihe mere asusu na omenala ha.

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## IGBO EFUOLA: THE EXTINCTION OF THE IGBO IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT.

By

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### Umị Edemede

*The ejiri mara obodo, agburu ma o bu mba o bula bu omenaala ha. Agburu o bula nwekwara omenaala di iche iche, kama omenaala ndi putakachara ihe na-ebuputa agburu ma o bu mba bu asusu ha, ejiji ma o bu ekike ha nakwa udi aha ha-aza. O bu nke a mere agburu o bula kporo onwe ha ndi ma o bu mba ejighi asusu, ejiji nakwa aha ha egwu egwu. Ndi ocha ghotara ya otu a nke mere na agburu ndi ocha di iche iche ekwebeghi ka ibe ha kpugide ha. Leenu ndi China, India na obodo Arab di iche iche. Malite n'asusu ruo na ekike na aha, ha putara ihe. Leenukwa agburu Britain na America, nke ha ruchara n'akwukwo okowa okwu (Dictionary) ebe ha zotachara nkowa mkpurukwu ka Britain si ekwu na ka America si ekwu. A biakwa n'obodo anyi Nigeria, e nwere agburu di iche iche mana e nwere nweko na agburu ndi putakachara ihe bu Igbo, Awusa na Yoruba. N'ime agburu ato ndi a, I lepu anya, i ga-ahu ma ghotakwa na ndi Awusa (Hausa) na Yoruba ejighi okpurukpu omenaala ato ndi a akporo aha egwu egwu. Ha na-asu asusu ha ebe o bula ha no. Ha na-aza aha ha otu o kwesiri. Ha na-ejike di ka eji mara ha mana odighi otu a n'ebe ndi Igbo di. Ajuru a buru o bu gin kpatara nke a? Edemede a ga-akowami mkpa o di ndi Igbo iseputa onwe ha na mmiri a na-eri ha site n'iji obi ha nabata ibu ndi Igbo nakwa iji asusu Igbo, aha nakwa ejiji ndi Igbo mee ka nke a putara oha na eze ihe. O ga-akowakwa oghom di iche iche na-eche anyi n'ihu ma o buru na anyi aju iza aha akporo anyi.*

**Okpurukpu ndi di n'edemede a:** asusu Igbo, aha, ejiji/ekike na omenaala

### Abstract

*Culture is a people's way of life, a mark of identity for a people. It comprises the people's language, naming system, mode of dress, food, dance, songs, architecture etc. every ethnic group has her distinctive culture. However, among the numerous cultural entities, language, mode of dress and names distinguish a people most prominently. Sequel to the above, many ethnic groups do not compromise their language, mode of dress and naming systems. It is apparently this consciousness that cause the Western ethnic nations to resist cultural domination and assimilation by sister nations. Little wonder nations like China, India and ofcourse the Arab nations are themselves in their language, dressing, names respectively to mention but a few. The highlight of the resistance to cultural domination and assimilation is the case of Britain and America where in dictionary listing of words, descriptions and pronouciations are provided in both American and British Englishes. In Nigeria in particular, many ethnic groups exist. This gives her the multilingual and multicultural status it bears. However, the the three major tribes are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. A closer view at these ethnic groups will reveal that while the Hausa and the Yoruba pay attention to their culture vis-à-vis language, dressing and names which reflect their identities in the global context, the Igbo do not. The question is why? This paper focused on the need to create Igbo consciousness among the Igbo that would possibly culminate in the practice of distinguishing*

*themselves in the global context via their language, dressing and by their names. It concludes with recommendations.*

**Key words:** *Igbo language, mode of dress, naming system and culture.*

## **1.0 Mmalite**

Chineke kere ihe niile n'ụwa mere ka ihe niile o kere nwee njirimara. Ọ bụ ya mere na njirimara mmadụ dị iche na njirimara ụmụanụmanụ dị n'ohịa, azụ dị na mmiri, ahịhịa na osisi dị n'ohịa. A bjakwa na mmadụ, mmadụ dịkwa iche iche. Ndi ọcha yiri onwe ha ma nweekwa njirimara ha dị ka agburu ha si di. Ọ bụ ya mere onye China jiri di iche n'onye India, onye America di iche n'onye Arab. Otu akaahukwa, onye Igbo di iche n'onye Yoruba ma o bu onye Fulani. Nke a bu ọlu aka Chineke.

I gagodu na zuu, i ga-ahụ na agu di iche n'odum, enwe di iche n'ele, eke di iche n'ajuala na umu agwo ndi ozọ. Azu niile di n'oke osimiri abughị otu. Ufodu nwere ahụ ogwu ogwu, ebe ibe ha di muru muru. Ozokwa, ukazi di iche n'uziza, uha, onugbu, ugu, utazi ma ha niile bucha akwukwo nri. N'otu akaahukwa, osisi ugba abughị osisi oji, oji abughikwa udara, ugiri dikwa iche na oroma. Otu a ka Chineke siri choo ya.

Ihe ndi a niile Chineke kere nwechara uzọ di iche ha si ebi ndu ha, eme mmekorita, amuba, nakwa usoro ha ji eme ozuzu ha. Ufodu na-eyi akwa, ufodu na-amu nwa ha, ufodu akuku na-esite na mkpuru amuba, ebe ibe ha na-esite n'osisi ha amuba. Ufodu ka a na-eli n'ime ala tupu ha aghoo ihe oriri, ebe ibe ha bu ndi ana-akwuwa oto tupu ha eweputa nkpuru ha. Aka oru Chineke ndi a nwechara uzọ ha si eme mmekorita ha na ibe ha. Ka ewu si eti mkpu, abughị ka awo na akiri si akwa akwa nke ha. Nke a putara na ihe niile ekere eke nwere omenaala ha ma o bu njirimara ha. Mmadu sokwa nwee njirimara na omenaala.

## **1.1 Nkwa Omenaala**

Omenaala bu uzọ ndi mmadu si ebi ndu ha; nke gunyere akparamagwa ha, nri ha, ejiji/ekike, asusu, egwu ha, aha ha, udi ulo ha na-ebi, udi ezinulo ha na-enwe dgz. O nweghi ogbe, mba ma o bu agburu na-enweghi omenaala. O bu ya mere (Ejiofor 1984) jiri si, 'a people without culture are considered inexistent themselves'. "Ndi, mba ma o bu agburu na-enweghi omenaala, anwuruola ala." (Ntughari bu nkem)

Abia n'ime uwa taa ruokwa n'obodo anyi bu Nigeria, e nwere otutu mba na agburu di iche iche. Na Nigeria, agburu e nweghi ike igutacha onu ma ndi putachara ihe bu Igbo, Awusa na Yoruba. Agburu niile ndi a ma ndi na-akpotughị aha nwechara otu ha si ebi ndu ha, ya bu omenaala ha. Ufodu agburu na-eme otu ihe ma o bu kari dara uda iji wulite omenaala ha elu ma site na nke a buru ndi a maara amara. A gafee emume di iche iche nwere ike idaputa site n'oge ruo n'oge, omenaala ndi putakachara ihe nke na-ebuputa, kwalite ma mee ka mba puta ihe bu aha, ejije/ekike na asusu ha. N'ebe a ka ndi Igbo nwere nsogbu. Ihe ndi ozọ ji eme nganga ka anyi bu ndi Igbo gwuru ala lie. Anyi ga-akwa otu Igbo si na-efu site n'ileba anya onodu ndi Igbo dowere okpurukpu omenaala ato ndi a anyi kpoturu aha.

### A. Aha Ndi Igbo:

Mgbe Chukwu kesiri okike ya, o nyere Adam ike ịgụ ihe niile aha. Akwụkwọ nsọ sị na aha ọ bụla Adam nyere ihe ọ bụla ka ọ na-aza ruo taa. Onọdụ a abataghị ndi Igbo n'uche. Ilu ha bụ, “onye enyuwara, na enyugharị onwe ya”. Na mgbe gboo, tupu ndi ọcha e buru ụka ha bịa Nigeria, ụdi aha ndi Igbo na-aza bụ Egwuonwu, onwuchekwa, Nweke, Nwokorie, Nwachukwu, Nwanyimma, Nwaezimma, Nwannediya, Azuogu, Nwogu, Nwankwo dgz. Aha ndi a nwechara mmetuta na ndu ndi na-aza ha nakwa na ndu ndi enyere ha. Ozugbo ndi ọcha butere ụka ha, ndi Igbo amata isi manye na ha. Ebe agburu ndi ozo ji otu anya ele ndi ọcha na ihe ha ji, were otu ukwu guzoro, ndi Igbo aburu “o nuru buru anughi zie”. Ozugbo anyi natara Kristi, anyi anata “aha mmiri chukwu”. Ndi ọcha na ndi ukochukwu amalite ime ndi Igbo bughị Igbo, bughị bekee. I ga-ahụ onye Igbo na-agbajighi chooku, aha ya aburu aha bekee; Bathelomew, Isaiah, Modecai, Nichodimus, Andrew, Cornelius, Jonah Job, Theophilus dgz.

Ndi emeturu ebere, a guo ha John, Peter, Timothy, Simon, Mary, Maria, Ruth, Noami, Esther, Deborah, Rhoda dgz. Mgbe ahụ ka ditu mma n'ihu na ha nwere ike idi na-aza bathlomew Nwankwo, Andrew Nkoro, Cornelius Azuogu, Maria Nweke, Esther Nwogu. Otu a ka o digidere rue otutu afọ. Mgbe ụka na ozuzu agumakwukwo gwakotaara onu, ndi Igbo ebido natawa aha mmiri chukwu ndi ditu fere fere n'onu, dika Augustine, Clement, Patrick, Polycarp, Fortunatus, Eucharua, Augustus, Dominic. Ndi a bu aha ndi Nso nwuru anwu. Ndi nke a kwekwara odidi n'ihu na i ga-anu Clement Dimkpa, Eucharua Umunnakwe, Dominic Anaba, Augustina Nkoro, Patricia Onwunliri dgz.

Mana site n'ihe di ka afọ 1980 ha rue taa, ka mgbe ifufe ụka oloroohu febatara Nigeria, wee rute ala Igbo ka ihe mebichara. Ugbu a ka achoputara na ihe mere ndi di afọ iri anọ gbadawa ji anwu n'ezinulo ha di iche iche, meekwe ha amutala nwa na enweghi oganihu bu aha nna ma o bu nke nnanna ha na-aza. Ha echefuo na ndi zara aha ndi a ha na-akatọ ma na-agbanwekwa biri ndu ha n'uju tupu ha anwu. Ugbu a, ndi Igbo na-agbanwezi aha aghara aghara. Ndi Igbo, gwanu m otu anyi ga -esi ama onwe anyi ma o bu otu mmadu si amata anyi ebe anyi niile na-azazi, Gospel Praise, glory John, Ambless Johnson, Miracle Edmund, Francisca Peter, Crystabel Mark, Belinda Clement, Rose Peters, Patric Nobleman, Clinton Innocent dgz. Ka aga-asị na odachi ga-abijara anyi ma anyi zaa, ozioma, ebubechukwu, olobube, chiagoziem. Ebe anyi zara aha Igbo, anyi ga-achoriri uzọ a ga-esi mee ka o daghara uda nke ga-ebute ito nti n'ala tupu amata na o bu aha onye Igbo.

Gwanu m umunna a, ebee ka ahuru onye Awusa na-aza Clinton, Humphrey, Boniface, Praise, Loveday, Churchhill? Aha e jiri mara ha bu Jumai, Aisha, Audu, Mohammed, Suleman. Ndi ogbo anyi ndi Yoruba ka jidesiri ike aha ha dika, Bimbo, Omolade, Adebo, Adekunle, Adeniran, Tokumbo, Ajala, Sola, dgz. Ndi agbato obi anyi ndi mmono (Ibibio) ka na-aza, Essien, Etim, Udeme, Akpan, Ekaete, Etukufot dgz. Unu ahula na Igbo efuola. Chetakwanu na Igbo bu Igbo guru n'aha, 'Ahamefula'.

### B. Ejiji Ndi Igbo

Nke a bu otu n'ime okpurukpu omenaala anyi anyi na-ekwo ihu n'ala. Ebe ndi Awusa ka na-eyi uwe mwuda ha ma n'eke ma n'orie nagbanyeghi ebe ha hutara onwe ha, ndi Yoruba ejighi Iro na Buba egwu egwu, o bu ndi Igbo ka ana-achọ achọ n'ogbako o zuruoha ya na mmemme di iche iche. I hu ebe onye Igbo kporo kootu, hazichaa Tai ya, ya adika onye ọcha. Ha cheta Babaringa (1500) ma o bu Iro na Buba, gi agunyere ha ndi awusa ma o bu Yoruba. Mgbe m na-ele onyonyoo TV na nso nso a, we hu n'ebe a na-eme ememe mgbape mmughari Nigeria (Inauguration of Nigeria

Rebirth), na imirikitimi mmadu juru ebe ahụ naanị otu nwoke ka m huru jikere ka onye Igbo, oyi jompa isiagu ya, kpuru okpu uhie uhie ya. O putara na o bu so ya bu onye Igbo biara mmemme ahụ? Abia na mmemme ncheta omumu mmadu, nkupu nwa, igu aha, itu mmamma di iche iche, o bu umu nwaanyi ndi Igbo na-eyi uwe aka giriri, nke na-enweghi aka nakwa nke na-erughi n'ikpere. Nke ha jiri buru bekee. Ebe ndi Awusa na Yoruba na-etinye aka n'igbe weputa brokeed na leesi di oke onu ahia ha kwara di ka omenala ha si di. Otu ha si ejike ka umu ha si ejike, otu anyi si ejike ka umuanyi ha sikwa ejike. Ndi Igbo muo nwa, otolitewe ha amalite yibe ya udi uwe ana-akpo "ma mkpuru gba oto". O tozie, ya ewere aka ya dokakwuo nke oyi n'ahu. O bu ndi Igbo ka 'sagin' putaara uwa. O bukwa anyi ka ntujawa isi iku egwu na Igba boolu diiri. I hu onye Igbo na-aku egwu ma o bu nke na-agba boolu, i meere ndi muru ya ebere. Ndi agburu ndi ozo na-akukwa egwu, gbaa boolu ma jikwata ejije e jiri mara agburu ha.

O bu onodu a ka Ejifor lekatarara anya we si na "Ekike ma o bu ejiji abughi ihe diiri umunwaanyi di ka ufodu na-eche kama o bu ngwaru putara ihe e ji egosiputa ihunanya na nkwanye ugwu a na-kwanyere obodo, agburu ma o bu mba". Popoola (2000) we tukwasi na "ejiji, di ka okpukperechi na asusu di iche iche na Nigeria bu njirimara agburu di iche iche. Ekike bu otu n'ime uzo esi amata ndi, agburu, mba nakwa ogbe di iche iche".

Ofomata (2012) kwara ejiji di ka "usoro mmadu si akwado onwe ya ma o bu dozie onwe ya n'udi ochicho na nnabata nke agburu ya. Ndi Igbo nwere ekike e jiri mara ha. Ma nwata, okenye, nwoke, nwaanyi, aghoghobia na okookporo o buladi ndi Igbo chiri echichi".

A na-ekwu na oke gara ikwa ezé alotabeghi, ngwere nwanne ya a chiri ego sowe ya. A na-ekwu na akwukwo ndi Igbo guru e meela ha amakwaghi ekike ha, ndi uka olorohu eburu abo ha wuchie si onye emekwala ka onye Igbo. Ihe niile onye Igbo mere n'usoro omenaala bucha aru n'anya ndi uka olorohu. Akwa niile ndi mmadu zuchara kwaa amakpisa n'ime Igbe ebe ha na-achio idika ndi ocha. Onye yiri jompa ma o bu mara ukwu akwa abuo, pasito ebigbo ya. O mecha ya akaja ubochi ozo ya akpo kooti bia, e kwee ya n'aka. N'ufodu uka, e weputara naanị otu ubochi uka n'ime izu iri ise na abuo di n'afu, eji eme uka ndi Afrika bukwanu naanị ubochi a na-atu anya na onye o bula ga-eyiri uwe ma o bu ekike odinaala. Ugbu a, o nweghizi onye na-ekweta na o mara ukwu akwa abuo eke ebe ndi nwoke siji na jompa na-agba ha ajirija ma o bu mee ahụ ha okpomoku.

Ndi nne na umu ha na-azozio ogodo bekee uzo. Onye yiri putawa, o dotuo nke ukwu asi na o bu sagin. umu nwaanyi yiri uwe elu ma o bu obelukwu na-ayo ayọ nke ihe eji mara ya bu a noro odu, ya akpulie elu, e kulie oto adodata ya. Asi na nke a bu Yori Yori. A na-esizi n'akuku uwa niile, ma na mochuari buko uwe jiinu bia wusara ndi Nigeria maka na o na-adi ndi Igbo mma. O nweghizi onye ma onye nne ma o bu nwagbogh. Egbé na Egbè aburuziela otu. O buru ahụ onye nne ma o bu onye nna kere ekike otu o kwesiri, e kelee ya n'ugwu (Daa/Dee maazi, mmamma, kaa). Ebe na-onwenughi onye kwere na ya bu nne/nna, onye o bula a narawa gudu moni. Ihe a na-emebikwu. Abia n'ekike ma o bu ejiji ndi Igbo, Igbo efuokwala o!

## Ch. Asusu Igbo

Mgbe Chineke ghagburu asusu umu mmadu na Babel, (Tower of Babel), ejim n'aka na ihe ndi mmadu jiri mara ndi ha na ha ga-agako bu asusu. Ndi o bula asusu ha na ibe ha makoro, aburula umunne na ndi si n'otu agburu ma eleghi anya. Ya bu na njirimara mbu Chineke nyere iji mata mmadu, ogbe, obodo ma o bu mba bu asusu. Otu akaahukwa, otu n'ime njirimara ndi Igbo bu asusu

ha. Mgbe Ejiofor (2012) na-akowa asụsụ dika ihe kachasi mkpa n' iimara agburu, o kowara na o bu ya mere otutu mgbe aha agburu ji abukari aha asusu ha di ka Ndi Awusa na-asu asusu Awusa, ndi Yoruba na-asu asusu Yoruba, Igbo na-asu asusu Igbo dgz. "Ebe asusu na agburu enweghi otu aha, ha abuo na-eyi onwe ha ka nwanne na nwanne; di ka England na English, France na French, Germany na German"

Ejiofor kowakwuru asusu di ka 'ugbala eji ebu omenaala na odibendi agburu." O siri na asusu bu ndu agburu. Ejiofor mere ka nke a putachaa ihe mgbe o kowara otu ndi Germany na ndi Jew siri jikotachaa onwe ha onu burukwa mba n'otu n'otu mgbe otutu afo gaferechara etisasiri ha. Na nkowa ya, mgbe e meriri ndi Germany n'agha n'afu 1945, kee ha uzọ anọ ndi meriri ha ekporo otu otu, n' ihi na-ekeghi asusu ha, ha mechara jikotakwa onu buru otu mba n'afu 1989. Otu a kwa ka ndi Jew jikotara onwe ha onu burukwa otu mba mgbe o gasiri otutu afo ha gbasasiri n' uwa niile binye na mba ndi ozọ ka obia (1878-70 – 1948). Ihe mere onodu a jiri diri ndi Jew na ndi German mfe bu na ha etufughi asusu ha.

O nweghi obodo asusu ha kwu chim chim taa na-alughi ogu asusu. Mgbe asusu Latin chorọ ikpagbu asusu French, ndi France gbara mbọ megide nke a. Taa asusu French eguzosiela ike ma mubaa rute ala Nigeria nke na o ghoziela otu n'ime asusu goomentị Nigeria chorọ iwuli elu n'obodo Nigeria. Iji mee ka ha zota asusu ha mgbe asusu bekee bjara gbawa asusu French gburugburu, Goomentị France hiwere iwu n'afu 1975, na onye o bula ga-ede ihe n'asusu French agaghi edenye okwu o bula si n'asusu ozọ kari ma o nweghi uzọ ozọ aga-esi tugharia okwu ahụ n'asusu French (Ajunwa 2006). Ejiofor nyekwara omumaatu otu ndi swizaland jiri mee iwunjiko ha we maputa asusu anọ ha ga eji aru oru n'obodo ha ruekwe n'ozuzu n'ulo akwukwo, o wee debara ha. Ha bukwa obodo bara uba n'asusu dika Nigeria. N'ime asusu anọ a ha maputara, o nweghi ndi na-ekwe ka elomie ha di ka ndi Igbo si kwete ka bekee lomie ha.

I juo ndi Igbo ihe bu mkpa ha ha jiri were bekee ete ofe werekwa ya na-echu umunta bjara uwa ohuu mmiri, ha asi gi na, asusu Igbo ezughi ezu, o bu asusu ka a ga-eri? Isu Igbo ga-emeru isu asusu bekee ahụ dgz. Amaghi ihe di otu a atuturu asusu Igbo kpoo ya ihu n'ala nke na o nweghizi ihe o di mma ya. A bia n'ulo akwukwo, o nweghi onye chorọ iji nti anu Igbo ma ya fodu igu ya agu. Umụ Igbo bucha diokpa na 'Nollywood' na-emecha ejije ha na bekee, i gaghị agawa huta akwukwo ntaakuko e dere n'Igbo. I dee, onye ga-agu? Ogbako umunna buzi bekee ka eji edeko ihe gbara na ya. Uka ugbo a buzi na bekee. Echichi a na-echi n'ulo uka ndi Igbo esila na "Ezinne'/Ezinna baa siliva, goldin na Dayamond mother/father. Kedu nke a ga-ekwu ghara ibe ya.

Ndi eze na ndi echiri echichi puta n'oha ha a tuturu bekee surisie ka o wee buru na ha sokwa. Leenu aka na-aciji agburu Awusa na Yoruba ha. Lenu Sanusi (Emir nke kano). Anyi ga-asi na ha agughi akwukwo? Ha chorọ igwa ohanaeze okwu ebe mmadu turu ngwa, ha a suo asusu ha, onye ozọ a na-anatara ha okwu. Anyi ka ha mma? Ma Ejiofor ma Ofomata, achoputala n'ejighi asusu Igbo kporo ihe di ugbo a mere amamihe ndi okpu na umu azuru n'ime obodo ji kari nke umu ugbo azuru n'obodo mepere emepe. Amamihe ndi eji echekwa omenaala, ma nwee ezi akonuche bu ndi zoro onwe ha n'akuko ifo, ukabuilu, ilu na akpalaokwu di iche iche bukwanu ndi na-anaghi etinyere onu n' ihi mmasi anyi nwere n'asusu bekee. Mgbe Ofomata na-akowata otu asusu ji ebughari omenaala si n'ogbo ruo n'ogbo, o siri na, "**o bughị ka anyi si eme. Ndi be anyi anaghi eme otu ahụ. o bughị ndu anyi. Otu a ka anyi si eme ya. Lee otu o siri di n'obodo anyi**" na-arutucha aka na omenaala mana o bu site n'asusu ka a na-eme ka ihe ndi a puta ihe. O buru na asusu adighi,

nkowa di otu ahụ agaghị adi. Leenu ihe a a na-akọ ya adika akuko ifo. Ugbo a ofufu Igbo na-efu aputawala ihe. Iji maatu, n'eguruegwu igba boolu ofere mba emere n'ama Egwuruegwu kano otutu afọ gara aga, enyere nkowa (commentary) n'asusu bekee, Awusa na Yoruba ma o nweghi onye juru Igbo kwanu? Ugbo a, uloru mgbasaa ozi uwa di iche iche di ka BBC, VOA, Redio France, Redio South Africa, Redio China, Redio Jamaica dgz na-akocha akuko uwa (News) n'asusu Yoruba na Awusa ma o nweghi nke na-akọ n'asusu Igbo.

Ohiri- Aniche (2008) choputakwara na ndi Fulbright Foundation di na America bidoro nyewe umuakwukwo na-agu asusu bekee na Mahadum di na Nigeria skolaship ibia biri n'America otu afọ, ka ha muta asusu bekee nke oma ma jiri ohere ahụ kuzie asusu olunne ha na America. Ndi ha na-enye bu ndi nwere ike ikuzi Awusa na Yoruba. O dighi nke enyere ndi Igbo. O nwere uzọ ozo eji akowa na Igbo efuola?

## 2.0 Mmechi:

Umunna a, ihe ndi a anyi na-elehara anya adighi mma. Ana-ekwu okwu si na nwanne di na mba. Olee otu onye Igbo ga-eji amata nwanne ya na mba ebe anyi na-anaghi asu Igbo, anyi anaghi aza aha Igbo nke anyi ji ejike ka nd Igbo? O bukwa nne ewu na-ata ahija nwa ya ana-ele ya anya. O dikwa mkpa na anyi bu nne na nna ga-amaghari uru sightharja isi na agwa anyi na-akpasị omenaala Igbo tumadi asusu Igbo, aha nakwa ekike ndi Igbo. O buru na-anyi agbanweghi omume anyi, ruo oru anyi kwesiri iru n'ezinulo anyi ha nakwa n'obodo anyi ha, tutee mmuo ndiigbo ka o di n'uche ha na ha bu Ndiigbo n'agbanyeghi ebe ha bi, tinyekwa uchu n'isu na ichekwa asusu Igbo, n'iza aha Igbo nakwa n'ike ekike ndi Igbo, Igbo ga-efu kpm kpm. Asi m Chineke ekwela.

## 2.1 Ntuputa Ero/Ntunye Uche

Gini ka a ga-eme ka ndi Igbo nwetaghachi onodu ha na mba uwa di ka ogbo/agburu ha di iche iche?

1. Ndi Igbo ga-amalite suwa asusu Igbo n'ulo ha ha na umu ha, n'ahia, n'okporouzo, n'ulo uka, n'ulo akwukwo na n'ebe niile di iche iche.
2. Goomenti ha na-achi steeti ndi Igbo iwere otu obi tie iwu na umuakwukwo niile di na koleeji ma nke goomenti ma nke ndi nkiti nwe ga-emeriri Igbo. Otu a ka gooment ndi na-achi steeti Rivers na steeti ndi Awusa na ndi Yoruba ha tiri mgbe ha huru na Goomenti ewepula asusu Nigeria niile n'onodu ha nobu di ka sobjekti nwata akwukwo na-ahaghi imu ma lee ule na ya n'ogo senio sekondiri ( NPE 2013).
3. Otutu uloakwukwo otaakaraa nakwa paramari ndi nkiti na ndi uka oloroohuu nwe anaghi akuziri umuaka asusu Igbo. O bu n'ogo a ka ha na-emebicha umuaka nke ndi nne na nna mebiforo. Goomenti kwesiri itinye iwu ikuzi asusu Igbo n'uloakwukwo ndi a ma dikwa na njikere imechi uloakwukwo o bula na-edebeghi iwu a.
4. Iti iwu ga-eme ka nwaafu Igbo o bula ga-emeriri Igbo na koleeji ma nwee ya akara kerediit tupu enye ya ohere agumaakwukwo na mahadum ala anyi ha.
5. Itinye iwu na asusu Igbo ga-aburiri otu n'ime ihe omumu na-aghaghi ime ma gafee (compulsory/general course) na mahadum o bula di n'ala Igbo.
6. I malite ideputa ma mee ejije di iche iche n'asusu Igbo di ka ndi China na mba ndi ozo si eme n'asusu ha ma deputa ya n'asusu bekee.
7. Ikwelite omenaala Igbo n'ogo di iche iche site n'itinye ememe di iche iche nke ga-eme ka umu Igbo kee ekike odinaala ndi Igbo.
8. Ime ka ndi uka ohuu mata na amaala toro choochi site na isi onwu na-akwado ka ndi Igbo mgbe ha na-aga uka na ogbakọ ndi ozo.

9. Inye ụmụaka anyị aha Igbo na ịzasi aha Igbo anyị ike.
10. Ikwado ikuputa egwu uto dị iche iche n'asụsụ Igbo.
11. Ikwado nrepu ahia (advert) nke redio na TV n'asụsụ Igbo
12. Ime eguregwu dị iche iche, itụ ilu, akụkọ ifo, na egwu dị iche iche na TV nakwa na redio tinyekwa ịsompị nke ihe nrita so n'egwuregwu ndi a.
13. Idị na-eti ndi nkuzi, ụmụakwụkwọ na-agụ asụsụ Igbo na ndi gụcharala asụsụ Igbo aka n'obi site n'inye ha ihe nrita dị iche iche nakwa sụkọlaship.
14. Iti iwu onye sụọ ngiligbo n'ogbakọ ndi Igbo, erie ya iwu.

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## BLOG APPROACH TO LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NIGERIAN LANGUAGE BLOGS

By

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### Abstract

*Blogs and blogging, which are now common in contemporary media culture, have changed the way people communicate. There are an estimated 521 languages that have been spoken in Nigeria and some of these are now extinct, while others may be on their way to extinction without some drastic intervention. This study attempts to understand the ways in which blogging can promote language acquisition, training and other information dissemination purposes by examining indigenous language content on Nigerian language blogs. The SECI (socialization, externalization, combination and internalization) model and functional-notional approach to language acquisition provided theoretical framework for this paper. Within a purposive sample selection of 5 Nigerian language blogs, a content analysis was conducted to demonstrate the language spread, visibility, interactivity and magnitude of Nigerian language contents on these blogs. Gathering of data was based on a three-month blog posts and audience comments from selected blogs. Results provide insights into the role of blogs in diffusing language acquisition in an online environment. Findings show that most of Nigerian language contents on the blogs represent only the three major languages (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba) and Pidgin English and the blogs lack interactivity and multimedia content. The study concludes that the spread of Nigerian language content on blogs could be improved if a significant number of bloggers representing various languages integrate a basic language literacy multimedia component on their blogs to attract more speakers of those languages and prevent further extinction of some Nigerian languages.*

**Keywords:** Content analysis, blog, blogging, language, acquisition, Nigeria

### Background of the Study

Language is an important part of human communication and existence. According to Lemetyinen (2012), “Language is a cognition that truly makes us human.” The possibility of an imminent or actual a language loss or decline challenges the one thing that makes us truly human. Although Blench (2012) notes that West African languages were not amongst those facing high levels as a result of extinction compared to those of Eastern Africa and Southern Africa, interest in language endangerment has become a highly significant topic in recent times. Gordon (2005) and Wikipedia (2016) report that of the 521 languages that have been spoken in Nigeria, 510 are living languages, two are second language without mother-tongue speakers, and nine are extinct. This is worrisome. Studies have shown a relatively easy mastery of language complex skill in younger children (Rowland & Noble, 2010). However, language acquisition in adult L2 learners of a second or new language has proved more challenging (Lenneberg, 1964). As a result, various techniques have been employed to enhance language acquisition of the L2 category. Interestingly, digital technologies have increased options of language acquisition. One of such possibilities is the application of the Web 2.0 tools such as blogs to enhance language acquisition. In less than two

decades of its emergence, blogs have reshaped communication, content creation, and information sharing. The City of Kitchener, (2010) posits that this development,

... has created what some experts call the most significant and fundamental shift in world culture since the Industrial Revolution, the automobile and television. It has transformed online monologues into engaging dialogues, social media platforms enable millions of people worldwide to connect and communicate in new and innovative ways—to be content creators, critics, reviewers, and filmmakers.

In addition, Blench (2012) contends that besides traditional media of communication, new media have become more important and significant in the promotion or otherwise of indigenous languages. According to him, with new media a lot has changed in the technology of language dissemination, as stakeholders must consider the Internet and SMS text messaging. Blogs have provided a unique platform for any kind of information sharing through content and comment on the content of others. Language Weblogs or blogs are gaining in popularity (Herring et al. 2005). Bloggers are increasingly using blogs to promote the learning of languages in ways that may encourage language acquisition.

Although many people use blogs for information dissemination and content sharing, studies that have analysed the content of Nigerian language blogs in pertinent scholarly articles are scarce. This is because extant research has focused on foreign languages. In other words, the use of blogs to push the language agenda in Nigeria is still in its infancy. This article seeks to help fill the knowledge gap in this field. The researchers believe that Nigerian language content on blogs deserves research attention because the ubiquity and interactive nature of blogs make them veritable platforms to host language acquisition contents. Against this backdrop, this paper analyses the contents of Nigerian language blogs and possible future uses of these blogs for L1 and L2 Nigerian language learners. The results of the content analysis carried out may form the basis for relevant effect studies and future empirical validation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The usefulness of the blog approach to learning languages and for language acquisition could stand out with the rising threat of some languages extinction. Hence, as technologies grow to enhance access to information, linguists are beginning to see the possibility of using language information made possible by blogging to encourage teaching and learning of language, especially among computer literate members of society. The questions are: Have blogs helped encourage indigenous language usage among L1 and L2 audience in Nigeria? What are the possibilities of using language blogs to stop the possibility of some Nigerian languages going into extinction? To what extent do blogging in Nigerian languages extend to some other languages outside the three major languages (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo)? These are the questions this research set out to answer.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to find and content-analyse manifest Nigerian language content on Nigerian blogs. Hence, the study was aimed at

- (1) finding out how many Nigerian languages are covered on indigenous blogs;
- (2) ascertaining the frequency of posts update on Nigerian Languages blogs;

- (3) identifying the magnitude and prominence of contents among Nigerian languages blogs;
- (4) finding out the level of interactivity of Nigerian languages blogs.

### Research Questions

- RQ 1 How many Nigerian languages are covered on indigenous blogs?
- RQ 2 What is the frequency of posts update on Nigerian Languages blogs?
- RQ 3 What is the magnitude and prominence of contents among Nigerian languages blogs?
- RQ 4 What is the level of interactivity of Nigerian languages blogs?

### Literature Review

#### Blogosphere: An Overview

Bolter (2004) notes that new digital media is a cultural and economic phenomenon; no wonder many academic disciplines are turning their attention to these forms, at least in part to claim a share in the resources that it is generating. This position compels us to rethink the relationship between language acquisition and new media tool such as blogs. Blogs which is the short for web log are Web sites is an online journal or diary that displays frequently updated entries or posts that usually appear in reverse chronological order and can focus on one narrow subject or a whole range of subjects (City of Kitchener, 2010; Jackson-Brown, 2013; Wang, 2011). Blog is also a place of opinions, research, and creation in which one or more authors publish over time contents as texts, images, media objects and data, sorted in reverse chronological order (Le Meur & Beauvais, as cited in Anggia & Sensuse, 2013). According to Jackson-Brown (2013), recent technologies enabled blogs to integrate the “comments” function that allows readers to send reactions to the blog posts and track links to a blog post. Anggia and Sensuse (2013) note that the introduction of blogs as a part of Web 2.0 tools promotes an appropriate way to manage knowledge. Blog, is characterised by the production, communication, sharing and dissemination of information involving more users and generating an infinite interactivity (Sbihi, El Kadiri, & Aknin). That being the case, blogs can greatly facilitate in real time the education, information transfer and skills acquisition of users, for instance—Nigerian languages.

Jackson-Brown (2013) writes that one of the earliest and most widely referenced publications about blogs is written by Blood (2002) wherein she identifies three broad types of blogs (short-form journals, notebooks and filters). Luzón (as cited in Jackson-Brown (2013), while analysing 15 academic blogs from different disciplines for a study on use of links in these blogs, identified four main types of academic blogs namely: political, research sharing for feedback or collaboration, conversing or networking about academic life, networking, and hybrid of all or some of the above. In her study, Luzón (2009) found links are used for scholarly communication purposes such as building communities, development intellectual identity, and facilitate conversation that leads to greater collaboration. Herring et al. (2005) conducted extensive research on blogging using both content and discourse analyses methods. In their 2005 study they conducted a quantitative analysis of 203 randomly selected blogs and found that blogging:

...along with other emergent genres expressed through interactive Web technologies — occupies a new position in the Internet genre ecology. Specifically, it forms a de facto bridge between multimedia HTML documents and text-based

computer-mediated communication, blurring the traditional distinction between these two dominant Internet paradigms, and potentially contributing to its future breakdown.

Studies have shown that blogs provide a platform for Web-based collaboration for academics and others (Dennen & Pahnyak 2008). Some other studies on the use of blogs for educational purposes are: application of blog for university students' information literacy education (W. Li, & T. Wang, 2010); improving knowledge management for educational blog; Improving teachers' knowledge management with blog platform (Yang 2008); Blog for teacher implicit knowledge sharing model construction (Wang, 2011) and Analyzing the benefits of blog for enhancing knowledge management among bloggers (Anggia & Sensuse 2013).

In spite of the challenge of applying content analysis to Web-based content, several studies have been conducted in this regard. For example, Singh and Baack (2004) used content analysis to study Web Site adaptation between U.S. and Mexican Web sites. Herring, Scheidt et al. (2004, 2005) employed content analysis as a means to characterise English language blogs as a genre in a random sample of 203 blogs selected from the blogs-tracking site blogs in 2003. They found that the average English-language blog had a single author, focused on personal events in the bloggers life, contained relatively few links and received few comments, Papaacharissi (2004) conducted a quantitative content analysis of a random sample of 260 blogs hosted by Blogger.com and found similar results. In a sequel study, Herring, Kouper et al. (2004) found that ordinary bloggers were female nearly as often as male and young (teens or young adults) as often as adult. However, gender and age of bloggers varied according to blog type. Adult males wrote almost all the filter blogs and young females wrote the largest proportion of personal journal (diary blogs).

Recent research suggests that there may be also cultural differences in blogging practices. In their content analysis of 358 polish-language blogs drawn from the blog hosting service blog.pl, Trammell, Tarkowski, Hofmohl and Sapp (2006) found that Polish bloggers are almost 75% female and younger than English language bloggers, they are often elementary and mid-school ages. Similarly, Scheidt (2006) contend that Trammell and her colleagues found that the themes of young Polish female bloggers' posts tend to focus on the emotional impact of the life events that they are portraying. Analysing websites by human coders is often challenging, mainly because many websites consist of many pages, as a result, Bauer and Scharl (2000) introduced WebAnalyzer in their study to automatically gather and analyse parameters such as a site's HTML code and information about the site features, including the number of images and external links. None of these studies to the researchers' knowledge has addressed the use of blogs in language acquisition and learning within the Nigerian blogosphere, hence, the need for this study.

### **Preferences in Media Language Content**

Arguably, in spite of the over 500 Nigerian languages (Blench, 2012, Nwagbara 2013), only a fraction are often represented in the media. Supporting this contention, Nwagbara (2013) observes that,

There are more than 250 distinct ethnic groups and languages in Nigeria. Only a few of these languages are used in news presentation in the broadcast media. Such 'privileged' languages are those spoken by bigger ethnic groups. English, the official language of the country also dominates in media presentations. This trend

has led to the marginalization of the languages spoken by smaller ethnic groups in the country.

Corroborating this position, Blench (2012) writes that,

The use of second languages for communication and in administration was well established in pre-colonial Nigeria and has further expanded, as the diversity of migrations has required the development of *linguae francae*. The most notable languages used in this way are English, Pidgin, Hausa, Kanuri, Fulfulde, Yoruba, Igbo and Efik. Some of these are expanding, such as Hausa and Yoruba and others in decline, notably Kanuri and Efik.

The question is: how are bloggers using blogs to promote the over 500 Nigerian languages? This and more, are some questions this paper hopes to provide answers. This paper incorporates content analysis of Nigerian blog perspective by analysing a selection of 5 Nigerian language blogs to determine how it can aid language learning and acquisition of especially L2 learners.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper anchors on the SECI model and functional-notional language acquisition theory. Wikipedia (2016) defined language acquisition as the process by which humans acquire the capacity to perceive, produce, and use words to understand and communicate. It involves the picking up of various syntax, phonetics, and an extensive vocabulary. Behaviourists, like B.F. Skinner Piaget and Noam Chomsky argued that language acquisition and development are learned behaviours. They believe that over repeated exposures, especially for L1 language learners may learn to associate an object with a sound or word for that object.

Popularised by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983), the Functional-Notional Approach of language acquisition or teaching which is categorised under the communicative approach posits that language acquisition is organised in a language syllabus. The emphasis here is on breaking down the global concept of language into units of analysis in terms of communicative situations in which they are used. According to them, notions are meaning elements that may be expressed through nouns, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, adjectives or adverbs. The use of particular notions depends on three major factors: (a) the functions (b) the elements in the situation, and (c) the topic being discussed.

SECI model from knowledge evolution is a model from socialization, externalization, internalization and combination as shown in Figure 1.

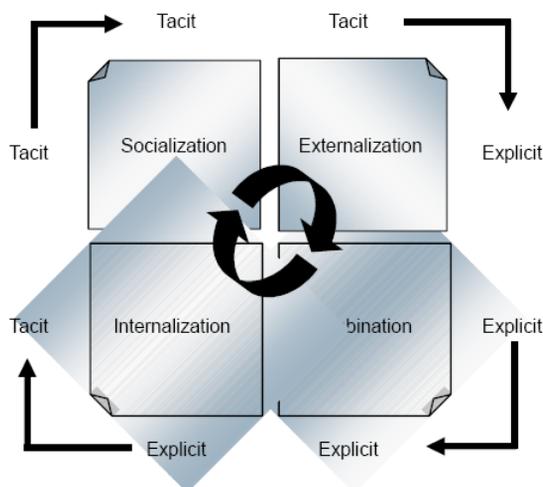


Figure 1 : SECI Model (Anggia and Sensuse 2013)

Anggia and Sensuse (2013) used the SECI model to analyse the benefits of blog for enhancing knowledge management among bloggers. They used the model based on blog to explain the common issue about the exchanging ideas of tacit to explicit way. While tacit knowledge includes insights, intuitions, and hunches (instinct) and are difficult to express and formalise, difficult to share and usually based on individual experiences, explicit knowledge refers to knowledge that has been expressed into words and numbers. This finds relevance in the issue using blogs to enhance explicit language acquisition skills. Pinkie Anggia and Sensuse (2013) found that blogs have been able to provide many new benefits such as enhancing learning process, strengthening communication among bloggers, readers and brands; building relevant communities and developing new skills. The externalization example is blog, which is a process of converting tacit into explicit knowledge. In language acquisition, we can convert tacit into explicit knowledge as an externalisation form taken from SECI model by expressing blog posts in words, sentences, symbols and so forth. The knowledge captured on blog can be transferred easily to readers and other bloggers through multimedia content. As a part of knowledge management system, blog provide several technologies to transfer the idea appropriately. As with other new media theories, SECI shifts away from traditional one-way models of communication to two-way communication. Although studies have shown that as we age, language acquisition becomes more difficult, especially for adults learning a new language (Lenneberg 1964), application of these theories may still find relevance for L2 language learners. This paper conceptualises blogs as a mechanism to enhance the language spread, prominence, visibility, and magnitude of Nigerian language contents on blogs.

In applying the SECI model and Functional-notion approach to language acquisition, it is pertinent for bloggers to answer these questions: Do the contents provide solution to a L2 language learner? How easily can the blog user access content? What is the frequency and level of interactivity? Processing these from the blog users' viewpoint could possibly improve the chance of language acquisition success. The answer to these questions has implication for understanding the nature, of blogs and changes for predicting future trends.

## Methodology

This study identified and employed a content analysis on five Nigerian language blogs. Krippendorff (1980) posits that content analysis examines the artefact (e.g. text, images) of communication itself and not the individual directly. The population of study consisted of all text-based and multi-media Nigerian Language blogs that cover one or more languages. Based on ‘findability’ and relevance, five blogs were purposively selected for this paper. For the purposes of this study, we exclude all official English language-based Nigerian blogs as well as blogs that had not been updated in the past six months to ensure that the blogs were not an abandoned project.

Defining the unit of analysis on Web-based content usually presents unique challenges due to the combination of multiple media forms it displays (Kim & Kuljis 2010). In this study, we choose the home page as the main unit of analysis because it covers the contents we wanted to examine. Factors for the coding categories (e.g. visibility, comments, longevity, activity level and content) were adapted from sample of blogs list identified by Quinn (2009) and expanded upon. We coded nine sub-themes (images, language, words, audio, visual, audio-visual, multimedia, sentences, symbols) under 5 categories (frequency, visibility or prominence, language spread, magnitude and interactivity).

Prominence (placement) and magnitude measures (pixels for images, bytes for video/rich media and line text) using a 5-point rating scale previously developed for an online study by (Epepe, 2015) were adapted. We adapted indicators from Odoemelam, Okeibunor and Okorom (2015) as follows Frequency-1-10, 21-30, 31-40 41-50. The intervals indicate that the frequency of content was observed at least once per interval. A code sheet containing the categories was created based on these measures. Sampling of weeks studied within the 5 language blogs was drawn from a random sample of 6 weeks over a 3-month period (December, 2015, January 2016 and February 2016) at 2 weeks per month as depicted in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sample of Weeks/days**

Month	Week/days	
December, 2015	13-19	6-12
January 2016	3-9	17-23
February 2016	14-20	21-27

This finds support in extant study, which found that after the analysis of 19 studies that applied content analysis on the World Wide Web, most studies conducted data collection in one to two months with the quickest data collection reported at two days, and the longest being five months (McMillan as cited in Kim & Kuljis 2010). The coding categories were adapted from conceptual constructs of pertinent studies (e.g., Herring et al., 2004, 2005) and checked for consistency by a statistician. In addition, data samples coded by four coders achieved 79 per cent agreement. Reliability test of instrument from a pre-test (14 January and 3 February, 2016) by the researchers and an independent coder, gave a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.818. The intercoder reliability of each coding category was above the acceptable indicator of 0.75. The results are reported using descriptive statistics.

## Results

### Research Question 1

How many Nigerian languages are covered on indigenous blogs?

**Table 2: Nigerian Language Spread on blogs**

	Blogs	Language Spread			
		Igbo	Pidgin English	Yoruba	Hausa
1.	NigerianDictionary.com	Igbo	Pidgin English	Yoruba	Hausa
2.	Yoruba Blog			Yoruba	
3.	Igbo English .com	Igbo			
4.	Teach yourself Hausa				Hausa
5.	Nigerian English.com		Pidgin English		

*Source:* Content analysis, December 2015-February 2016

The results in Table 2 indicate that only the NigerianDictionary.com representing 20 per cent of blogs selected had a language spread of four Nigerian languages (Igbo, Pidgin English, Yoruba and Hausa). We observed that although there was a label (see Appendix B) for ‘others’, the blog covers just the three major language and Pidgin English which is fast gaining reputation as an authentic Nigerian language. In contrast, 80 per cent of the blogs studied focused on single language coverage as their names imply (see Table 2). This result implies that the major languages remain the sole focus in language learning and acquisition programmes of blogs.

The findings are similar to those of Nwagbara (2013) which found that broadcast media and schools curriculum did not cater for minority languages in four States (Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River and Rivers) of Nigeria. As with this present study, language content tend to be focused on the major or ‘privileged’ languages of the country. Nwagbara (2013) contends that this trend is unfavourable to the spirit of the Nigerian Language policy. The trend found in this study may be attributable to the fact that those who run the blogs are from the majority language blocks. From the findings, we conclude that minority languages are not the focus of the major operational Nigerian Languages blogs. The results also lead to discussions about the expansion of language spread to promote Nigerian language acquisition for a wider range of languages.

### Research Question 2

What is the frequency of posts update on Nigerian Languages blogs?

**Table 3: Frequency of Nigerian Language Blog Entries**

Blog	Frequency					Total
	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	
NigerianDictionary.com	78	42	29	7	-	156(37.7%)
Yoruba Blog	45	19	13	11	9	97(23.4%)
Igbo English .com	7	11	19	4	1	42 (10.1%)
Nigerian English.com	4	9	10	13	2	38 (9.1%)
Teach yourself Hausa	33	21	13	6	8	81(19.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>414(100%)</b>

*Source:* Content analysis, December 2015-February 2016

Table 3 shows that NigerianDictionary.com had more frequency with 37.7 per cent in terms of blog entries update. This was followed by the Teach yourself Hausa with a frequency of 19.6 percent of blog entries. The blog with the least frequency interval was the Nigerian English.com which is a Pidgin English focused. The behaviourists established that language cognition is a learnable skill and that repeated exposures to language content is associated with success rate of language acquisition (Wikipedia, 2016). Based on the Functional-notional approach of language acquisition, the frequency of organised language syllabic blog entries may enhance language acquisition for L2 learners. It stands to reason that the more blog users are exposed to a language content that are syllabically organised language content, the greater their chances becoming proficient in that language. This position finds support from Finocchiaro & Brumfit (1983).

### Research Question 3

What is the magnitude and prominence of contents among Nigerian languages blogs?

**Table 3: Magnitude and Prominence of Nigerian Language Blog Entries**

<b>Blog</b>	<b>Magnitude (Pixels)</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Prominence (position)</b>
NigerianDictionary.com	110		81
Yoruba Blog	78		95
Igbo English .com	16		11
Nigerian English.com	21		17
Teach yourself Hausa	35		41

*Source:* Content analysis, December 2015-February 2016

Using our magnitude measure (pixels and bytes) to capture images, text and audio visual, we found that while NigerianDictionary.com had content with higher magnitude of 110 points, most of the audio content was not functional. By contrast, the Yoruba blog had fewer magnitude rating (78 points) with functional audio pronunciation and translation content. The Igbo English.com, Nigerian English.com and Teach yourself Hausa, had the lowest magnitude as their contents were mainly text-based. The Yoruba blog gave more prominence as observed from the strategic and organised placement of relevant content. As with other new media theories, SECI (Socialization, Externalization, Combination and Internalization) shifts away from traditional one-way models of communication to two-way communication. The concrete expression or externalisation of language content through multi-media content may be crucial to blogs serving as a vehicle for language acquisition. As with the L1 group, the interest of the L2 learners may be captured with rich media content. This is a position that both the SECI and Functional-Notion approach promote.

### Research Question 4

What is the level of interactivity of Nigerian language blogs?

Qualitative findings suggest that although some elements of interactivity were found in the selected five blogs, only two blogs representing 40 per cent (NigerianDictionary.com and Yoruba Blog) had a relatively functional two-way interactive commentary or contribution platform. However, because NigerianDictionary.com is a membership blog, only registered users are allowed to interact on the blog (see Figures 2 and 3). Thus, users who do not have the patience to register or willingness to divulge their personal information may be restricted from using the blog.

Advertise | About Us | Contact Us | News | Newspapers | Articles | Newsletter | Addresses | Business Info | Nigeria | Forum | Translate | More



Register | Login  
Newsletter | Search Members | Help

Search :  All Languages

Search by : Map , Member , Contributor, Images, Sounds Search Tips

Home | Igbo | Pidgin English | Yoruba | Hausa | OTHER | More Languages | All Words | Translate | Contributors | Forum

Submit Word(s) | Edit Word(s) | Word of the Day | Tools | Nigeria Map | Tell A Friend

ALL | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

Results» 1 - 4 of 4  
Result Page » 1

### List of All Languages

1 . Pidgin English

Nigerian Pidgin English is a version of English and ethnic Nigerian languages spoken as a kind of lingua franca across Nigeria and is referred to simply as "Pidgin", "Broken English" or "Broken".

It is estimated that Nigerian Pidgin English is the native language of approximately 3 to 5 million people and is a second language for at least another 75 million

Categories: Slangs , Proverbs

**Top Contributors**

adeniyi aris brmsugarbabe37 Nneoma

**Translate This**

ore Submitted By Sunday

Oya baby, kulie oto ... Submitted By mee

I love you Submitted By Tomiwa Awosika

[Click for more](#)

Figure 2: Comment section on NigerianDictionary.com

### Most Recent Forum Comments

- » check yoruba/frensh translations..Submitted By rahma
- » Translate this from Igbo-English!..Submitted By Thereseyvette
- » Please Translate Into English Ot Italian..Submitted By OKEYCC
- » help please..Submitted By princesszoonia
- » Need help for translating to English please.....Submitted By StellaMa

» [Click for more](#)

### Learn About Nigeria

ezone

Figure 3: Comment section on NigerianDictionary.com

This negates the position of Anggia and Sensuse (2013) that blogs are knowledge management systems for bloggers to build relevant communities, where people in the same topic of interest share knowledge. These findings largely negate blogs' role in language acquisition by creating a virtual space for language content to thrive on strategic engagement, collaboration and networking.

### Implications

The findings have theoretical and practical implications. It has expanded literature and empirical literature on language blogging. By successfully applying the SECI and Functional Notion models, this study contributes to an understanding of the strategies that guide optimum content creation on blogs. This understanding is crucial to running a successful two-way communication language

blog. Blogs have developed and increased in popularity among academics and professionals, but little research has been published about language blogs. This study examined the content categories of blogs thereby contributing to research in this area.

### **Conclusion, limitations and areas for further study**

This study sought to examine the possible use of blogs in promoting Nigerian languages acquisition. This study offers evidence of the positive effects of blogs on language acquisition. It also contributes to the discourse of issues in language learning through blogging and blog use. Findings show that majority of Nigerian language content on the blogs representing only the three major languages (Hausa, Igbo Yoruba) and Pidgin English lacked interactivity and multimedia content. The study concludes that the spread of Nigerian language content on blogs could be improved if a significant number of bloggers representing various languages integrate a basic language literacy multimedia component on their blogs to stimulate the interest of native and other speakers of the language and help prevent further decline or prevent extinction of some Nigerian languages. The findings of this study contribute to knowledge regarding the application of Nigerian blogs in languages learning and acquisition. Further research is needed to determine the possible effects of Nigeria languages blog use on L1 and L2 learners. In addition, the study recommends a more comprehensive and diversified language use on Nigerian blogs. In this process, emphasis should be placed on languages that are considered ‘minority’.

Finally, as with many other previous web-based studies (e.g., Kim & Kuljis, 2010), this content analysis conducted in this study was faced with sampling and coding challenges. As with many other related studies, the complexity of characteristics of media mix within the Web content makes generalisability and representativeness a daunting task in this study. In spite of these limitations, this study has hopefully contributed to knowledge in the area of new media, development communication and language acquisition.

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#### Appendix A: Nigerian Language Blog list

1.	“The Yoruba Blog,” <a href="http://www.theyorubablog.com/">http://www.theyorubablog.com/</a>
2.	“NigerianDictionary.com,” <a href="http://www.nigeriandictionary.com/index.php">http://www.nigeriandictionary.com/index.php</a>
3.	Igbo English .com <a href="http://www.igboenglish.com/">http://www.igboenglish.com/</a>
4.	Nigerian English.com <a href="http://www.nigerianenglish.com/">http://www.nigerianenglish.com/</a>
5	Teach yourself Hausa <a href="http://www.teachyourselfhausa.com/">http://www.teachyourselfhausa.com/</a>

#### Appendix B: Content measures

The unit of analysis was the home page

Magnitude was measured using a five-point pixels/bytes-based scale.

Frequency-1-10, 21-30, 311-40 41-50 at least once a week calculated by overall posts on home page for each blog for the study period.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MASS MEDIA IN DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

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### **Abstract**

*The language of any group of people is the major carrier of the group's tradition and beliefs, customs and history. It is the medium through which the customs and traditions of society are transmitted to the future generation. Mass media are the various media through which individuals are enlightened, educated, entertained, mobilized and persuaded. There are an estimated 521 languages that have been spoken in Nigeria and some of these are now extinct, while others may be on their way to extinction without some drastic intervention. The policy emphasized that every child shall learn the language of immediate environment. This paper reviewed the importance of mass media in developing and improving Nigerian Languages. It deals with the challenges in using mass media in developing and improving Nigerian Languages and possible ways of overcoming them.*

**Keywords:** Mass Media, Development; National Policy and Language

### **Introduction**

The importance of language in any society is inexhaustible. Language stands at the center of human affairs, from the ordinary to the most profound. The language of any group of people is the major carrier of the group's tradition and beliefs, customs and history. It is the medium through which the customs and traditions of society are transmitted to the future generation. This is essentially aimed at achieving a social situation.

Nigeria has two broad groups of languages indigenous and exogenous languages. Exogenous languages are those that are foreign such as English, French and Arabic while indigenous languages are Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. These are considered Nigeria's major languages because they are spoken by over ten million people each (Crosier & Blench, 1992). It finds that although the country at the moment has a policy that appears to take cognizance of the development of Nigerian languages, the facts on ground actually negate efforts to develop these languages.

At present there is no language policy in Nigeria; rather what we have is a policy statement on the use of the child's native language and English language in education. It states that a child should be taught in his native language of immediate environment in his first three years in the primary school; thereafter English language will be introduced as the medium of instruction (N.P.E, 2004). The problem with above statement is that not every child in Nigeria primary school is learning in his/her native place. This means that if a child attends a non-native school, he will automatically be taught in (a non- native) language of immediate environment. It is imperative to move the importance giving to the use of English as a medium of instruction from primary four which poses a big challenge to the use of indigenous language at higher levels of education in Nigeria. This is as a result of lack of properly articulated language policy.

There is the problem as to how to develop, preserve and promote these indigenous languages in Nigeria so that the people will be capable of using them effectively in oral and written communication and also to make Nigerian children inheritors and not survivors of social and cultural heritage. Every language spoken in the world represents a special culture, melody, colour and asset and to everyone indigenous language is certainly one of the most precious treasures in their lives. It is a duty and responsibility to preserve it and pass it down from one generation to another. The mass media with their powerful functions of information and value dissemination can impact meaningfully on the population and accelerate the development, preservation and promotion of Nigerian indigenous languages. In other words, mass media has the capabilities to help the Nigerians to become literate and fluent in their indigenous languages.

Mass media are resources that can appeal or reach unlimited number of people in their interactions and dealings with other people (Onyejemezi, 1990). The media as a rule connotes newsgathering and dissemination, from the people back to the people, through both the print and broadcast media (Uyo, 1997). The Onus of this paper thus, lies on how mass media could be used strategically to develop, preserve and promote Nigerian indigenous languages.

### **Mass media**

There is hardly any home or industry around the world that does not employ the media as a means for receiving or putting a story across. Media has so occupied a part of our daily lives that without it, effective communication becomes impossible (Dopemu, 1988. p. 108). Media is a significant force in modern culture particularly, in language use. It refers to the ways people receive information and entertainment. According to Ademoyin (1991, p. 70) media are channels through which message, information, ideas and knowledge are conveyed and are disseminated. They are the instruments through which stimuli can be passed and or obtained. Media are materials that can be used to record, store, preserve and transmit or retrieve information. Teachers and learners can refer to and use them as sources to obtain knowledge, new ideas and to acquire new skills and competencies. Teachers can also use them to present learning tasks. When properly used, they can help to make the message of the teachers more vivid, interesting and intelligible. They make the participation of the learners in teaching and learning activities more fully involved, meaningful and useful (Agun, 1988 .p. 134).

Mass media mean the various media through which individuals are enlightened, educated, entertained, mobilized and persuaded. According to Barbara (2007) mass media could be written, broadcast or spoken and it is aimed at reaching a large audience. Mass media accommodates a multitude of sources such as television, radio, newspapers, cinema/films, movies, magazines, books and the Internet. The media however manipulates the time axis (Kramer, 2006) and more generally notions of place and time. Media as technologies open the way for aspects of the world which cannot be seen or heard by natural perception (Barbara, 2007). The advent of mass media which were not based on print culture opened up new worlds to even more people. Mass media operating with pictures and sound, most typically film and television, gave really large parts of the population access to media culture.

Today, electronic media provide access to information and entertainment to all parts of the population (Njemanze and Ononiwu, 2015). Media has also portrayed a “mediated culture” which

reflects and recreates people's culture. This has enhanced the rate of media saturation and in turn with strategic programming will enhance the development of Nigerian languages.

### **Nigerian Languages**

Nigeria has two broad groups of languages – indigenous and exogenous languages. Exogenous languages are those that are foreign such as English, French and Arabic. Wikipedia (2016) reports that of the 521 languages that have been spoken in Nigeria, 510 are living languages, 2 are second languages without mother-tongue speakers and 9 are extinct.

Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are considered the Nigeria's major languages due to their having speakers in excess of 13 million each, while the rest are referred to as minority languages. Again, these languages have been grouped into their main language families thus Nilo Saharan family, Asiatic family and Niger Congo family e.g. Igbo, Fulani, Yoruba, Edo etc (Greenberg, 1996). However, most of the three major Nigerian languages belong to Niger Congo family – Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa and were chosen to be the three major Nigerian languages because they are spoken by over ten million people each (Crozier & Blench, 1992).

Among the exogenous languages – English, French and Arabic – English is the official language. It has been in Nigeria since 1842 that is before the coming of the British missionaries to Nigeria. It has been discovered that English has increasingly displaced Nigerian languages and is widely used in business, academics and everyday life activities especially in the cities. English language also became institutionalized because it is the language of Nigeria's colonial masters and was imposed on the people. It is also the dominant language of science and international relations.

This is really a serious challenge and the situation is actually making Nigerian children to no longer be inheritors but survivors of social and cultural heritage. This portends a cultural catastrophe for the country which demands serious concern by all Nigerians (Ohiri – Aniche, 2000, Obe, 1980). This situation also created discomfort in the nation mainly to policy makers largely because the goals of the Nigerian language policies are not being attained as proposed. For instance, at primary school level, the mother tongue policy has been abandoned and there is very little in the school curriculum to teach the children their languages, cultures and mores to make self-assured, knowledgeable and proud Nigerians.

### **Development**

This is a concept that has varied definitions and interpretations. It is a multi-dimensional phenomenon which encompasses the improvement of all aspects of human life. Development denotes advancement, change and improvement in all aspects of human living standards. Development in this paper is examined in relation to the language situation in Nigeria. Thus, Njemanze and Ononiwu, (2015) describe it as “inter-human environments, transforming them to their own betterment by humans in order to improve and transform their environment”. Development therefore, is a system-wide manifestation of the way that people, firms, technologies and institutions interact with each other within the economic, social and political system. Specifically, development is the capacity of these systems to provide self-organizing complexity (Barder, 2012).

Development in Nigerian languages according to Njemanze (2012) refers to the advancement, improvement and transformations of the various indigenous languages in Nigeria by the policy makers because language is basically used by humans. Development indices such as internal cohesion, integration, unity, economic wellbeing and citizens' participation in governance are promoted through indigenous language. Based on these assertions, Olaoye (2016) found that native languages in Nigeria play fundamental role on issues like democracy, technology, meta language and linguistic globalization. There are however some challenges in the optimum utilization of these mother tongues. The major problems being orthographic inadequacies, the multiplicity of minority languages, linguistic desertification, and language endangerment.

The term language development can be used in both individual and societal senses. It is commonly used among psychologists and educators with reference to individuals to refer to the phenomenon of child language acquisition (that is, how infants acquire language). Ethnologue (2016) states that language development is the result of the series of on-going planned actions that language communities take to ensure that they can effectively use their languages to achieve their social, cultural, political, economic, and spiritual goals.

Language development is generally referred to as human communication process which enhances learning, political and economic development of an individual (Njemanze, 2007). Language development embodies applied and practiced skills which generally improve education in a nation. It enhances the educational needs and status of a country and above all, it is central to the development of a functionally literate nation (Njemanze, 2007).

The educational needs and status of any nation are unique to that society, while the level of a nation's mastery of a language is dependent upon the contexts of usage. A good language development plan aims at ensuring mastery and proficiency attainments by users. Therein lies the importance of the mass media. As Njemanze and Ononiwu (2015) maintain "Communication therefore is basic to any language process".

### **Language development and policies in Nigeria**

In addition to appreciating the importance of language in the educational process and as a means of preserving the people's culture, the government considers it to be in the interest of national unity that each child should be encouraged to learn one of the three major languages other than his own mother tongue. In this connection, the government considers the three major languages in Nigeria to be Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (NPE, 2004, P.5).

Developing a policy and language that will accommodate the needs of all ethnic groups in Nigeria is a task that confronts policy makers and language planners. Nigeria since independence has continued to battle with its ethno-linguistic challenges which have been detrimental to its language development plan. Nigeria has large, medium and small languages littered all over the country which creates an upsurge in inter-ethnic, economic, education, political and religious competition. This ethnic rivalry has enhanced the maintenance of English as single official language. There has been reduced attention given to the development of a national language in Nigeria. As long as English has continued to occupy its esteemed positions in the nation, achieving a well developed language plan for other languages would continue to pose a challenge. Various attempts to establish a composite national language (WAZOBIA) has not produced an encouraging result because of

ethnic competition. No ethnic group wants to lose her language even if the users are very few. The major and minor ethnic languages are supposed to be projected in a way that their mastery will facilitate learning and as well foster national development. They should be projected to be used alongside the English Language as official languages and not having English Language stand alone in that regard. Although the practice in Nigeria is often that of visible disparity between policy and practice, language planners should be recruited to help in drawing-up an all embracing language plan. This is because the acquisition of language is a complex process.

### **Importance of mass media in developing and promoting Nigerian indigenous languages**

Right from the dawn of human existence mankind has organized itself in groups, members of which communicate with and understand one another through shared audio-visual expressions (Ukwu, 2009). In recent times, communication media has added new dimensions to the learning of languages in Nigeria. Media roles in language development are enormous especially in the communication process, a process which requires proper understanding, encoding and decoding of the message from its sources. Since the media is a tool for written, spoken and visual communication which helps in the cultivation of proper language skills and proficiency needed for effective functioning in the society, it can enhance the development of indigenous languages in Nigeria through the following processes.

- Correspondence
- Integration
- Flexibility and
- Competition

The impact of correspondence in language learning has aided learning through email and other digital medium. Such medium as e-mail, blogs, net-speaking etc will help learners to actualize their goals of indigenous language learning in Nigeria. Thus, it is possible to combine phones with video or interactive sound with pictures (multimedia) in teaching and learning. Also data stored in digital formula remains intact and can be copied severally irrespective of the number of years it has stayed. Flexibility and competition help the learners to communicate with a wider audience. People were able to combine the transactional capability of computers and computer networks to carryout online learning. Mass media tools have therefore been designed to edit and produce cumbersome works in a short time.

Since mass media are tools for written, spoken and visual communication which help in cultivation of proper language skills and proficiency needed for effective functioning in the society, they have the capabilities to develop, preserve and promote Nigerian indigenous languages. In this paper we focus on the following media:

- ❖ Print media
- ❖ Television
- ❖ Radio broadcasting
- ❖ Internet

#### **(a) Print media**

The print media include books, newspapers, magazines and letters. Books are seen as useful learning devices because of their compactness, portability, low cost and reusability. Books are summaries (sometimes elaborations) of knowledge developed through research. Schramm (as cited

in Anyanwu, 1988) notes that the textbook has been so fully accepted as part of education that it is neither questioned nor even made the subject of research aimed at improving its quality. A book does not require equipment to use, does not disturb non-users and provides opportunities for individualized learning as the student sets his own rate of learning and can re-read necessary portions. Books are effective in propagating the language and culture of a people. For example, in Igbo language, writers of Igbo origin have done us and the nation proud by the volume of their output. Such iconic writers like Chinua Achebe, Olaudah, Equiano, Elechi Amadi, Cyprian Ekwensi, Flora Nwapa, Onuora Nzekwu, Anezi Okoro, Adiele Afigbo and many others have brought Igbo life and culture to the notice of the world and stimulated our awareness and interest (Ugwu, 2009). In the domain of Igbo language proper, the following have made notable impact: Pita Nwana, Tony Ubesie, Chinadum Ofomata, Inno Uzoma Nwadike, Ogbalu, F. C., Onwuchekwa, J. , Chimamanda Ngozi, Buchi Emecheta and so on.

The newspaper as another medium can be used at the individual's own pace and the individual could go back and read a story again and again to understand it better. Furthermore, newspaper reading is an activity that does not intrude on people around the reader. It may be done in a social environment, but full attention is usually given to the printed account. It is a very convenient medium because it can be carried around and read in almost any context. There are different ways of using the newspaper in the language classroom. The student may read the articles therein written on Igbo, Hausa or Yoruba and this could transmit some form of culture into the student or reader. For an example, a story with the headline "Emume iri ji ndi Owerri, (a town that serves as the capital of Imo State in Nigeria) Oru Owerri" will expose the younger generation who do not know much about new yam festival in Nigeria in Igbo-land or in Owerri, to vital information about the culture.

Newspapers and magazines also help in reflecting changes in a giving language, including morphological, semantic and even stylistic changes and as well could assist teachers, readers and students where necessary to keep themselves abreast with these changes. It will suffice to say that most newspapers are linguistically up to date and provide valuable linguistic data for the student, teacher and ordinary learner of the language.

#### (b) **Television**

The television may be the most powerful communication medium for many purposes: The television can convey a great number of stimuli or ideas simultaneously; it can make great impact from mutually reinforcing gestures, words, postures and sounds and a background of symbolically significant issue (Onyejemezi, 1990). With the spread of Nigerian language movies in Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba and other indigenous languages, viewers are exposed to Nigerian language reinforcement. The visual and critical aural awareness of the viewers are increased and thus enhances language learning and development. The viewer or the learner listens to the authentic language as it is spoken by the native speaker in the movies aired by the television stations, and sees the actions of the characters, as well as how they say them and thus matches action with words in order to get a better grasp of the language. Any learner or teacher of Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba or any other Nigerian language who engages himself in watching the relevant language movies for the purpose of language learning would grasp the accent, voice, body language, correct and appropriate lexical items, correct phrases and syntactic structures of the language. Computers and smart phones

enhance language learning and development. Again photographs and illustrations presented on a television programmes could help the learner to describe situations.

(c) **Radio broadcasting**

Radio is the technology of using radio waves to carry information, such as sound, by systematically modulating some property of electromagnetic energy waves transmitted through space, such as their amplitude, frequency, phase, or pulse width (Wikipedia,2016).

Broadcasting is the act of spreading information widely through sound to a group or groups of people either in their homes, at listening and through electronic devices of several kinds (Ogunmilade, 1988. p. 158). Radio broadcasting is a popular medium all over the world. Radio broadcasting enhances speech production and other mechanics of pronunciation.

In language teaching program, it makes use of the four language skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking. Students pay attention to accent, choice of word, listening, sound patterns, favorite demonstrations and more. By using different voices, dialogue, natural sounds, strong and vivid descriptions and background information learners have the opportunity to construct mental pictures of events (Onyejemezi, 1990. P. 149). The production of radio programmes in Nigeria involves well qualified and experienced teachers, subject specialist, experts and resource people from State Ministries of Education, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Media representatives and experts from the National Educational Technology Centre, Kaduna (Onyejemezi,1990. P. 159). The human voice and other techniques used in presenting radio lessons account for their emotional impact on the learners. It is obvious that a lot of radio programmes in Nigerian languages contribute to language learning particularly the phonological aspect of the language which deals with pronunciation, stress and intonation. When language learners listen to their local Radio news and other programs, they learn among other things pronunciation of new words and develop greater confidence in their ability to speak their local languages.

(d) **The internet**

The Internet, sometimes called simply "the Net," is a worldwide system of computer networks - a network of networks in which users at any one computer can, if they have permission, get information from any other computer (and sometimes talk directly to users at other computers) Today, the Internet is a public, cooperative and self-sustaining facility accessible to hundreds of millions of people worldwide. Physically, the Internet uses a portion of the total resources of the currently existing public telecommunication networks. Technically, what distinguishes the Internet is its use of a set of protocols called TCP/IP (for Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol). Two recent adaptations of Internet technology, the intranet and the extranet, also make use of the TCP/IP protocol (Rouse, 2016).

It offers a collection of information with topic ranging from business to science and technology. It also possesses material on the arts and research materials for students entertainment, sports, shopping dictionaries encyclopedias and maps (Owolabi, 2001.p. 60). The “net work of networks”, are linked by fast – speed telephone cables, fiber optic cables, laser link and even satellites links (David, 1997, p.38). The publicly accessible internet contains literally thousands of terabytes of digital materials that can be reused to support learning without reformatting by models such as O2. The structure of this material varies greatly-some are video, some are audio, some are PDF

(Portable Document Format), some are HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) and so on but, because humans carry out the aggregation of these resources, the heterogeneous nature of the resources is not problematic (Willey, 2010).

The internet has affected people across the world. Its penetration in schools, homes and offices has been spectacular in rich countries, but some developing countries like Nigeria have also sized on it. In these countries, the subscribers are increasingly dependent on basic browsing, E-mails, e-learning, messaging for job hunting, trading, and many of other practical applications.

E-learning according to Koper (2010) can be defined as the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICIS) to facilitate and enhance learning and teaching. E-learning specialist specializes in development of multimedia and electronic learning products, particularly Web-based learning. E-learning authoring tools are software or online services that enable users to create courses, simulations or other educational experiences. These tools typically support conventional, presentation-like courses and may enable screen recording, multimedia, interactivity, quizzes and non-linear or adaptive approaches (Wikipedia, 2016). E-learning as posits by (Owolabi, 2013, p. 11) means "learning by using electronic technologies such as computers and internet in conjunction with other information related media".

Teaching through the use of the digital media or the Internet in particular helps the teacher to attend to a wider range of audience at a given time and engaging learners in the learning process. Internet can provide lessons which will help students to learn grammar and vocabulary at their own pace. It can also improve teaching and learning of language through the provision of access to resource persons such as mentors, experts, researchers, professionals, business leaders and peers all over the world (Tinio, 2011). Teleconferencing technologies enable instruction to be received simultaneously by multiple geographically dispersed learners; that is, synchronous learning (Tinio, 2011). Teleconferencing means meeting through a telecommunications medium. It is a generic term for linking people between two or more locations by electronics (Lane, 2013).

Based on the nature, interactive and sophistication of technology, teleconferencings are grouped into four types namely:

- (a) Audio conferencing
- (b) Audio graphic conferencing
- (c) Web-based conferencing

Audio conferencing involves the real-time (live) exchange of voice message over a telephone network. Video conferencing does not just allow voice and graphics but also allows exchanges of moving images. This does not use telephone line but either a satellite link or television network. Web-based conferencing involves the transmission of text and graphics, audio and visual media through the internet. It requires the use of computers and browsers. Teleconferencing can be used on formal and informal learning context.

### **Challenges in using mass media in developing and improving Nigerian languages and ways of overcoming them**

Even though there are numerous benefits of mass media in developing and improving Nigerian languages, it has inherent challenges. These challenges include:

- a. Inadequate books for learning Nigerian languages;
- b. The hardware and software for electronic media (Radio and Television) are not produced locally and cost of establishing them is quite high.
- c. The educational policy and planning, language and content, infrastructure, capacity building and financing have not been reviewed to suit the computerized world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Inadequate books for learning Nigerian languages:** In this country at present, books are no longer cheap mainly because they generally are scarce. To support this assertion, Ukwu (2009) states that, “*we have not succeeded in establishing and maintaining credible newspapers and magazines in Igbo. The list of books on local histories and tradition is growing but books in Igbo remain few and far between*”. To eradicate this, there should be massive production of Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba books. Massive production of books should not be interpreted to mean the proliferation of substandard publications. There ought to be some type of official monitoring of publications to control quality. Monitoring and control units should therefore be established both at governmental and school levels. The units should ensure that not only are contents of high quality but that they also reflect approved syllabuses. The private sector, especially corporate organizations can help by sponsoring research institutions and publishing houses.

The hardware and software for electronic media (Radio and television) are not produced locally and cost of establishing them is quite high. There is scarcity of qualified technical staff to maintain and service the equipment. Spare parts are not easy to acquire, consequently there is a lot of unserviceable equipment that could, otherwise, be repaired and put to use. In Nigeria, there has been no serious effort to apply the electronic mass media (Radio and television) to formal school programmes. Programmes such as Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba by radio or by television, though they cover formal education subjects, are not directed at the classroom. The target audience may be the students in formal school systems but the programmes are presented at the wrong time. For example the Star times has the following NTA cable TV networks which provide NTA knowledge, NTA entertainment, NTA Igbo, NTA Hausa, NTA Yoruba and so on.

To address this problem, the whole school levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) should establish at least a small radio transmitting unit in its institution for academic broadcasts. Though it is usually more cost effective (not only for initial cost, but also for maintenance and upkeep), it will also require few hands to manage it. The ministry of education in collaboration with teachers in the field should plan the programmes with financial support from government to compensate for lost commercial time. Also qualified technical staff should be employed to maintain and service the equipment.

The educational policy and planning, language and content, infrastructure, capacity building and financing have not been reviewed to suit the computerized world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Tinio (2011) posits that attempts to enhance and reform education through ICTs require clear and specific objectives, guidelines and time-bound targets, the mobilization of required resources and political commitment at all levels to see the initiative through. For Internet facilities to be used effectively there are factors that need to be put in place. These may include infrastructures. ICTs should be made available for teachers and learners. Virtual learning environment such as blogs, video conferencing and podcasts should be created by teachers and school administrators. Teleconferencing should be put in place for effective language teaching and learning. We are not

ignorant of the fact that most of our children are ICT compliant and therefore can manipulate its facilities whenever and however they deem fit. But educating the teachers will better equip them to harness the abilities of these children.

### **Conclusion**

The importance of language in any society is inexhaustible. Nigeria has two broad groups of languages- indigenous and exogenous languages. Exogenous languages are those that are foreign such as English, French and Arabic while indigenous languages are Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. Mass media with their powerful functions can impact, meaningfully on the population and accelerate the development, preservation and promotion of Nigerian indigenous languages. Development in Nigerian languages refers to the advancement, improvement and transformations of the various indigenous languages in Nigeria by the policy makers because language is basically used by humans. Language development is generally referred to as the advent of human communication process which enhances the development goals of language learning, political and economic development of an individual. A good language development plan aims at ensuring mastery and proficiency attainments by users. Therein lies the importance of the mass media.

In recent times, communication media has added new dimensions to the learning of languages in Nigeria. Since mass media are tools for written, spoken and visual communication which help in cultivation of proper language skills and proficiency needed for effective functioning in the society, they have the capabilities to develop, preserve and promote Nigerian indigenous languages through the following media:

Print media

Television

Radio broadcasting

Even though there are numerous benefits of mass media in developing and improving Nigerian languages, it has inherent challenges. These challenges include:

- a. Inadequate books for learning Nigerian languages.
- b. The hardware and software for electronic media (Radio and Television) are not produced locally and cost of establishing them is quite high.
- c. The educational policy and planning, language and content, infrastructure, capacity building and financing have not been reviewed to suit the computerized world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

These challenges can be overcome through the following ways:

- i. There should be massive production of books for learning of Nigerian languages.
- ii. The whole school levels should establish at least a small radio transmitting unit in its institution for academic broadcasts.
- iii. To enhance and reform education through ICTs require clear and specific objectives, guidelines and time-bound targets, the mobilization of required resources and political commitment at all levels to see the initiative through.

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