

Towards a National Language in Nigeria: Problems & Prospects.

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Abstract:

This work sets out to find out why the issue of a choice of a national language for Nigeria has remained elusive for so long. This state of affairs has been brought about largely by the fact that the country suffers from an extreme form of linguistic complexity.

In highlighting factors that might be in favour or against both endeglossic and exoglossic language choice for the nation we find that so long as issues of number, morality, bureaucratic inertia on the part of the political leadership and the fate of the languages not considered remain unresolved, so long shall the issue of a national language remain elusive.

We conclude that English will continue to play its role as the official language for a long time to come; that the implementation of the National Policy on Education, with time, will promote positive linguistic attitudes among the numerous ethnic groups in Nigeria and that because language is a necessary factor but not a sufficient one for unity, other sources of promoting national unity should be explored and exploited.

Keywords: Language/ English language/ linguistics/ endeglossic language/ exoglossic language/ National Policy on Education

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