AWKA JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERARY STUDIES (AJELLS)

Volume 11 Number 1
July, 2024

Language as an Instrument of Exclusion and Participation in Nigeria

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Abstract

Language, held up as a sign of belonging, becomes a gatekeeper for inclusion/exclusion, regulating access to citizenship and education, health and legal protection. The use of language as a tool of exclusion among the indigenous people of Nigeria has contributed to the decline or extinction of indigenous languages. This article investigates the process of exclusion and describes an investigation on the extent of this phenomenon as it concerns Nigerians and their indigenous languages. The purpose of the study is to explain Language as a tool on the instrumentalist approach to language; discuss various ways language creates a class of the excluded; describe the English Language as an instrument of exclusion in Nigeria, and explain the attitude of education practitioners and civil servants towards indigenous languages. Qualitative Descriptive method was used. The article made use of the theory of communicative competence propounded by Dell Hymes (1966). The data for this study was gathered from varied sources including libraries, published research papers, and

websites. In the findings, the colonialists made the mastery of English language a standard for advancement to administrative (white collar) jobs and consequently social elevation. Under this condition, Nigerian indigenous languages and every aspect of life and culture of the people became less fashionable, inferior, retrogressive, and symbolic of poverty. Nigerians, by nature, are very receptive of innovations and embraced the learning of English, the white man's language and way of life. English language, therefore, became a tool for excluding Nigerian indigenous languages to the extent that some sect in Nigeria detest their own language. Thus, the English language was used as a tool for excluding Nigerians from their heritage and culture as a people. This has resulted in the present state of decline of the indigenous languages in Nigeria.

Keywords: Language, Instrument, Exclusion, Participation, Nigeria

Introduction

Language is one of the peculiar characteristics of man. Greenberg (1971) states, "Language is unique to man". No other species possess a truly symbolic means of communication and no human society, however simple its material culture, lacks the basic human heritage of a well-developed language. Language therefore is very vital to the existence of any group as a human community. Language is a basic means of communication and is an important index of identity. Any deprivation in relation to language affects not only the identity of individuals but also their human-rights. Language has, also, long served as a powerful factor in distinguishing the self from the others socially, politically and legally. Although, language is used to unify diverse population and contributes to the inclusion of individuals in the national system. Language can, however, be a major source of disintegration and exclusion. Hence, language which can be used as an effective instrument for national development and the promotion of national consciousness and unity can also be used as a weapon for

marginalization and or exclusion. It also serves as a means of identification of any people as a unique entity and a unifying factor. Often, language is also used as a means of tracing common ancestry of a group that shares the same language. Different people have also regarded their languages as one of the most valuable aspects of their heritage and own them as the vehicle for expressing, preserving, and propagating their culture and civilization. They work hard at developing and preserving their language in the face of any threats. However, in many situations, indigenous peoples are disadvantaged in carrying out language development or preservative decisions as they would desire due to unfavourable political, legislative, or bureaucratic systems especially in multilingual situations.

When multilingual situations are created by the coming together of people who speak different languages, the need to communicate exists. This need is usually met but not without fallouts. These fallouts depend on the circumstances of the contact. If it is trade or some social situations such as migration, naturally the language of the dominant group inadvertently would in time dominate the other and assume a more "prestigious" status thereby marginalizing the language of the minority and consequently its people. On the other hand, if the contact is brought about by war colonization, colonialists or conquering people usually relegate the language of their colonized or conquered people to the background by making their own language the official language of education and bureaucracy. Language exclusion applies in situations where particular languages and consequently their speakers are excluded.
Nigeria is a multilingual nation with varying estimation of the total number of indigenous languages. Adegbija (1994) states that "Nigeria has a total population of 88.5 million and has between 400 and 800 languages", while Gordon (2005) reports that the "sum of Nigerian local languages listed is 521". One thing to be deduced from these, is that, Nigeria is rich in variety of languages. The language situation in Nigeria is such that the English language

is the official language and there are three recognized major Nigerian languages, namely, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba spoken in the three broad regions of the country: Northern, Eastern, and Western regions, respectively. The English language as the official language is used as the language of medium of instruction in educational institutions in the country. The current policy on education in Nigeria states that for the first 3 years in school (that is up to Primary three), the child should be taught in the language of the immediate local community. This is the reason why it is said that language is very important in our life endeavours.

Language remains an important means of communication among humans. As individuals meet on daily basis, they share their emotions, ideas, beliefs or feelings by using a common code that makes up the language. It gives shape to people's thoughts, guides and controls their entire activities. Therefore, language is a purely human and intrinsic method of communication. The entire human progress, in fact everything that distinguishes humans from animals, depends on language only. Language is, today, a medium of literature, science and technology, computers and cultural exchanges between social groups, and the most powerful, convenient and permanent means of communication in the world. According to Pushpinder and Jindal (2008), "all human civilization and knowledge are possible only through language". Therefore, languages in the world are for communication, sharing our ideas, opinions, passing on culture from generation to generation and most especially for knowledge.

In Nigeria, the indigenous languages we have are Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. These languages are the mother tongues for the Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba cultural groups. They are the languages that fully identify with the personal or native culture of a bi/multilingual person. In other words, there is no aspect of the user that his or her native language would not be able to express. For example, the Igbo language is used in expressing the world

views, culture and tradition of the Igbos. So it is with the Hausas and the Yorubas. In the same vein, English language fully expresses the native culture of the L1 users. In many communities across the world, indigenous languages are under pressure because they are excluded by the nations and by other languages to the extent that many of them are either extinct or at the verge of extinction. This is why Corson (2003) says that, "in every case the languages of these peoples show marks of this history of oppression that their speakers have experienced and so, where these indigenous languages are extinct or on the verge of extinction, they survive in language contact situations where dominant invasion languages threaten to swamp the aboriginal languages". In his opinion, there are many documented accounts of injustices regularly inflicted upon indigenous minorities in an attempt to eradicate their languages through schooling.

Furthermore, the notion by policy makers that indigenous peoples are better off learning and using the languages of colonizers came to bear on the making of language policies. At the same time, it gave the colonizers access to the cultural and economic goods of the dominant cultures while moving them away from their own aboriginal sociocultural contexts adjudged inferior to those of the colonizers.

The language policies seem to stem from ignorance and racism. The aboriginal languages are ignored in schools and replaced with the language of education. The situation of indigenous languages across the world has informed interventions from UNESCO over the years. A 1999 UNESCO committee of experts ruled that on psychological, sociological, and educational grounds, "it is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child" is the child's mother tongue and that the most appropriate way of protecting indigenous languages against the English language is by bilingual and bicultural forms of education. UNESCO also proposed that English language should be introduced as a subject at the later

stage of Primary 1 and used as a medium of instruction from Primary 3. However, there was a Makerere Commonwealth Conference on the Teaching of English as a second language in 1961. The conference reiterated, the necessary role of English in technological development and wider participation of speakers in public affairs of a nation. It then advised that English should be introduced early in the curriculum of a nation that sought after the objectives of UNESCO. Furthermore, Hembrom (2016) surmises the fact that "a lonely death of an individual will finalize the extinction of a cultural species and a community". He further opines that "with the process of extinction is a consciousness that does not even know that it is impoverished by the death of a cultural strain and is not aware of the brutalization unleashed by that insensitivity". In the light of the foregoing, a number of intervention projects have been sponsored by UNESCO to sensitize language speakers on the vitality status of their languages and provide technical advice on the possible ways of ensuring that these languages are preserved and revitalized as may be necessary.

In the UNESCO (2003) document on language vitality, some factors were also considered: vitality status of any language, number of the speakers, response to new domains and media, intergenerational language transmission, proportion of speakers within the total population and availability of materials for language education. The English language met all the factors. The English language in Nigeria became a product of the society which employs it. It is employed and engaged in a continual process of recreation. This is why it is said that language reflects the culture and the folkways of the people who use it.

Consequently, the English language is neither the mother tongue nor the first language of any of the over six hundred ethnic groups in Nigeria. According to Uzoezie, (2011), "the English language is a borrowed gown and one of the inheritances of our colonial experience". Furthermore, the language is indigenous to Britain,

but today, it is the language most spoken world-wide. It has become the language of government, law, commerce, education and international communication for most of the former British Empire including such faraway places as India, Hong Kong, most of Africa south of the Sahara (including Nigeria) and even the Caribbean e.g Jamaica. English language got a foot-hold in Nigeria through interpreters trained overseas and employed in the Slave Coast, as well as through hiring professional interpreters who offered their services to ship-captains.

Furthermore, the development of the English language in Nigeria was speeded up by the abolition of the slave trade. With the abolition, freed slaves from America and other places came to their original homes in West Africa (Uzoezie, 2011). Since these ex-slaves had learnt some English as slaves, they introduced this language in their original homelands. According to Adetugbo, Crowder (qtd. in Uzoezie, 2011) reports that in the late 1930's "many freed slaves from Freetown came back to their original homes in Lagos, Badagry and Abeokuta, and by 1842, more than five hundred of them had settled in Abeokuta and some three hundred in Lagos". Some of these slaves had received formal education in the English language. Later on, many of these freed slaves were employed by both the missionaries, trade companies and British colonial administrators as interpreters, messengers and even teachers as the former moved from the Coastal areas to the hinterland. The purpose of the study is to: explain Language as a tool on the instrumentalist approach to language, discuss various ways language creates a class of the excluded, describe the English Language as an instrument of exclusion in Nigeria and explain the attitude of education practitioners and civil servants towards indigenous languages. This has resulted in the present state of decline of the indigenous languages in Nigeria.

In other to carry out this study, there is need for conceptual clarification on major terms used in this study as such will give a

better understanding and insight of the terms. The terms have been listed in the keywords.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts the theory of Communication Competence. Communicative competence theory was developed by Dell Hymes in (1966), as a reaction to Noam Chomsky's (1965) linguistic competence which focused on correctness in grammar; that is, knowing and adhering to the rules of grammar. According to Hymes, having an accurate knowledge of the grammar rules of a language is not enough to make the learner competent in the use of that language for communication. The learner also needs communicative competence which entails knowing what to say, to whom, in what circumstances and how to say it. In other words, communicative competence refers to the language user's grammatical knowledge of his language and as well as his social knowledge about how and when to use this language to accomplish specific communication goals. Communication competence is also helpful in this study because, it is one who is competent enough in the global English that will be able to allow this language to influence his own language, culture and others. Similarly, the English language teacher also needs to be competent in the processes of teaching the language especially the global English.

Humans have the gift of creativity in language to capture the uniqueness of each context and language situations. Examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community and the way people convey and construct aspects of their social identity through languages. Hornby (2000) is of the opinion that language is "speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country or state". Going by this definition, it will be safe to say that language can be expressed in speech and written forms. "Our language changes to meet the needs of people" (MacCallum,

1990). This definition shows that language is not only central to man but also flexible, adaptable, and productive. This means that language cuts across the social structure of a people and that the study of the people's language can reliably predict the social situations under which the language is generated.

Instrument

This is a means of getting something done. It is also known as a tool or thing one can use to get something done. It is also a means whereby some acts are accomplished.

Exclusion

This word as a noun means the process of excluding or the state of being excluded. It is also the act of preventing someone from entering a place or taking part in an activity. Something not included in an investigation or a task. The exclusion of something is the act of deliberately not using, allowing, or considering it.

Participation

This means the action of taking part in something.

Nigeria

This is a country on the coast of West Africa, bordered by the Bight of Benin, Cameroun, Chad and Niger. It shares maritime border with Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, and Sao Tome. It has the largest economy in Africa. It is projected to rank among the world's top ten economies by 2050. It has abundance of resources like oil and gas. It holds the largest natural gas reserves on the continent, and it is Africa's largest oil and gas producer.

Research Methodology

In other to obtain an in-depth and thorough information on Language as an instrument of exclusion, the study uses qualitative descriptive design method. This design method is concerned with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions of practice, beliefs, and attitudes. Utterances

and statements credited to researchers constitute data for this study. Books, journals, articles, and internet materials are sources of data for this study.

Language, a tool on the Instrumentalist Approach to Language

Fowler (1971) insists that "some knowledge of how language works provides some indispensable information for the students, this is because linguistics is a theory of how language works, how it is acquired, how it communicates meaning and what kind of structure it employs". Language is a system of signs, the main purpose of which is communication. It must be borne in mind that language is "an instrument, a means never an end" (Tauli, 1968). Something either has value in itself, or is valued instrumentally, as a means to attain something else. When applied to language, one's view accords languages intrinsic value: languages are valued in and of themselves, not as means for attaining any other end. The instrumentality approach, in contrast, considers language as a tool, an instrument that is valuable to the extent it helps us achieve goals and objectives that we value. The more useful a language is, the more value it will have for its speakers. Some languages are more suited to reach certain goals, and relative value of those goals will have an impact on the relative value of the languages. For example, if our goal is to convey messages to as large as possible audience, there will be massive inequalities to value between small languages like *Ekwa*, *Ika*, Prisian, Piraha or Rhaeto-Romansch on the one hand, and Mega-languages like English or Chinese on the other hand. But if the objective is to "have access to writings from our ancestors" or to "protect our cultural heritage", then these languages might be able to compete. In this article, the researchers have clarified what understanding languages as instruments imply. Similarly, we described in detail the most common instrumentalist arguments given to justify certain language policies. It is also noted that, for one to be able to place languages noting their values, competence in language is needed.

Various Ways Language Creates a Class of the Excluded and Participation

As important as language is, it creates a class of the excluded and participation. This can be achieved through the following ways.

Official Language

A good number of African countries have adopted one Indo-European language or the other as official language. These favoured languages are: English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese, which are used in all official circles in these African countries. According to Worukwo (2023), "participation in any official domain therefore depends on the ability to operate in the relevant European language: English in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, French in Togo, Burkina Faso, and DR Congo, Spanish in Equatorial Guinea, and Portuguese in Angola and Mozambique". Only the educated minority in these countries, who by virtue of their formal education can operate in these European languages, have access to all official positions in these countries, to the exclusion of the uneducated minority that cannot speak the official language of the country. The adoption of an alien language as official language automatically excludes a good number of the citizenry from participating in official domains.

Language Requirements

When the condition for certain positions in the society is the possession of a given language, it automatically means that people that cannot speak the language in question are excluded from such position.

Medium of Instruction in Schools

Most African children suffer exclusion in early primary education because rather than being taught in their mother tongues at this early stage, they are taught in some European languages with which they have had little or no contact. Such a child is therefore faced with the dual problem of first learning an alien language as

well as the content taught in the language. This situation places them at a disadvantage when compared to their privileged counterparts who are already proficient in the imported language. A good number of these children are unable to complete their education and are consequently excluded from those domains that require proficiency in the alien language.

Language Proscription

Language proscription usually results when there are government policies that favour some languages within a society. Such policies accord recognition to some of the languages within the society to the exclusion of others, and even when there is no obvious statement on the proscription of some of the languages, the languages that are not included in the official policies stand proscribed since their use is not tolerated in those domains where the recognized languages are used. There are international organizations in Nigeria, for example, where the staff are only allowed to speak a European language, French or English, to the exclusion of any Nigerian language. This policy automatically excludes all those that are unable to operate in these European languages from functioning in such organizations.

Literacy

Literacy is for participation and exclusion in the modern world. Using literacy as the basis for occupying certain positions in the society means that those who cannot read and write are excluded from such positions. This factor is gaining so much ground that even in some traditional African societies, people who are illiterate are not allowed to be community/family heads on the ground that they cannot effectively represent their communities outside. What this means is that, given the fact that the majority of members of such a society are illiterate, more people are excluded on the grounds of literacy, while just few are able to participate in such spheres. Exclusionary language and behaviors can take on many forms, both subtle and overt. It may be conscious or unconscious,

intentional or unintentional. Whatever the form or context, it's damaging for the victim — the person who the exclusionary language is isolating or offending. The harmful effects of exclusion can result in the victim withdrawing from the group or even leaving the company to escape the situation. Furthermore, victimization can lead to problems like depression, low self-esteem, and anxiety — which, as a consequence, can affect someone's ability to complete daily tasks or experience positive feelings. Since exclusionary language is constantly evolving, it can be hard to anticipate and avoid every aspect of it, but with positive intent, it is possible to understand the context and work together to solve the problem. Language is powerful. It can heal, or it can really hurt. But if love, awareness, and respect are actively pursued, exclusionary language, though challenging to eliminate completely, will be at a minimum.

Language Stigmatization

Language prejudice can bring about unfavourable attitude to language. This is due to wrong judgments that people make about languages based on the general "feel" of the language by describing some languages or accents as "beautiful", harsh", melodious", etc. This attitude can determine the inclusion or exclusion of the speakers of the affected variety in high culture. In the U.S, for example, children who speak Black English are usually stigmatized. A language can also be stigmatized when it is associated with a negative situation like oppression, as is the case with Afrikaans in South Africa.

Majority/Minority Language Status

This situation prevails in multilingual societies where languages and tribes differ. In such circumstances, speakers of the minority languages experience exclusion as their languages are not accorded any recognized function in the society. The minority languages are largely ignored by the language policy of such societies. The

situation is different with the majority languages, whose speakers are able to occupy positions of influence in the society.

Neglect of Immigrant Language

Many countries today have a good number of immigrant population. In a majority of cases, the immigrant population maintain their language, such as Spanish among the Hispanic population in America, or develop a peculiar form of speech for themselves, such as Black English in the United States. To neglect the language of the immigrants is tantamount to exclusion, especially when the immigrants contribute significantly to the growth of the host community.

Empowerment through Language

Language policies can also bring about participation and exclusion because it locates language within the social structure. Policies about language accord prestige and power to members of the society whose language is used in official domains. The result is that speakers of varieties that are not used in high culture are excluded from such domains, thereby making them, weaker and disadvantaged when compared to their other counterparts.

The English Language as an Instrument of Exclusion in Nigeria

The English language is an important heritage from the west. According to Onuigbo, (2011), we can jettison the cultural heritage and we can even jettison the political heritage, but the linguistic heritage is to remain with us for a very long time". We retain this gift on the condition that it be used according to our own circumstances and according to our own genius since the language is in fact "a universal tongue that can no longer be a strict nationality or polity identification symbol" (Ajulo, 1982). The effect of this was directed towards education so as to re-direct new creative energies towards the imaginative experience revealed by the study of the English language and its history. In fact, academic scholars were produced who could synthesize both the material

and the linguistic medium of expression to produce geniuses that are uniquely fascinating in the language as they were catchy in their content.

From the onset of the introduction of formal education in Nigeria, the British government and their colonial representatives had very poor and unfavourable notions and attitude towards African languages. They insisted that According to Awoniyi (1976), "the natives must and will know English language in spite of all well-meaning but diseased notions; it is the language of commerce and the only education worth a moment's consideration". Nwadike (2002) reacting to the above statement surmises that "the colonialists regarded the African languages as the language of "barbarians" languages that could satisfy the purpose for which God instituted all human languages …arrogantly referring to the English as the only language capable of serving human purpose". This means that the "image of the enslaver remains a strong concept in Nigerian indigenous languages and the learners explore the image to project the notion of equal partnership between the horse and the rider" (Onuigbo, 2011). The learner of the English language has the responsibility to search out the subject matter within the experiences of society and these experiences usually derive from the socio-political and spiritual lives of the people that make up society. In most cases, therefore, the learner's creative imagination and energy are directed towards the analysis of the socio-political contradictions of time.

A number of policies, personal utterances, actions, and attitudes on the part of the operators of the educational system, concerted to the ultimate exclusion of the Nigerian languages. Starting from the first education ordinance of 1882, most government policies and practices have been unfavorable for the growth and development of indigenous languages. The ordinance was geared towards creating an enabling environment for improved education achievements in established schools. The clause "the Nigeria

subjects of teaching shall be reading and writing of English Language" (Gwam 1961) was the poisonous pill that made people to put in their best to study the language. The indigenous languages were not to be studied at all levels of the educational system. Thus from then on, the start of a child's educational pursuit, he/she is given the notion that the language with which he/she learnt to talk was of little importance hence should be abandoned for a "more noble" system of communication, namely: the English language. It also meant that if the pupil would do well in other subjects, which were studied in school, he/she must master the English language which is the teaching Language and is used as a tool of Exclusion. Any subject must be understood and any response/examination whether in spoken or written form must be expressed in same. Moreover, the level of importance attached to the learning of the English language by both the parents, the teachers, and in fact the entire society clearly spelt out to the child that he must embrace the English language.

Furthermore, English language was therefore learnt at the expense of the indigenous languages. From the colonial era, a student must pass the English language before he/she is promoted to the next class or gains admission into institutions of higher learning. Under this rule, a well-educated Nigerian may be totally ignorant in writing of his/her mother tongue. No mention was made of the indigenous languages until very recently when the students were mandated to offer at least one of the three major Nigerian languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) in West African Schools Certificate Examination before they were allowed to register for the examination. Even at that, the level of pass or failure in that language is of no importance in securing admission into a higher institution except when the language is the subject of study of the student. In higher institutions of learning in Nigeria for many years, the study of indigenous languages was done using English language as a medium. The implication was that even the teaching of the grammar and stylistics of these indigenous languages were

carried out using the English language. Until recently, even long essays, theses, or dissertations as the case may be for programs leading to the award of degrees in indigenous languages were also written in the English language. Even after years of the study of these languages in the higher institutions, they had remained largely undeveloped with no significant growth until recent years.

The Attitude of Education Practitioners and Civil Servants towards Indigenous Languages

In more recent years, "scholars have recognized the fact that the use of the indigenous languages had been relegated to the background through the attitude of education practitioners and teachers" (Obianika 2014). The author recalls that from senior primary to the secondary school levels, there used to be an inscription boldly written in the front of each class: "Igbo speaking is not allowed." Interestingly, during fieldwork for this article, the same phenomenon was recorded in a primary school in Awka Urban. The teachers were still urging and indeed demanding that the pupils should not speak the Igbo language in the school except during Igbo language lessons, which were scheduled for only two school periods of about 35 minutes per week. This particular teacher affirmed that she had scolded her class pupils a number of times that morning against speaking of Igbo language in the class outside the Igbo lesson period.

The aim was to force the students to speak the English language as often as possible to enhance their chances of effectively learning the language. To enforce this, students who spoke Igbo (or vernacular as it was called) were subjected to punishment of manual labour or payment of a sum of money. Therefore, it was an offence to speak Igbo language in the classroom. Similarly, some people do not even know how to speak the Igbo language properly, many prefer using the English language because to them it is easier for them to comprehend.

Empirical Studies

The empirical studies were based on some key words related to this study. Some scholars have written on the concept of language used in reporting exclusion. They believed so much in the English language that they feel it is the best to be used for social occasions than the indigenous languages. For example, Adegbite and Wale (1999) opine that "English language performs three broad functions in Nigeria: accommodation, participation and social mobility". In performing the accommodating function; the English language is recognised as a world language. So it performs international functions. It serves as a link between people of multilingual societies, Africa and the outside world. It is the language of international politics, trade and sports. For example, at the OAU, UNO and the Commonwealth, Nigeria has no language other than English for taking part in the deliberation. English language also opens the door to high technology, science, trade and diplomacy. All these are made possible because of the large number of English speakers. The English language is also the official language with which the government conducts its business. Literate people from different ethnic groups use the English language to communicate with one another.

Consequently, Omolewa (1975) emphasizes that "European officials had a very poor opinion of the vernacular (indigenous language) which they considered neither very extensive nor of very high quality, he had to impose his own speech (the English language) on the conquered peoples". In this case, their speech replaced the indigenous languages and excluded them from being used socially. The English language so thrived in Nigeria because according to Crowder (1962), many freed slaves from Freetown came back to their original homes. About five hundred of them have settled in Abeokuta, and some three hundred in Lagos. Later on, many of these freed slaves were employed by both the missionaries, trading companies, and British colonial administrators as interpreters, messengers, and even teachers.

Adetugbo (1984) supports Omolewa as he says, "it is believed that the English language got a foot-hold in Nigeria through the native interpreters trained overseas, and employed in the Slave Coast, as well as through hiring "professional interpreters" who offered their services to ship-captains, among them the English".

According to Uzoezie (2011) "the English language became the most prestigious and dominant language in Nigeria". He establishes this fact as he says, the language is now domesticated in Nigeria. It is also made a compulsory subject in the school curriculum. Making success in the subject, is a pre-condition for getting a school leaving certificate at all levels, and therefore a passport to any white collar job in the colonial civil service or for admission into any of the higher institutions. This view is supported by ethnographers and language scholars like Albert H., Abiodun Adetugbo, Funsho Akere, Braj Kachru, J. B. Pride and so on (Kachru, 1976).

However, the colonial master's attitude towards the use of the indigenous languages for trade, education or administration was so negative, they were only interested in the promotion of the English language, primarily because of its preoccupation to train the core of clerks, accounting assistants, copyiststs, messengers, interpreters… to assist the colonial administration. This type of attitude dominated language considerations as they were embodied in the colonial educational policies before, and even after, Nigeria's independence in 1960. The above scholars reported the issues on the English language because they mastered the language very well and can use it in any level. This is where communicative competence plays a role. Similarly, it is observed that there are factors that made the English language so important that it excluded the indigenous languages from functioning properly in the society. Although, language is used to unify diverse population and contributes to the inclusion of individuals in the national system. Language can, however, be a major source of

disintegration and exclusion within a national system. Hence, language which can be used as an effective instrument for national development and the promotion of national consciousness and unity can also be used as a weapon for marginalization and or exclusion.

Conclusion

This article is on Language as an Instrument of Exclusion and Participation. The paper explored language as a tool on the instrumentalist approach to language, various ways language creates a class of the excluded, the English language as an instrument of exclusion in Nigeria, the attitude of education practitioners and civil servants towards indigenous languages. Qualitative Descriptive method was used. The article made use of the theory of communicative competence propounded by Dell Hymes. Some recommendations are also offered in order to underscore the practicality of the investigation. Consequently, from the explanations so far, language is regarded as an Instrument of exclusion and participation in Nigeria. Language is a master key and a very important access in the lives of the people and society at large. It is very difficult to achieve a good life without being competent in language which is a clear environmental and socio-political factor that distinguishes man from other animals. Humans can communicate meaningfully only when they are competent in the language they make use of. This is because language facilitates empowerment which is essential for the participation of people in all aspects of their developmental processes. Furthermore, the findings show that language serves as an instrument of exclusion in Nigeria. Indeed, the indigenous languages became excluded from their roots and became dominated by the English language. This ugly trend can, however, be reversed if government takes the issue of mass literacy more seriously since the result will be the participation of more citizens in the areas where literacy is made a prerequisite. In the absence of a mass literacy programme, more attention can be given to oral communication as this will enable

more people to participate in the affairs of the community. Similarly, language is useful in classification and identification within a society, it can equally be manipulated for participation and exclusion. Those members of the society, especially in Africa, who have benefited immensely by virtue of having access to power should encourage the excluded members and languages of the society by empowering their languages through development, use in education, and the provision of incentives to those that use or study such languages. An approach such as this will bring about the participation of a larger number of the members of the society in the higher domains of the society.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made.

1. The study of indigenous languages must be taken serious in our societies and communities.
2. The elders should start on time to inculcate these languages to the younger generation and if possible, make them to adhere strictly to them so as to know them very well.
3. The school curriculum should be designed in such a way that the indigenous languages should be studied almost every day in the school in order to be versed in it. This will help learners to always read their books on indigenous languages.
4. Teachers should also make out time to discuss and interact with the learners in the indigenous languages and tell them how important they are in their life.
5. If these languages are implemented and practiced, not only will students become better in them, but they will be confident while using them.
6. Indigenous languages should be used to promote workshops in different areas of Nigeria.
7. Learning these languages should be the number one priority of Nigeria.

8. Language curriculum should be designed so as to engage these indigenous languages more often. Studies and subjects that will add and expand the horizon of the learners' knowledge in the indigenous languages should be taken serious.
9. Only earned progress and elevation in these indigenous languages should be venerated and promoted in order to make for quality knowledge in the learners.
10. Indigenous languages must be taken as core courses by providing materials that would make their study interesting.
11. There should be new orientation in handling indigenous languages so that learners should be interested in taking them seriously.
12. The government, corporate bodies and non-governmental organizations should join resources to bring into reality the improvement in the introduction of teaching aids like books, computers, writing materials, good teaching classroom environments, good blackboards and so on that will help the teachers to improve their teaching of these indigenous languages.

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Worukwo, G. I. Language as a Factor in Participation and Exclusion. *RIK International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* (RIK-IJSSH) Vol. 7 No. 2, March 2023 ISSN: 2350- 5342 (Print) ISSN: 2350-143X (Online). Online Sources

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