READINGS IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

First Edition

'Lekan Oyeleye
&
Moji Olateju

MULTILINGUALISM AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Adegbite Wale. Department of English. Obafemi Awolowo University. Ile-Ife. Nigeria.

1. Introduction

The discussion in this chapter is divided into four parts. apart from the introduction and conclusion. In the first part. a brief explanation of the term 'multilingualism' is made and the phenomenon is described with references to its occurrence in the world. Africa. Nigeria and individuals. The second part discusses language and national development by examining the indices of national development of which language is an integral part. The third part describes language planning and language policy by focusing on the types and activities of planning as well as policy decisions and provisions on language in Africa /Nigeria. Lastly. the implications of language policy and planning for national development are observed by identifying the desirable goals of the Nigerian nation and then suggesting some steps for removing the constraints on language planning and policy formulation. In all. while the study has only attempted to study salient issues in the field. it does not claim to have fully exhausted the points or treated all the issues in detail. Students will nonetheless find the paper to be a useful introduction on the subject area.

2. Multilingualism in the World

Multilingualism is the concept of having more than two languages. It contrasts with 'monolingualism'. the concept of having one language. on the one hand. and 'bilingualism'. the concept of having two languages. on the other hand. Thus. Nigeria. which. according to Akindele and Adegbite (1991:21). has about 400 languages. will be regarded ordinarily as a multilingual nation and a person who speaks three or more languages. i.e. a 'polyglot'. can be said to be multilingual. Sometimes. a multilingual person or society may be said to be bilingual in a technical sense if the numerous languages in the repertoire of such an individual or society serve two socially recognized functions. For example. an individual. who is ordinarily a polyglot. may be said to be bilingual if only two of his/her numerous languages perform social roles as mother tongue and second language. while the others are used for personal (special) purposes. Nigeria is also regarded as a societal bilingual country (Fishman 1968. Stewart 1968) if all the indigenous languages. which serve as mother tongues of various groups. are organized along one line and English. which serves as the official language of the country. is regarded as a second language. In this sense. all other languages in the repertoire of individuals in the society will be regarded as foreign. i.e. serving specific rather than social needs of the people.

The status of multilingualism in the world. as aptly illustrated via figures by Gunnemark(1991:102).Krauss(1992:5).the *Ethnologue*(http://www.sil.org/ethnologue)

and Skutnab-Kangas (2001), is briefly presented here. There are between 6000 and 7000 languages in the world and the spread is as follows: Africa (1,400-1,900), Asia (1,600), the Pacific (1,200-1,500), Europe (40+), the USSR (100+), Americas –North, South, and Central (900), the USA (100+), and the Middle East (100+). It is further observed that:

(i) The median number of speakers of a language is about 5000- 6000;
(ii) Over 95% of the world's spoken languages have fewer than 1 million native users;
(iii) 5000 languages have fewer than 100,000 speakers;
(iv) 3000+ languages have fewer than 10,000 speakers;
(v) 500 languages have fewer than 100 speakers;
(vi) 83-84% of the world's spoken languages are endemic (i.e. located in specific areas).

In addition to the above, the information given about the top ten languages in the world and the native speaker's population is as follows (see *Ethnologue*, *op. cit.*):

(i) Chinese, Mandarin (885m), (ii) Spanish (332m), (iii) English (322m), (iv) Bengali, (189m), (v) Hindi (182m), (vi) Portuguese (170m), (vii) Russian (170m), (viii) Japanese (125m), (ix) German (98m) and (x) Chinese, Wu (77m). English is of course the most internationally spoken language in the world with an estimated population of 1.5 billion speakers (Crystal 1997). Also, the top ten most linguistically diverse countries of the world and the number of languages in them can be listed: Papua New Guinea (850), Indonesia (670), Nigeria (410), India (380), Cameroon (270), Australia (250), Mexico (240), Zaire (210), Brazil (210) and each of Philippines, Russia, China, Tanzania, and the United States (100+).

Although no nation exists in the world without ethnic minorities, some officially monolingual nations can be identified: France, Great Britain, Spain, Japan and West Germany. In Africa, a handful of countries are officially monolingual if we take 90% population of speakers as the mark (Wolff 1999): Botswana (Setswana), Burundi (Kirundi), Lesotho (Sotho), Madagascar (Malagasy), Ethiopia (Amharic), Rwanda (Kinyarwanda), Somalia (Somali) and Swaziland (Seswati). Officially bilingual countries in the world include Afghanistan (Pashton, Dari Persian), Algeria (Arabic, French) Bhutan (Dzongkha, Butanese), Cameroun (French, English), Canada (English, French), Cyprus (Greek, Turkish), Czech Republic (Czech, Slovak), Finland (Finish, Swedish), Ireland (Irish Gaelic, English), Kenya (English, Swahili), Luxemburg (French, German), Mauritania (Arabic, French) and Namibia (Afrikaans, English). Also, a few officially multilingual nations are as follows: Belgium (Flemish, Dutch, French), Pakistan (Bengali, Urdu, English), Seychelles (English, French, Creole), Singapore (Malay, Chinese, Tamil, English), Switzerland (German, French, Italian), Yugoslavia (Serbo-Croatian, Slovenia, Macedonian) and Nigeria (English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba). Nigeria stands out as the most linguistically diverse country in Africa and its over 400 languages have been variously classified thus:

Colonial (Dominant) – English
Majority (Deprived) - Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba
Minority (Endangered)- Angas, Edo, Efik, Fulfude, Ibibio, Idoma, Igala, Ijaw, Kanuri, Ogoni, Oko, Tiv, Yangas, etc.
Foreign (Special)- French, Arabic, and Latin
Trade (Common)- Anglo-Nigerian Pidgin (or Pidgin English)

English is regarded as a colonial language because it is a colonial legacy. It plays a dominant role as the official language in Nigeria. It is the language with which the government conducts its business. It is the language that literate people from different ethnic groups use to communicate with one another. Nigerians have a positive attitude towards it and rate it higher in social prestige than other indigenous languages because it has been for so long the sole language of social and educational advancement. Its neutrality as a non–ethnic language also prevents it from any negative bias from ethnic groups. Despite attempts to promote the language officially, it is said that only about 20% of Nigerians speak it.

The majority/minority distinction is made by virtue of the population size of the speakers of languages–the three largest ethnic groups in Nigeria speak the major languages. The terms 'deprived' 'endangered' and 'dying' are defined more in terms of use than number. Bamgbose (1993) explains that a deprived language is used in formal education and as a means of communication beyond its immediate community; but it is subordinated to an imported official language, which is used in wider administrative and educational domains. An endangered language, on the other hand, is not used for formal education, and communicative functions are limited to the in-group and for such purposes as rituals, festivals, village affairs and informal contact. In contrast to these two types of language, a dying language is not used in any serious function, its continuing relevance is that there are some old people who can still speak the language, but the occasions for such use are becoming rare because there are fewer interlocutors to interact with.

While some parts of Nigeria in the North, West and East have fewer languages, some other parts have many languages, with the highest density in the North-East, Middle-Belt, South-East and South-South. Indeed, each of such States as Taraba, Plateau and Cross-River is said to have over 60 languages (Adegbija, 1994: 103).

Talking about individual multilingualism, the following quotation by Wolff (1998:3) from the *UNESCO Working Document, Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa,* Harare will suffice:

> In a survey related to the case of Nigeria, the number of languages spoken by each of the subjects of the speech communities studied ranged from two to five as follows: 60 per cent of the subjects spoke two languages; 30 per cent three; and 10 per cent over four languages. A similar observation could be made regarding many if not all, the African countries, where there is a widespread tradition of handling multilingualism....

3. Language and National Development

Although development is the ultimate goal of national aspirations and individual efforts, it is most apparent that the nations of the world and individual persons either attain or fail to attain this goal in varying degrees, thus necessitating the classification of nations in terms of 'developed' 'underdeveloped' and 'developing'. The commonest means of measuring development is in economic terms of gross domestic product (GDP) of nations and capital formation. But the GDP may sometimes cover up the lopsidedness in the wealth distribution among a population. Seidman (1976:49) claims that development should be based on:

> ...an analysis of the spread of productivity and increased level of living of the broad masses of the population.

The World Bank (1989) report confirms Seidman's opinion further when it says that measuring development in terms of human-centered social indicators such as basic health service, food, education and life expectancy reflect more accurately the condition of most of the population because of their broader distribution across households. Thus, development in broad terms should be measured in terms of the provision and access of the whole population of a country to social amenities such as education (i.e. increased level of literacy), good health, portable water, good roads, and electricity and information and communication facilities. The masses of a nation ought to be mobilized to participate collectively towards this goal.

National development is also observable in terms of the realization of certain political goals, e.g.: democracy, unity and peace, foreign relations and cultural preservation. Other indices apart from politics include the achievement of success and effectiveness in certain areas of human experience such as administration, education, language, arts and technology.

Generally, it is very rare to see scholars other than linguists who relate issues of development to language, since the latter is seen purely as no more than an instrument of communication. But the link between language and development is more fundamental than that. Language is the only creative property unique to human beings as individuals. It is the only road to thinking (Sapir 1921:15-16), which makes human living possible and also makes the pooling together of individual capacities of human beings for social development become inevitable (Afolayan, 1994).

As language is the key to the heart of the people and consequently the means of unlocking their knowledge and treasures (Engholm, 1965), human beings can explore together, discover and extend knowledge through their languages. Language, apart from being a marker of identity, also marks individuality and national sovereignty (Bamgbose 1990). In most cases, national development may seem to correlate with language development, as the advanced nations of the world appear to be those who have been able to efficiently manage and utilize their language resources. Developing nations of the world ought to follow suit and plan their most often diverse languages in order to achieve sustainable national development.

4.0 Language Development: Planning and Policy

Language development is a general term that has been described in various other terms which exist in the literature: *glottopolitics, language engineering, language elaboration, language standardization, linguistic renaissance* and *language planning*. A radical form of language development is conveyed by the concept of 'linguistic renaissance', which entails "making the indigenous languages (of Africa) desirable and effective tools for educational development, economic opportunity, political participation, social mobility and cultural practice"(Chumbow 1990, Webb 1995, Kamwangamalu 2001). In this paper, we shall use the term 'language planning' and the complementary concept of 'language policy' to describe the phenomenon of language development.

4.1 Language Planning

Several attempts have been made to describe this term, but our working definition here is that it refers to (Akindele and Adegbite 1999:74):

...a set of deliberate activities systematically designed to select from, organize and develop the language resources of a community in order to enhance such resources for national development.

Language planning is motivated by certain factors which include coordination of linguistic diversity, coping with rapid social changes, promotion of linguistic assimilation, management of linguistic pluralism, vernacularization and internationalization of languages (Cobarrubias 1983, Fasold 1984, Akindele and Adegbite 1999). Since it is geared toward language and national development, language planning is aimed at tackling and checking political, socio-economic, educational and technological problems of a nation.

In a multilingual community such as Nigeria, an uncoordinated linguistic diversity may result in the creation of many problems like educational underdevelopment, ethnolinguistic agitation, breakdown of information and communication gap between the government and the people. A sequence of realizable objectives is set in order to embark on several activities to check the problems above.

Various activities may take place while planning languages. This may involve 'status planning', which either widens or narrows the function(s) of a language and the right of those who use it, and/or 'corpus planning', which seeks to develop or improve the structure of a language to enable it to perform the function(s) assigned to it (Wardhaugh 1986). Status planning activities include language survey, the selection and assignment of roles (such as informal, trade, religious, educational, official, and national) to languages at the local, state and national levels, while corpus planning activities include the 'graphization', 'standardization', 'modernization' and sometimes the 'purification' of structure of languages. The term 'acquisition planning' has also been devised (Cooper, 1989) to concern decisions that are made about language learning in terms of structuring the learning environment, preparing teachers, creating materials and developing sound theoretical basis to ensure that students learn what they are intended to learn.

According to Ruiz (in Gutierez *et al.* 2002:336), the most crucial issue in acquisition planning is how to create 'additive' contexts out of situations that have historically been 'subtractive' ones (see also Brisk 1998 and Freeman 1998). The fundamental distinction made between 'additive' and 'subtractive' bilingualism by Lambert (1978) provides a sound basis for the prospects of mother tongue in education policies. While the former results in the acquisition of both mother tongue and second language skills, the latter results in the loss of mother tongue skills while promoting the acquisition of the second language.

It is the type of status planning activities embarked upon that result in the dominance and over-utilization of some languages and the under-utilization of some other languages in a community. The terms *major, minor, official, national, dominant, deprived, endangered* and *dead*, (see section 2 above), which are used to describe languages, already show that there is inequality in the process of language planning concerning the social advantage and prestige accorded some languages and their speakers above other languages and speakers (cf. Tollefson 1991). Note that the efficient implementation of status planning activities helps to stimulate and encourage the performance of corpus planning activities, while the effectiveness of the latter in turn enhances the statuses of languages and their speakers.

Meanwhile, a few corpus-planning activities need to be explained here. 'Cultivation' is the process of identifying languages through a language survey programme in order to recognize their existence. 'Graphization' (or 'graphicization') is the process of reducing a spoken language into the reading form. The process involves devising letters of an alphabet and other features of writing that are used to represent speech. 'Standardization' involves the writing ('codification') of various rules of pronunciation, orthography, vocabulary and grammar to enhance uniformity and prestige of languages. 'Modernization' is the process of making languages to respond to the features of modernity through 'lexicalization' (i.e. lexical borrowing, inventing, and adaptation) and marketing (promotion of language use for prestigious purposes) processes. Lastly, 'purification' of languages is embarked upon by a few conformists who are concerned with maintaining the correctness of a form of language by advocating the removal of deviant or unwanted structures.

4.2 Language Policy

When the task of language planning is of sufficient salience to demand the attention of the authorities in a political system, then the matter requires the government's policy intended to guide the public. This usually takes the form of government issuing a white paper or statement/ provision in national documents (constitution, gazettes or educational policy) on a planned course of action (Akindele and Adegbite 1999). A typical example of these policy statements are contained in the *Constitution of Nigeria* (1979/1989/1999) and *National Policy on Education* (*NPE* 1977, revised 1981/1998) which state among other things a national policy on language use in government, education, politics and so on. Let us look briefly at some provisions in the above documents:

(i) ...the business of national assembly shall be conducted in English, and in Hausa, Ibo, (sic) and Yoruba when adequate arrangements have been made therefor.

1999 Constitution, Section 55

(ii) ...the business of the 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.

1999 Constitution, Section 97

(iii) ... in addition to appreciating the importance of a language in the educational process, and as means of preserving the people's culture, the government considers it to be in the interest of the national unity that each child should be encourage to learn one of the three major languages other than his own mother tongue. In this connection, the government considered the three major languages in Nigeria to be Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba.

NPE, Para. 8

(iv) ...Government will ... ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community.

NPE, Para. 11 (3): Pre-primary Education

(v) 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.

NPE, Para. 15 (4): Primary Education

(vi) In selecting two Nigerian languages, students should study the languages of their own area in addition to any of the three main Nigerian languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, subject to availability of teachers.

NPE, Para. 19(14): Junior Secondary School

A policy is formulated in line with the objectives of a nation and its national ideology. For example, it is guided by such general principles as democracy, unity and national integration, cultural preservation and enrichment, social justice and foreign relations. A language policy usually considers certain major factors such as:

(i) the socio-cultural integration of the society;
(ii) the choice of national language(s), whether it is one or several languages, indigenous or foreign or both, a major or minor language, a trade language, etc.;

(iii) the consideration of languages as official language(s) or language(s) of wider communication (LWC);

(iv) the consideration of whether the use of an official language such as English will be based on an exo-normative standard (e.g. 'R. P') or endo-normative standard (e.g. standard Nigerian English);

(v) the process of modernizing indigenous languages;

(vi) the goal of biculturalism, whether the orientation should be towards traditionalism or modernism or a blend of two cultures.

The language policy decisions of Africa are observed along the lines of three patterns suggested by scholars- *A modal, Unimodal and Multimodal* (Whiteley 1971, Verdoodt 1979 and Adegbija 1994). The 'A modal' policy, which extols one 'exogenous' language such as French or Portuguese) and belittles all 'endogenous' (indigenous) languages, is practised in most French and Portuguese ex-colonies such as Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo (French) and Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau (Portuguese). The identity and assimilation strategy of the French and Portuguese colonialists ensured that the metropolitan community and African people share a common political belief and cultural destiny.

The 'Unimodal' policy selects one major endogenous language such as Swahili in Tanzania, Kirundi in Burundi, Somali in Somalia, Amharic in Ethiopia and Arabic in Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Sudan as the national or official language while other languages serve various other functions. In Tanzania, the smallness in the size of over 100 different ethnolinguistic units assisted the selection of Swahili, a neutral language that has developed through trade inter-communication between people.

The 'Multimodal' policy type, in which an exogenous language as well as one or more endogenous 'majority' languages are extolled over and above other minority languages, operates especially in former ex-English colonies like Nigeria (English, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba), Sierra Leone (English and Creole), Kenya (English and Swahili) and South Africa (English and Afrikaans).

In all of the three policy types above, it is observed that the use of African languages as resource for development is lacking. Even in the few nations where African languages serve official functions, such languages are mere lingua francas or languages of wider communication but serve limited functions in formal education. In other nations, the dominant uses of foreign languages as elaborated codes is glaring, while the indigenous languages are either absent or are used to serve restricted functions. For example, in Ghana and Nigeria, English serves as the official language, while Akan, Moshi-Dagomba and Ewe (Ghana) and Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (Nigeria) serve as 'Languages of Wider Communication'(LWCs). These are majority languages of the largest ethnic groups in the countries. In addition, these and all other minority indigenous languages are assigned minor roles as media of instruction at the lower rung of the educational system. Meanwhile, pidgin English also exists as a lingua franca of low status, Arabic is

used by Muslims for religious purposes, some Latin is used in Catholic Christian worship, and French is used by individuals in particular for communication across the all French-speaking neighbours of the two countries.

Meanwhile, the critique of positive and negative features of formulation and implementation of language policies is an on-going feature among language scholars and educationists. Bamgbose (1994, 2001), for example, identifies the following problems of language policy-making in Nigeria:

(i) negative attitudes to Nigerian languages
(ii) overwhelming bias for English
(iii) reliance on sentiment rather than objective data (such as statistics of language use)
(iv) elite domination of policy –making
(v) equation of elite interest with public interest
(vi) plain ignorance about language (as shown in the false claim that the use of one's mother tongue will reduce one's intellectual capacity).

Bamgbose (2001) further describes the policy situation in Nigeria along three dimensions, which we summarize as follows:

a. challenges: national communication, national integration, national development, education and socio-cultural development;
b. opportunities: revision of colonial policies, the National Policy on Education, Six- Year Yoruba Primary Project (Afolayan 1979, 2001), constitutional provisions- opportunities to build on the above were wasted:
c. constraint: failure to accord priority to language policy (no comprehensive language policy), negative attitudes, absence of implementation strategies, administrative or political instability leading to frequent changes of policy-makers and policies, failure to use language experts, and lack of political will.

5. Implications of Language Policy and Planning for National Development

In order to positively utilize the language resources for national development, the constraints on language planning and policy formulation mentioned above have to be removed. Before we suggest some steps for removing the constraints, let us first identify what in our opinion should be the desirable goals of the nation in respect of some areas of national life: culture, education, communication, literature and technology.

5.1 Desirable Goals in Areas of National Development

With respect to cultural development, the following quotation from Spencer (1962:16) seems appropriate here:

Multilingual nations could make a great contribution to the world by virtue of the inevitable variety and mixture of their cultures. They are in contact with the modern world, and have moved right into it, by means of the language introduced

under European rule. They are also in contact, through their own languages with an older less feverish, more stable tradition. And although we all, in the modern world want technological progress, we all- also need stability.

The quotation recognizes the positive roles of an integration of traditional and modern cultures in national development. Patrick (2003: 4 - 5) contends that "there is nothing to say that both dominant (modern) and indigenous languages cannot be both valued and used by speakers or that new forms of bilingual and multilingual practices will not arise and create more hybridized acts of identity, especially among indigenous youth".

Meanwhile, the linguistic media of traditional and modern cultures are the mother tongue (MT) and second language (SL) respectively. While the mother tongue serves as the primary means of communication, the role of the second language is complementary to this. Furthermore, the collaboration between these media can also have two possible creative outcomes that are positive for national development, viz. the modernization of mother tongues and the indigenization of the second language.

In the area of education, language serves two major roles: (i) as a subject and (ii) as a medium of instruction. Our suggestion here is, first, that both MT and SL are taught as subjects at all levels of the educational system. Secondly, a 'collaborative' bilingual medium of instruction is recommended for all levels of education. This means that both the MT and SL can be used in education either severally or integratively, in interpreting, translation or code switching. Where some indigenous languages do not yet have the capacity for higher levels of education, a progressive use of such languages should be devised from the lower levels, based on the rate of their development.

On national communication, it is expected that, according to Adegbite (2002:8), both English and indigenous languages should play complementary roles. Today, as a veritable vestige of colonialism, English remains the language of 'nationism', i.e. the language for inter-ethnic and international communication, apart from all other functions of modernism associated with it. No other language cuts across all ethnic groups in Nigeria as English does. In this regard, it should be the business of the national assembly to organize and coordinate efforts to officially promote the development, learning and use of English for national and international communication purposes.

The proper nurturing of bilingualism/multilingualism can bring forth the existence of national literature in three media: (i) literature in indigenous languages; (ii) literature in English; and (iii) literary translations from indigenous languages into English, and vice-versa. The content of such literatures should be diverse, describing communal, national, African and world experiences and thoughts, with emphasis on indigenous cultural values. Both serious and popular literatures are to be encouraged; also in order to correct the present imbalance of literature in favour of men, the writing of literature by women and, especially, children should be promoted. The literary forms, while keeping to the standard rules of mother tongues and second languages, should be flexible enough to allow

literary creativity achieved through such features as code switching, linguistic interference, proverbs, explicit and implicit translation, coinages, borrowing and pidginization.

The promotion of indigenous technology such as blacksmithing, dyeing, carving and pot making and adaptation of foreign technology to the African situation are the norm in a bilingual-bicultural, multilingual-multicultural context, rather than technological transfer in the sense of direct importation of both hardware and software from abroad. The language of science and technology ought to be accessible to the majority of their practitioners, who are barely literate artisans. Local mechanics, plumbers, bricklayers, electricians and other technicians ought to be exposed to abundant literature on traditional and modern techniques largely in their mother tongues. This is a challenge to writers, publishers and the mass media to make scientific literature available in the indigenous languages in original or translated form.

There is no doubt that foreign languages will still provide a means of accessing modern technology. Exposure to modern technology should be accompanied by the attitudes of 'adaptive consumerism' instead of 'wholesale dependent consumerism'.

5.2 Removal of Constraints in Language Use for National Development

The solution to political instability is the entrenchment of democratic rule in Nigeria, whereby the citizens are mobilized and empowered to participate in the governance of the country. Language can be used as a source of social mobilization and empowerment in Nigeria if certain laws and practices that support language exclusion in the social system are checked and all citizens utilize language as a participatory tool for development of the nation.

The foisting of languages on people by the State instead of allowing people to voluntarily choose for themselves cannot be dissociated from the unitary pattern of military governance that was then in operation. Margaret Peil (1976:118) observes the even though Nigeria was run as a highly-centralized government, the impression was always given that the nation is a federation of states. Unfortunately, in the present case, the unitary declaration of language policy is not acceptable to all Nigerians, most especially the minority ethnic groups who feel threatened by the exclusion of their own languages from the Constitution. Adegbite (2002:7) contends that it is rather fortuitous that the foisting of major languages on the minorities has not resulted in chaos. Thanks to the relatively smaller number of the latter groups. They might not have used the weapon of physical force to frustrate the minority decision, but they have used the attitudinal weapons of apathy and lack of will to the best of their advantage.

Next to democratic governance is the lack of political will demonstrated by, especially, the leaders and the elite group who govern the nation on matters relating to language and national development. Leaders of the nation are expected to demonstrate more patriotism by jettisoning their ambivalent attitude towards indigenous Nigerian languages and paying adequate attention instead of lip service to their development and utilization for serious communication purposes.

With regards to the negative attitudes towards indigenous languages, scholars (Adegbija 2000, Bamgbose 2001, Adegbite 2003) have already advised that enlightenment programmes through awareness campaigns be designed to convert such attitudes. The Nigerian elite is perceived as the initial target of such programmes, being the group most critical and antagonistic to the indigenous language development issue. With the full support of the elite, the masses can easily be convinced as they look to their leaders from direction.

Scholars who are familiar with the language policy issue (Adegbija 1994, Bamgbose 1994) have also emphasized the need for a comprehensive national language policy document. Hitherto, language provisions are scattered over many documents in which their occurrences are considered secondary or marginal to discussions of other subjects, e.g. *The Constitution* and the *National Policy of Education*. It is expected that all language provisions in various documents will, based on the principle of 'additive bilingualism/multilingualism' be extracted, examined critically, reformulated, where necessary, and brought together as a coherent whole document of language policy.

Lastly, the implementation of the language policies should involve all stakeholders in status, corpus and acquisition planning -linguists, educationists, authors, publishers, teachers, media practitioners and various other individuals, bodies and organization to whom roles must be properly assigned. For example, legislators at the Federal, State and Local Government levels are concerned with the formulation of polities to enhance the statuses of languages. Furthermore, Local and State governments with the support of cultural organizations, NGO's, wealthy individuals and language experts have the primary assignment of developing both minority and majority indigenous languages. The Federal Government has the primary task to fund the development of English and other foreign languages that are desirable.

6. Conclusion

It is high time African people saw multilingualism as a blessing in disguise rather than a curse. A positive attitude has to be developed towards this phenomenon so that polyglottism is envied and sought after and multilingualism is utilized to enrich the socio-cultural life of people in nations of the world. The diversity in multilingualism can even be positively harnessed to engender unity and progress in a nation, as Donna M. Ogle says in *Reading Today* (2001:4):

> Individually, we can only know a part.
> Together, we can only understand the whole.

Where there is the will, there is life. Language development cannot be left for the government alone. Cultural organizations, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and individuals (scholars, Linguists, and media practitioners, publishers and educationists) have major roles to play here. Finally, there is the need for public enlightenment on the importance of languages in human and national life,

most especially, on the recognition of natural and divine power inherent in our mother tongues.

References

Adegbija, E. (1993). "The graphization of small group language: A case study of Oko" *International Journal of Sociology of Language* 102, 153-73.

_____. (1994)." The context of language planning in Africa: An illustration with Nigeria" In M. Putz (ed.) *Language Contact and Language Conflict.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 139-163

_____. (2000). "Language Attitudes in West Africa" In A, Bamgbose (ed.) Sociolinguistics in West Africa. (Special Issue No. 141 of *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*) 75-100

Adegbite, W. (2002). "Language and Social Mobilization of Citizens in A Federal Democratic System" Dele Afolabi (ed.) *Reading in the Humanities.* Dept of General Studies, LAUTECH, 1-19

_____. (2003). "Enlightenment and Attitudes of the Nigerian Elite on the Roles of Languages in Nigeria" *Language, Culture and Curriculum* (Forthcoming) Multilingual Matters

Afolayan, A. (1979). "A current evaluation of the Six Year Primary Project" *Educafrica,N UNESCO*

_____. (1994) "Language as a neglected factor of development in Africa"In W. Adegbite and C. E. Onukaogu (eds) *Language in Education in Nigeria.* Ile-Ife: Centre for Language in Education and Development (CELED), 250-283.

_.(2001) "The alienated role of the mother tongue in literacy education for Sustainable national development: The Western Nigeria Yoruba Example" *Proceedings of the 1st Pan- African Reading for All Conference, Pretoria, South Africa.* International Reading Association and UNESCO

Akindele, F. and Adegbite, W. (1999). *The Sociology and Politics of English in Nigeria* Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press.

Bamgbose, A. (1990). " Language and the national question in Nigeria" *African Notes* Vol. 14 , Nos 1 and 2, 70-80

_____. (1991). *Language and the Nation.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

_____. (1993). " Deprived, Endangered and Dying Languages " *Diogenes* No 161,41.1, 19-25

_____. (1994) "Fifteen Years of the National Policy on Education: How far has language fared?" in Adegbite, W. and Onukaogu, C. E. (eds) *Language in Education in Nigeria.* Ile-Ife: Centre for Language and Educational Development, 1-10

_____. (2001). "Language Policy in Nigeria: Challenges, Opportunities and Constraints" Keynote Address, Nigerian Millennium Socio-linguistics Conference, University of Lagos, Lagos, August 16- 18.

Banjo,A .(1992). " On Language Use and Modernity in Nigeria" Paper presented at

Seminar in Honour of Prof. Ayo Bamgbose, held at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan, January 9-11.

Brisk, M. (1998). *Bilingual Education: From Compensatory to Quality Schooling,* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Chumbow, B.S.(1990). " The Place of the Mother Tongue in the National Policy of Education" In E.N. Emenanjo (ed.) *Multilingualism, Minority Languages and Language Policy in Nigeria.* Agbor: Central Books, 61-72

Cobarrubias,J.(1983): "Ethical Issues in Status Planning" In Cobarrubias, J. and A. Fisherman (eds) *Progress in Language Planning*: International Perspectives The Hague: Mouton

Cooper, R. (1989). *Language Planning and Social Change.* New York Cambridge University Press

Crystal. D. (1997). *English as a Global Language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Das Gupta, J. (1968). "Language Diversity and National Development" In Fishman, J. A. *et al.* (eds) *Language Problems of Developing Nations* New York: John Wiley and Sons, 17-26.

Emenanjo,E. N. (1990). " In the tradition of the majors: Lessons in languages" In E. N.Emenanjo (ed.) *Multilingualism, Minority Languages and Language Policy in Nigeria.* Agbor: Central Books, 88-98.

Engholm, E. (1965). *Education through English.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Fasold, R. W. (1984). *The Sociolinguistics of Society* Oxford: Basil Blackwell

Federal Republic of Nigeria, *The Constitution* (1979/1989/1999) Lagos: Federal Government Press

Federal Republic of Nigeria, *National Policy on Education* (1977, revised 1981 and (1998) Lagos: NERDC

Fishman, J. A, Ferguson , C. A. and J. Das Gupta (eds) 1968. *Language Problems of Developing Nations* . New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Freeman, R. (1998). *Bilingual Education and Social Change.* Clevedon : Multilingual Matters

Gunnemark,E. V. (1991). *Countries, Peoples and their Languages. The Geolinguistics Handbook* Gothenburg: Geolingu

Gutierez, K. Asato, J. Pacheco, M. Moll, M. C. Olso, K. Horng, E. L., Ruiz, R. Garcia, E. and McCarty, T. L. (2002). " Conversations: Sounding American – The consequences of new reforms on English language Learners" *Reading Research Quarterly* Vol. 37, No 3, 328-343

Kamwangamalu, N. M. (2001). "African Renaissance and The Role of African Languages in Education: The case for a linguistic renaissance" The Nigerian Millennium Sociolinguitics Conference, University of Lagos Lagos, August 16-18.

Krauss, M. (1992). " The World's Languages in Crisis" *Language* 68: 1, 4-10

Lambert,W.E. (1978). " Some Cognitive and Sociocultural Consequences of Being Bilingual" In Alatis, J. E. (ed.) *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics* Washington D C, 214-229

Ogle, D. M. (2001). "Leadership lessons",*Reading Today* Vol. 19, No 1,p.4

Patrick, D. 2003 " Indigenous Language Stability and Change: Multilingualism and Political Economy" Paper Presented at the 8th International Pragmatics Conference, Toronto, Canada, July 13-18

Peil, M. (1976). *Nigerian Politics: The People's View*. London: Cassell

Sapir, E.(1921). *Language*. NewYork: Harcourt Brace

Seidman, A.(1976). "Changing Theories of Political Economy in Africa" In Fyfe, C. (ed.) *African Studies since 1945: A Tribute to Basil Davidson*. London: Longman, 49-96

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2001). " The future roles of indigenous languages for the world-from romantic rhetorical to realities: Applying to diversity and creativity argument to education" Millennium Sociolinguitics Conference, University of Lagos, Lagos, August 16-18.

Spencer, J.W.(1962). " Language in Multilingual State" In Brosnahan, L. F and Spencer J.W. (eds) *Language and Society*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 13-16

Stewart, W. A. (1968). "A Sociolinguistic Typology for Describing National Multilingualism" In Fishman, J.A. (ed.) *Readings in the Sociology of Language*. The Hague: Mouton, 531-45

The World Bank. (1989). *Sub-Saharan Africa from Crisis to Sustainable Growth*. Washington DC: The World Bank

Tollefson, J. W. (1991). *Planning Language, Planning Inequality*. London and New York: Longman.

Verdoodt, A. (1979). "Social and Linguistic Structure of Burundi, A Typical 'Unimodal' Country' In McCormack, W.C. and Wurm, S.A. (eds) *Language in Society* (Anthropological Issues) Mouton: The Hague, 509-31

Wardhaugh,R.(1986). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell

Webb, V.(1995). "Revalorizing the autochtonous languages of Africa"InV.Webb (ed)*Empowerment through Language: A Survey of the language situation in Lesotho and Selected Papers presented at the 2nd International LICCA Conference*. Pretoria: the LICCA Research and Development Program, 97-117.

Whiteley, W. H. (ed) (1971). *Language Use and Social Change: Problems of Multilingualism with Special References to Eastern Africa*.London Oxford University Press.

Williamson, K.(1990). "Development of Minority Languages: Publishing Problems and Prospects" In Emenanjo, E.N. (ed.) *Multilingualism, Minority Language And Language Policy in Nigeria* . Agbor: Central Books 118-44.

Wolff,H.E. (1998). " Multilingualism, Modernization and Post-Literacy:Some central issue Concerning the promotion of indigenous African Languages in a Democratic Society" Paper presented at the Workshop on "The Role of African Languages in a Democratic South Africa" Pretoria: University of Pretoria, CentRePol, South Africa.

Readings in Language and Literature has chapters in various aspects of the English Language and Literature. The principal concern of the book is to develop a text for students of English studies in tertiary institutions and the essays have been carefully selected, reviewed and assessed by internationally acclaimed scholars. The essays are inspiring and clear. It is an indispensable text for anyone studying English or Literature.

ISBN 978-136-141-7