

Nigerian Pidgin: A Solution to the Language Situation in Nigeria and Its Developmental Processes

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Abstract

English language has become a medium for communication among people of diverse cultures and tribes in Nigeria. The use of language if looked into, is quite embedded in people's culture or their way of life. English language serves as a unifying factor for a country like Nigeria with more than (250) two hundred and fifty ethnic groups and well over (525) five hundred and twenty-five indigenous languages without a well articulated language policy to foster unified integration and peaceful co-existence among its member states. Nigeria as a multilingual and multi-cultural country, make Nigerian language communities a diverse and complex society to survive in. This is because people of different ethnic groups, tribes and tongues live together without a common language or culture except for English language which is not spoken by at least 40% of its populace especially when one considers the proficiency of the users of the language. This as a result, made the Nigerian Pidgin language a lingua franca in some geo-political zones in Nigeria and a non-standard in some areas. Linguistic Relativity theory was adopted for this study. This research is a qualitative research with heavy dependence on library sources and interview sessions. Four questions were raised for interview purposes. This interview took place at *Choices*, an eatery at Awka road Onitsha where twelve persons were purposely interviewed by the researcher which comprises; four males and females and four youths. The researcher made an opinion from the interviewees' responses using Linguistic Relativity theory. This study therefore established the need for a language policy to manage the linguistic situations experienced in the Nigerian polity. It recommends that the federal government should set up a linguistic institute to equip and incorporate Nigerian Pidgin into our curriculum to serve as a language that unifies our ethnicity and multicultural diversity in Nigeria. To also follow a well articulated language policy that will carry everyone along considering our diversities and cultural differences.

Introduction

The linguistic situation in Nigeria might be considered to be second to none in the whole world. The entity called Nigeria was a British colony, it came into being in the 1914, by Lord Lugard the then colonial administrator. He amalgamated the southern and Northern protectorates of the British territory around the River Niger basin. Since then the country has been a country with harvest of diverse cultures, religion, custom and languages (Adeleye 2012). One can only admit that pidgins are formed when speakers of different languages engage in a trade or conversation with one another. However, when a sentence in English language has fragments of unintelligible structure or a mixture of different languages, it could be regarded as a Pidgin language. The Nigerian Pidgin is not far from this assertion of having fragments of languages combined and spoken as a Pidgin. Meanwhile this pidgin spoken in Nigerian has varieties. The creolized forms are the ones spoken in the south-south geo-political zones, places like Delta, Warri and Edo, where it has already been made a lingua franca for easy communications. Adegbite (2020:77) says "In Nigeria, pidgin serves as a lingua franca in some states of the federation and a trade language in some others. In Edo, Delta and Rivers state for instance, pidgin can be considered as lingua franca. However, in Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa speech communities, pidgin is considered as a trade language". A language only exists in the competence of those who speak and regard themselves as speakers of that language. Nigerian Pidgin may have been a rub-off of contact languages like English, Portuguese and French, notwithstanding its domiciliary is layered on indigenous languages being spoken in Nigeria. It is realistic to say that Nigerian Pidgin came to being as a result of contacts made with immigrants, invaders, tourists and sailors. Carl Reinecke (2017:539) posits that "the contact is a sine qua non for the rise of a pidgin and the use of make shift is a universal phenomenon to be witnessed wherever immigrants, invaders, tourists or sailors go". Wale Adegbite (2020:76) in the same vein recounts that "its origin could also be traced to the business transaction between the people on the west coast of Africa and the Europeans, namely the Spanish, Portuguese and English". Evidently there are proofs that Portuguese, French, Dutch and finally English

have contributed to the growth of Nigerian Pidgin. This is because of the contact the Nigerian people had made with these countries during slave trade.

Since the Nigerian Pidgin has varieties, Obiechina (1984:5) was able to summarize it when she says “the classification of the Nigerian Pidgin into variants and these variants are identified as follows: Bendel, Calabar, Lagos, Kano/Maiduguri and Port Harcourt. The ones categorized as Bendel variants are Abraka, Warri, Isoko, Sapel, Agbor, Itsekiri, Agbaraha-oto, Urhobo and Ewu”. What a Warri or Isoko boy speaks in Lagos is mutually intelligible for a Lagos boy too. Despite the important roles of the Nigerian Pidgin in our society it has not been given the recognition it desires. Not even a status role until now. Today, the country is streaming with (525) languages in existence (<http://en.wikipedia.org>). The minority groups like Fulfude, Kanuri, Tiv, Efik, Ibibio, Igbirra, Nupe, Ijaw, Ijala, Ishekiri, Urhobo, Idoma, Isoko, Fulani, Ekwere, Gwari, Efik, Angas, Yala, Ogoni etc., hold on to Nigerian Pidgin language which has already become a lingua franca in the South and South-East, geo-political zones and some parts of fragments of the Northern Nigeria for wider communication Adegbite (2020:76).

However, English Language, is the dominant language in Nigeria and it has a class of its own. Not only is it a foreign language acquired through colonial imposition, it is elitist and spoken by a limited population. It is also perceived erroneously as a neutral language to all of the indigenous ethnic groups in the country. Despite its hegemonic tendencies, English is used in all parts of the country for official purposes. It is the language of administration, education, business and commerce, the press and international relations. According to Suarez (2002) philosophical framework of hegemony which explores the power relations between dominant and minority groups, particularly the means by which the dominant group secures its position”. Employing the Gramscian concept of hegemony, Suarez (2002) again argues that whether moral or intellectual leadership, hegemony is established through consent and persuasion via the processes of leadership without force, leadership through legitimization and leadership through consensual and persuasion via the process of leadership without force, leadership through legitimization and leadership through consensual rule, which are the fundamental processes of hegemony. One argues that the total will want to understand these stratification and will want to know the idealism behind the decisions for having the three major languages as the ones for wider communications against the minority. On the same concept of hegemony, Fontana (1993) submits that the total system of hegemony requires that the leading group secures its position via the willingness and consent of the minority group and that this consent is secured through the manufacturing of mass consent, a mass belief of the naturalness and correctness of this social order. The manufacturing of this consent lies predominantly on systematic, consistent persuasion through media, and through institutions; and this persuasion will infiltrate ideas and beliefs of normalcy in daily life, so that they permeate and guide human interactions”. it might have been this subordination and subjugation of the minority groups that is being feared so much that it does not allow the country to set up a language policy for the fear of the unknown from the minority groups. It is pertinent to mention that the three indigenous languages in addition to English are considered as languages of wider communication; that is, they are languages that can foster unity as a national goal. The English language is thus the language that is not only national and official but also a language that fosters politico-economic opportunities and administration in Nigeria. To start with, it is the language that has been assigned the roles of politics and this is enshrined in the constitution (1999, Amended 2011) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (section 55) thus:

The business of the National Assembly shall be conducted in English and in Hausa, Ibo [sic] and Yoruba when adequate arrangements have been made thereof

And the section 97 of the constitution says

The business of a house of Assembly shall be conducted in English but 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

The issue raised in the quotations above were debated thoroughly during the ‘Second Republic’ (1979-83). At the end, the arrangement the country expected the National Assembly to make in respect of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba could not be achieved Adegbite (2020:115). This suggests that it is English that has been recognized solely by the above excerpt as the language of governance. English, being the recognized

national official language is also the language of education, judiciary and of administration. It is also a language that has been assigned the role of link language in addition to its ability to foster nationalism. Though some forms of linguistic homogeneity exist in some parts of the North, West, and East, there's also a handful of heterogeneous linguistic groups in small, minority speech communities with a variety of dialects but it doesn't oust the fact that the three major languages and English as an official language have been assigned some national roles. These roles include among others, the educational role, which involves a child being counseled to learn one other indigenous Nigerian language in addition to English and his/her own language. Although the policy makers have attempted to assign both national and regional roles to the local languages in the country, the majority language have not been clearly assigned specific roles. All those being done, was to give recognition to English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba as if these are the only important languages that would contribute to the political economic, social and administrative development of the nation.

Meanwhile, the policy makers equally assigned the role of education to the three indigenous languages. This is why it first made a pronouncement that every Nigerian must learn one of the three languages in addition to his or her mother tongue as well as English in the *National Policy of Education* (NPE, revised 2004). But this later changed to non-mentioning of a specific language in the NPE (revised, 2013) after critical comments against bias for apportioning some languages in the previous provisions. In addition, the policy makers emphasized the fact that at the primary level of education, children should be educated via the language of their immediate community. This is to facilitate cultural awareness as well as nationalism. A critical look at the roles assigned to the indigenous languages will show that the roles are quite minor compared to those assigned to the English language. The questions to raise are: Is the English language spoken by the majority in the country? Or are the Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba respectively generally spoken by the majority of Nigerian populace? If yes, to what extent? And if no, how then are the languages regarded as performing both national and official roles?

For the purpose of emphasis, the English language is used by a minority of the population in Nigeria and it is purely restricted to the administrative, judicial, educational and mass media set ups. It is in the light of this that the English language could be regarded as performing national and official functions. On the contrary, the major indigenous languages are restricted to the northern, western and eastern parts of Nigeria. It is only in theory that such languages could be considered as official languages, since they represent the largest ethnic groups in the country. However the minority languages such as Kanuri, Efik, Ijaw, and Fulfude are left unrecognized, except partially in early education just as Adegbite (2020:119) situates it. And a populace of over (140) million people, how many of them are educated and can speak the Standard English Language? How many of the Northerners can speak English language let alone the Standard English as well as the South and the East. How many? What is the percentage? Besides, researches have shown that these minor languages, which happen to be the languages of the immediate community of the pupil at the primary school level in some states in the country are not used as mediums of instruction. Instead, it is the dominant regional language that is employed, e.g. The Hausa in many states in Northern Nigeria. According to Attah (1987) and Jowitt (1991, 1995) the suggestion to language situation pose to be that the "NigE, indigenized and domesticated to wear a Nigerian colour when codified, would be different from colonial English. It is the codified, standard form that would be used for official inter-ethnic and international communication, while the colloquial and non-standard forms, including pidgin, could be used for intra-ethnic communication alongside the indigenous languages". The reverse is the case. In urban cities, communities are linguistically heterogeneous and complex, with members speaking different languages at work and in the same office. Children of different tribes and tongues are in the same class. The only means of communication or common language is English or pidgin. This is due to the inability of understanding one another, people rarely use their indigenous languages. Why wouldn't another codified indigenous language make a difference? According to Adegbite (2020) in his quest for 'Status Planning' on the national language in Nigeria, asks the following questions that are crucial to the debate in terms of relevant concepts and approaches and it states thus

- (a) Is the choice of language(s) based on a 'policy' or 'cultivation' approach? While the former approach appeals to administration, the cultivation approach involves the public, in general, and intellectuals, in particular.

- (b) Is the choice of language based on a monolingual, bilingual or multilingual principle, i.e. is it one language, two or more than two languages that will be selected ?
- (c) Is the language to be selected a major or minor one or are they going to be many major or minor language selected?
- (d) Is the choice based on 'endoglossia' (internal language), 'exoglossia' (external language) or 'endo-exoglossia' (both internal and external language)?

These hypothesis demand answer which will further proffer the way forward on the set-up of a language policy

Existing proposals of national languages can be categorized into terms: the unilingual and multilingual approaches, Adegbite (2020). Bamgbose (1990) supports that the unilingual category contains various suggestions such as the choice of Pidgin English, artificial languages such as 'Wazobia' or 'Guosa'. This got reviews and scholarly appraisal and Soyinka (1977) was one of the people who did make a contribution on this by saying "English language indigenous language 'Wazobia' was selected from Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba, a minor indigenous language such as Igala and an external Pan-African language such as Swahili". In contrast multilingual category features mainly the suggestion of the three major languages of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba as national languages with English retaining its present official status. The movement could be lead to the unilingual approach to language as represented in Bamgbose (1990, p.75) on his part, it focuses on the persuasive effect of the unilingual model when he opines that the possible candidates for selection as a unilingual model, some can be dismissed out of hand. In this group, I include Pidgin and artificial language, any Pan-African language and any minority languages.

Arguments have been on-going for the way forward and how the language problem or the issue of who speaks what and what should be spoken as national or official language and till now the 'Advocacy Planning' hasn't been set up. The mastery of each language is determined by amount of exposure of data, intention and attention given to that particular language. English till now is the language recommended for wider communications in Nigeria without preferences given to other indigenous languages

Models to Language Situation in Nigeria: A Background Study

Unilinguals Models

Pidgin English has been labeled an unlikely candidate for national language because it lacks prestige (Adegbite 2020). Even though it serves as a lingua franca among different groups in Nigeria; mostly in the southern part of Nigeria, it has a low social status as it is associated with semi-literate members of the society (Adegbite 2020). The variety is not associated with the educated ones because it is conceived as a non-standard. Elugbe (1990) writes about two efforts made towards the creation of an artificial language like Esperanto based on amalgamation of lexical items from main languages to form sentences. First, the slogan "Wazobia", was formed during the military era in Nigeria. According to the analysis "Wa", "zo", and "bia means Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo respectively, and representing the possibility of constructing a national language whose vocabulary that would be made up of elements of different Nigerian indigenous languages. Again, Alex Igbinewka of the Nigerian Television Authority proposed "Guosa" (After his middle name) as an artificial national language constructed from the vocabulary of major and minor Nigerian languages. The main point of the criticism is that such a language lacks the properties of creativity; affinity of sentences and conventionality which natural languages have. Elugbe (1990) in another interaction with the combination of the indigenous languages for another conventional formations when he mentions that nobody who knows what a language is can possibly accept that the combination of "nagode", "thankyou", in Hausa and pupo, very much or that "na mi hutu uki meta" from Efik, Hausa, Edo and Yoruba gives you a properly national and natural and new form for "give me three months leave/ holiday.

With this in mind which takes one to a suggestion in line of exoglossic which is to use English as the national language of Nigeria. It is argued that because English Language is perceived as neutral to various ethnic groups in Nigeria, the choice of the language will avert any tension which the choice of

an indigenous language might create. Also being a developed language with a vast amount of literature, there will be less problems encountered in the implementation of the choice despite these realizations. Many scholars have kicked against this suggestion simply for nationalistic reasons. The national language of Nigeria has to be a Nigerian language or languages that can fully express and preserve the experience and culture of Nigerians. It is also argued that not more than 15% of the country's population can actually speak and understand English very well. Sofunke (1990) submits that "English has been rejected for nationalistic reasons, lack of any sizeable consistency and having succeeded in dividing Nigerians vertically into groups of the 'governor' and the 'governed'. Bamgbose (1998:1-14) on language exclusion can be understood to have same ideology which he defines as "a product of elite closure". Myers-scotton further claims that "it is a type of social mobilisation strategy by which those persons in power establish or maintain their power and privileges via linguistic choices". Another suggestion in the line of an eniloglossic policy is that Hausa, Igbo or any other indigenous language can be a national language and that everyone would learn it within specified period of time. After the specified time has elapsed, English will be completely replaced in every sphere of life with the new national language.

Simpson's (1978) suggestion of Hausa is based on the perceived numerical strength of speakers of the language as well as other factors like

- (i) Its relatively fewer dialects than other major languages, which will enhance its learnability,
- (ii) Its spread in Nigeria and outside the northern part of the country;
- and (iii) Its outside the country's borders.

The above view would undoubtedly be held by some nationalistic purists. There are, however, a lot of problems associated with it. First, there is no way such government fiat can be adequately enforced. If people are forced to learn a language, they may develop antipathy towards it and if they learn it they may refuse to use it except when it is absolutely unavoidable. Second, Nigeria does not at the present have the manpower needed for such a massive effort. Third, such enforcement may be an exercise in futility after all, since there is no Nigerian culture for it to preserve. Fourth, such a policy can create tension in the society by giving an undue advantage to one ethnic group or some groups over others. The latter may protest violently against this. Lastly, there is the problem of isolation; otherwise how will the country communicate with the outside world?

In this suggestion of a minority indigenous language, Igala, from central Nigeria, Sofunke (1990) argues that in order to save the nation from unnecessary tension which the selection of major indigenous language may bring, "only a language which can adequately serve as a cultural political and linguistic bridge between the cultural north of Nigeria and cultural south of Nigeria can seriously be considered as a candidate in the national language race. However, it is counter-argued that selecting a minority language will pose greater problems of development of human and material resources for learning and teaching than a major language. Furthermore, it is likely to put the owners of language at an undue social advantage over the order groups. Another problem is that the gap between speakers of the local lingua franca and speakers of foreign language of international communication will continue to grow, thus creating a new set of elite who alone have access to foreign language. Lastly, on the unilingual approach, the suggestion of a Pan-African language, Swahili by Soyinka (1977) has been criticized as not being idealistic since for example there are no speakers of Swahili in Nigeria and speakers of the language are far away, it serves no use to consider the language at all.

Endo-normative model

According to (Adegbite 2020), it is noted that, the Standard Nigerian English, the variety of the English language that gives the ability for local variations the bid to satisfy the demands for communicative appropriateness, manifested in the Nigerian setting is so because Standard Nigerian English as an endo-normative model is appropriately reflect in the Nigerian experience, more supportive to the students in the Nigerian ESL classroom than the foreign British model which though used the standard in Nigeria as a former British colony. It is culturally in appropriate in the Nigerian context and does not, therefore, appeal to sensibilities of the students who, in their quest for communicative appropriateness in English in the

Nigerian socio-cultural setting, have to use the language to reflect the Nigerian overview. Bamgbose (1991) argues this by saying that language does not only serve as a communicative function but also a symbolic one which he calls solidarity function.

Multilingual Models

As being exposed by (Adegbite 2020), his suggestions and statement restates that coming to the multilingual approach, the suggestions have been observed to follow three major patterns. First is the suggestion that the government, in the spirit of endoglossia, declare many indigenous language official and require that they be taught in schools. While the above suggestion will satisfy ethnic particularism, it is difficult to see how it can make for a greater unity and ease the present communication problems especially, if English Language is completely ousted. Furthermore, the problem any child will face together with the problem of textbook production is so mind boggling that one need not spend much time considering it. Suffice it to say that it will not be easy to lay down any criteria for excluding any of the indigenous languages presently used, for example, on the federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (about twelve of them) from those that will be studied in schools. According to the criteria for working, although three languages can be placed on an equal footing as official language, one of them may not receive the same treatment from government officials as the other two, e.g., Italian does not receive the same treatment from officials in Switzerland as do French and German.

The second pattern is in the spirit of endo-exoglossia. That is, in addition to recognizing the presence of English, the major languages of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba should be chosen based on a number of factors. Examples are in Olagoke (1982:197-208)

- (i) the number of speakers of the three language, whose native speakers account for more than half the Nigerian population and whose native and second speakers account for about 80%
- (ii) the usage of the language in education and mass media and possession of relatively wide bodies of literature; and
- (iii) the population of speakers being large enough to produce adequate number of teacher to instruct the other linguistic groups.

The above endo-exoglossic policy will take care of the problem of isolationism mentioned earlier, but it nevertheless shares many of the problems already highlighted regarding development of indigenous languages to meet modernization requirements. Also, it is going to be difficult to convince speakers of the other unmentioned languages to accept this suggestion and co-operate towards achieving success in it. In the light of the government's adoption of this policy. In this light, Adekunle (1990: 247) expresses same fears in the following quotation:

Even countries with a radical language policy such as India and Tanzania have not been able to get rid of English. What it does mean is that the exclusive status of English will disappears...

The third pattern, also in the spirit of endo-exoglossia, is the suggestion that the government should declare support for each cultural group (or local government) to choose by referendum or other means and develop its own language (or any language of its choice) as much as possible while the government at the same time affirms its support for English, until such a time as it can be replaced by an indigenous language acceptable to the various ethnic groups. The proposal of language cultivation here may not completely satisfy the ideological purists who want to get rid of the vestiges of colonialism at all costs. But taking the present situation of the country into consideration, it appears to be the most democratic, realistic and feasible solution. The government should, therefore commit itself not only to compulsory free primary and secondary education but also to basic and functional adult education. It is a matter of reality that the major languages are not favoured as national language, whether separately or jointly, for various reasons. The best that they can achieve status-wise is to remain as regional languages, while the other indigenous languages serve as state, local government or community languages.

Theoretical Framework

Sapir-Whorf's Linguistic Relativity Theory, argues that language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but is itself a shaper of Ideas, the programme and guide for the individual meaningful activity. In other words language determines or shapes our perception of reality. Whorf's identity poses that "language shapes thoughts" According to Carroll (2004: 376) Whorf's supposition further states that "language are diverse in the way that they structure reality but had not fully developed the thesis and that these linguistic differences might facilitate certain modes of thought. This was certainly Whorf's position in his articles from (1925 to 1941). Carroll (2004:376) states that the notion that "language shapes thought is commonly referred to as the Whorf's hypothesis. Whorf's hypothesis deals with Linguistic Determinism and Relativity. Linguistic determinism refers to the notion that " a language determines certain non -linguistic cognitive process" That means learning a language changes the way a person thinks while linguistic relativity refers to the claim that the cognitive processes that are determined are different for different languages. Thus speakers of different languages are said to think in different ways. Whorf's reasoning on these matters is revealed in Carroll's (2004:377) in a famous quote by him when he says:

We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they state every observer in the face ; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impression which has to be organized by our minds and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature, organize it into concepts and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way, an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is of course, an implicit and unstated one. But its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement decrees.

There are several notions here to consider. One is that language "carved up" reality in different ways. Another is that these language differences are covert or unconscious that is, we are not consciously aware of the way in which we classify objects and it does influence our world view too. These main points can be outlined from Whorf's hypothesis. The structure of a language determines the nature of the speakers world view. Different languages are assumed to lead to different world views. Psychological studies of Whorf's hypothesis have examined whether lexical and grammatical differences between languages influence in various non-linguistic cognitive processes. Studies of colour terms have not proved support for Whorf's hypothesis other studies of the lexicon are more consistent with hypothesis. Finally, it involves the presence of a grammatical distinction in a language which may increase the ease of some cognitive processes. However, the absence of such distinctions doesn't prevent these processes. Lexical examples were also provided by Whorf's hypothesis, the use of lexical items for snow by the Eskimos and the English speakers are different whereas the Eskimos have a (100) hundred words for the word snow. These developments happen to make anyone understand the importance facets of their culture. The variety and register of these words can only make people see through the inhibition of their diverse cultures. This truth brings in the aspect of language sharpening reality.

Grammatical examples were also used to illustrate Hopi speakers "lightning" is a verb but in English it is a noun. Nootka an Island on Vancouver Island in which all words seem to be treated as verbs. (SVO) order in some languages like Spain and India violates the English rules and English speakers see these violations as unnatural too.

Methodology and Data Analysis

This is a qualitative research. Materials from library sources were heavily engaged. Internal documents, journal entries and books were consulted as well as an interview, questions were raised for interview purposes. This interview took place at *Choices*, an eatery at Awka road Onitsha where twelve persons were purposely interviewed by the researcher which comprises; four males and females and four youths. The researcher made an opinion from the interviewees' responses using Linguistic Relativity theory.

Data Analysis

The following questions were administered as interview questions to ascertain why Nigerian Pidgin Language should be a solution to the Language situation in Nigeria.

- Question 1. What is your name?
Question 2. Are you a Nigerian and which state?
Question 3. How many Nigerian Languages do you speak?
Question 4. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

(A: Represents the Interviewer and B: interviewee)

1st Person

- A. What is your name?
B. Akinoluwa Ife. (M)
A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?
B. Yes, I am from Ogun state.
A. How many Nigerian Languages do you speak?
B. Awori & Yoruba.
A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?
B. (Laughs) “Yes! English is Hard, as I no go school. Nigerian Pidgin is simple and everybody speaks it. You are free to talk anything. Not everyone can understand my dialect, Awori now, and as I enjoy speaking it you will not follow”.

2nd Person

- A. What is your name?
B. Blessing Ekanem. (F)
A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?
B. Yes, from Cross River state.
A. How many Nigerian Languages do you speak?
B. Just two, Igbo and Ukelle in Cross River.
A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?
B. “Yes, well, well! Nigerian Pidgin is everything. To speak English is stressful. Here in Onitsha, you don’t see who to speak your language with, so I learnt how to speak Igbo language so I can flow with the people here. And you know there many languages in Nigeria. My family has been moving from one state to another because my father is a civil servant and Nigerian pidgin has saved me a lot”.

3rd Person

- A. What is your name?
B. Ikenna Ozobunna. (M)
A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?
B. Yes naa, from Anambra.
A. How many Nigerian Languages do you speak?
B. Just Igbo
A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?
B. “Not all the time, but you know when all these Edo people come to market they speak pidgin and you have to speak it with them it is Igbo all the way”.

4th Person

- A. What is your name?
B. Oghenerukevwe Gospel. (M)
A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?
B. Yes, I am from Delta.
A. How many Nigerian Languages do you speak?,
B. I dey speak my dialect, I speak my father’s dialect, Urohobo and I speak Igbo too.
A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?
B. “I dey speak that one, I dey everywhere! You no dey speak am? No body get time speak that English o! English? Grammar too much! If we begin speak English now, we no go reach house today. (laughs) “

5th Person

A. What is your name?

B. Kenneth Thompson (M)

A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?

B. Yes, Kogi.

A. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?

B. One, Gbedde

A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

B. "Well, Pidgin is just there. We do not speak Igbo here. Everyone understands Pidgin and it is not hard to speak. There are too many dialects in Nigeria. If I speak mine you won't understand and if you speak yours, I won't understand and we are in the same country. This is why too many things are wrong in Nigeria, things can only be better if we decide to be one in culture and in language. Here, Abakiliki Igbo is hard to understand and speak. So, in a place where you are not an indigent member, Nigerian Pidgin is the simplest tool for communication".

6th Person

A. What is your name?

B. Ifeoma Ani. (F)

A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?

B. Yes, I am from Anambra.

A. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?

B. One, that's Aduge: Anambra Igbo

A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

B. "Yes, because here people from another state will come to buy market but you know they don't speak your language. So Nigerian Pidgin will serve as a means of communication. "Oya come buy". If the customer comes, they will speak the Nigerian Pidgin and you just have option than to reply. Nigerian Pidgin helps break the language barrier and it is not difficult to speak"

7th Person

A. What is your name?

B. Hilda Oghogho (F)

A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?

B. Yes, from Delta.

A. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?

B. One and half (laughs) Isoko and Igbo. My mum is from here.

A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

B. "Yes, we woke up with Nigerian Pidgin as children. English is for the learned people. We were made to understand that when we were growing up, but we didn't bother to speak English since Nigerian Pidgin is accessible. The beautiful thing is this, everyone in my house speaks the Isoko's version".

8th Person

A. What is your name?

B. Sonia Abah (F)

A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?

B. Yes, Benue.

A. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?

B. Two, Yalla and Igbo.

A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

"Yes, I do, It is just convenient".

9th Person

A. What is your name?

B. Philip Okon (F)

A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?

B. Yes, I from Cross Rivers

A. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?

B. Only my mother tongue Uyanga in Cross River

A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

B. "Yes o! Which other language I wan speak for here ? (laughs) But naturally we speak Nigerian Pidgin in our area. Everybody speaks it. It is not this one you speak here o. This one you speak here no done".

10th Person

A. What is your name?

B. Amanda Ogbonda (F)

A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?

B. Yes, River.

A. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?

B. Qua and Igbo.

A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

"Yes, that is the only common language for communication sometimes the person you are speaking English to, do not speak it, just as much as you besides it is very easy. People don't want to speak the big big grammar especially when they are free with you. Here, we speak pidgin for the purpose of easier communication. My Igbo is bad, so I don't waste my time speaking it. Igbo people can cheat you because you don't know how to speak their language".

11th Person

C. What is your name?

D. Emmanuel Nwabufo (M)

B. Are you a Nigerian and which state?

B. Yes, Enugu.

A. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?

B. Two, Hausa and Igbo.

A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

B. "Yes, I do, but then before you speak it someone beside you should be willing to".

12th Person

A. What is your name?

B. Onyinyechi Adirika (F)

A. Are you a Nigerian and which state?

B. Yes, Imo.

A. How many Nigerian languages do you speak?

B. Two, Igbo and Yoruba.

A. Do you speak Nigerian Pidgin and why?

B. "Yes, I do, we grew up in Lagos where there are too many languages and dialects. The Yoruba I think I can speak has varieties. (laughs) I like it, everyone has the right to stay in his or her own world. People from other country see this as a tourist attraction because the regions are with their different language and culture. Nigerian Pidgin is good o! You don't reason before you speak. Speaking the language is sweet, you can say anything in your own expression".

About (50%) of the persons interviewed emphasized the need for a language that is easy and very simple to use. Since not everyone is educated to engage or be proficient in English Language. "Nigeria is bad today because of the very many languages spoken by its citizens" was what one of them said. About (40%) encouraged the use of the Nigerian Pidgin English because it allows people from different cultural backgrounds to unite among themselves through a common language. Just about (10%) were indifferent about the quest. The answers given were simple and straightforward.

Resolution of the Language Situation in Nigeria.

There have been empirical backings supporting the promotion of Nigerian local languages but the question is, whose language should be the national language for wider communications other than the English language? Where exactly do we go from here? A logical step could be to confirm the higher role of English at the national level while delimiting its functions at sub-national levels. In this regards, the Nigerian Pidgin English should be adopted as the primary official language at the national level, while the indigenous languages are considered secondary at this level. It is mostly spoken where there are no mastery of the Standard English Language. About (70%) of Nigerians speak it, and it has varieties. Every region recognizes the variant existing in their political zones. The most popular variety should be adopted, codified and legalized into our curriculum for learning at both secondary and tertiary levels. The National Assembly passing it into bill will be a better way to start. Then, there would be role reversal at the sub-national levels where the indigenous languages would play primary roles while Nigerian Pidgin English plays a secondary role. The Standard English Language will be at the national level. A multilingual national language policy would thus be desirable in which English Language, indigenous languages and Nigerian Pidgin play active roles at different geo-political levels in Nigeria.

As things are, there is yet no indigenous language in Nigerian which is not foreign to more people than its speakers, although one can argue that any of them is less foreign than English in that the native speakers of a particular language are just a few miles away within the same country and not only can one study their language, one can also observe them in their cultural area, live and interact with them more readily than one can with English language. However, many languages in Nigeria belong to the same linguistic families, which show the similarities in the cultures of the people; such languages will be easier to learn than languages that belong to different language families.

Developmental Processes

Different strokes for different folks. The first attitude will be corpus planning. Language ortho-grahisation, it evolves through morphology and lexicology processes like compounding derivation, borrowing in phonologically adapted forms, expansion of meaning, use of dialects, lexical change and spontaneous formation of new words and it goes on and on until the language is rooted and spread. To meeting prerequisite for language standardization, language modernization, language purification, to developmental installations like language and governance, language and national literature, indices and characteristics and so on. Bishop Ajayi Crowther did the Yoruba translation of the Bible from English to Osun dialects. More of these effort will take our indigenous languages far into recognition. Nigerian Pidgin if codified to the standards will be easier for adoption. People will write Literature and circulate, but then the National Assembly has a big role to play by passing a bill and enacting its role and importance into the Nigerian polity.

Conclusion

This work has tried to review the theoretical aspects of linguistic situations in Nigeria and how there could be developmental processes and an interview session was carried out to ascertain how people feel about the Nigerian Pidgin English as a language used to oust cultural and language diversification in the Nigerian polity. In this context it has been stressed that when local languages are promoted among their native speakers, well-balanced citizens that are educationally, culturally and socially as well as well-grounded individuals will be produced. How many Nigerians can speak good English? Yet the number of indigenous languages are increasing by the day. Today it is (525) maybe by 2050 it must have been (530) indigenous languages who knows? There is need for a language of integration that will project one culture and promote one language which will have in it our culture and experiences embedded in it.

Recommendations

Contentions have been made on the linguistic polity, language alone is not enough to unify us. Though there is a need to promote Nigeria's local languages. In fact except done in togetherness one language learned and spoken by all Nigerians can make us strong, both politically and economically and Nigerian Pidgin can give us, such landing as a country . First, there should be an integration of local languages as

well as Nigerian Pidgin English in the curriculum for primary, and secondary and tertiary education as school subjects. It should be the required communicative competence in local languages for employees in the state, national and international offices. Including political assignments and posts in Nigeria and Nigerian diplomatic offices abroad similar to English requirement for employees in the United Kingdom. Universities, polytechnics and colleges of education in Nigeria and virtually all the bodies involved in the promotion of local languages should offer scholarships and research grants for courses and research in the local languages across the nation. Nigerian Pidgin has just come to stay in our societies. It is the neutralizer of class and the elite, efforts should be made to codify it. It is the substrate of English language but then has the influence of our various indigenous languages. The National Assembly should also pass it into law for recognition. These done, will give it the prestige it requires. At least we can start from there, to achieving a greater and better language policy for this nation Nigeria.

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