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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

This seemingly "pinchless" outing of the Educational Perspectives is due in part, to constructive contributions from the erstwhile Editorial Board of Prof. B.B. Oderinde [Editor-in-chief] and Prof. Ayo Agbonjimi [Managing Editor] and in part to the determination of the current Editorial Board to get the journal back on its feet.

Our Editorial Board was bombarded with articles from far and near, soon after the call for papers was published. The subjects treated by these writers covered almost all the topics in the teaching curricula. Identifying suitable assessors was not an easy task. The search for competent hands took us as far as the National Assembly in Abuja and other places. The speed at which all our assessors attended to the obligation thrust on them deserves the sincere appreciations expressed here.

The assessors' prompt response did not only contribute to the publishing of this volume within envisaged period it has also made feasible, our anticipation for producing a second volume within this year, 2002.

In order not to take the edge off your taste, only a brief introduction would be given on the articles in this volume, just to whet your appetite.

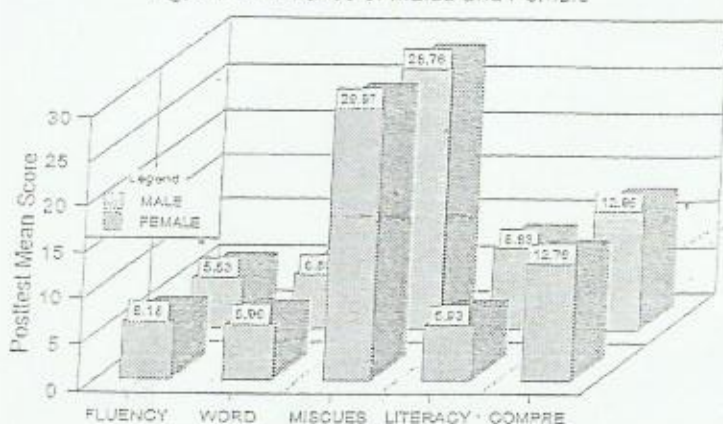
Each of the eleven articles published here, makes a tremendous contribution to education concepts, from language to science; Teacher Production to Adult Education; Readability to physical and Health Education, etc.

Finally, we want to appeal to future contributors to Educational Perspectives, to pay attention to the directives outlined in the handbills. They should ensure that all transactions are made with the Managing Editor - his office - not his person. Not complying with these directives usually results in the rejection of such articles. "And that is the truth" as our Editor-in-chief often concludes.

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Fig 1: Performance of Males and Female



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ETHNIC IDENTITY AND ATTITUDES TOWARD A LINGUA-FRANCA FOR NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine how ethnic identity will influence the attitudes of students in Lagos State toward having a lingua-franca for Nigeria. It made use of one hundred and forty-seven students randomly selected from three secondary schools (68 males and 79 females). Data collected was done with the administrator of a questionnaire. "Ethnic Identity and Attitudes Toward Lingua-Franca (EIDTOL)" on the sample. Data analysis involved simple percentage; the students' t - test and analysis of variance. The results indicate that majority of the respondents preferred English language to other local languages as a future lingua-franca for Nigeria. While most of them were positive in their opinion on the desirability of a lingua-franca, they also believe that a neutral language will be better. The results also indicate no significant difference in the attitude of respondents based on gender, speakers of major / other local languages and religious affiliations. These results underscore the need for the government at all levels to fund the development of all the undeveloped languages in Nigeria.

Background To The Study

Language is a very important factor in the educational process. It is an indispensable aspect of communication. It serves as a very strong basis for creative thought and with it, there would be no meaningful progress, civilization and culture (Makinde, 1997 : 7). Language according to (Adeniyi, 1999) performs some functions among which are the expressions of identity. That is, through language, the political affiliation, age, sex, regional and educational background, socio-economic status, personality of an individual or a people could be known.

We talk of ethnic identity in a multilingual society or country. A multilingual community is that in which different and various languages may be foreign to such communities. A typical example is Nigeria where we have many indigenous languages (spoken by different ethnic groups) apart from English, French and Arabic (Bello 1999 : 126). Edwards, (1981 : 39) explains that one of the highly visible manifestations of ethnicity is identified in terms of the language used by the people of a particular ethnic group.

As earlier indicated, Nigeria is a multilingual country and therefore multiethnic and multicultural in nature. Mackey (1992 : 12) has identified 410 languages in Nigeria while Crozier and Blench (1992) identified 430. The multiplicity of the indigenous languages has made English language to remain a strong national lingua-franca which performs instrumental and integrative functions in Nigeria (Awonusi 1993 : 5). Lingua-franca refers to a Language of Wider Communication (LWC) that is used by different ethnic groups or speakers of various languages as a common medium of communication. Such a language according to Bello (1999 : 130) neither has an official backing nor chosen decree and she went further to give the example of Hausa which is a common language amongst the people of Northern Nigeria. According to her an official language is the recognition of the government being the language of administration. A national language is an "endoglossic" one which has evolved from within a country and it could be chosen by decree for the purpose of national identity (Bello 1999).

The consideration of the fact that language has a stronger binding factor than any other aspects of culture has prompted some writers to call for a common national language in Nigeria. For instance, Gundu (1981 : 114 - 176) observes that about 15% of Nigerians (representing a minority) speak English. This has led Ikara in Fadeyiye (1996 : 125) to call for a rejection of English as the lingua-franca in its place.

There is no doubt that evolving a lingua-franca in Nigeria will be a delicate and difficult task to accomplish. It seems the different ethnic groups are sceptical of national languages for Nigeria. For instance, Obasanjo and Mabogunje (1991 : 200) remark that the search for a national language should be considered both fruitless and time-wasting considering the fact that the English language is providing a convenient means of communication among the multiethnic groups in Nigeria. Tiffen (1975) in Fadeyiye (1996 : 126) has even called on the multilingual and multicultural countries to adopt an international language rather than wasting their time evolving a lingua-franca.

In spite of the democratic structure being currently put in place in Nigeria, the unity of the nation is now threatened more than before. There is a call for a National Conference (SNC) which would actually determine the future existence of Nigeria. The present regime is disregarding such a call for fear of the envisaged outcome of such a conference. It could lead to a total secession, secessions or regionalisation of the country. Militant groups are emerging from the different regions. Some of these include the Ijaw Youths, the Yoruba Youths, the Egbesu Youths, the Biafra Youths and the Oodua People's Congress (all from the southern part of Nigeria). The emergence of Arewa People's Congress (APC) - a conglomeration of Northern Youths also calling for determination for the Northern States has also been witnessed in Nigeria. One wonders what the reaction or the attitude of people would be towards

the choice of language as a national language / lingua-franca. Even with the choice of three major languages in Nigeria (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) many speakers of the minority languages have been agitating for the inclusion of their languages. Baba (2000 : 5) wonders why Fulfude, the language of the Fulani people who happen to be in the majority in the Northern part of Nigeria is not considered as being important like Ibibio (a language spoken by a people not as popular as the Fulani people and also taught in Schools of States like Cross River and Akwa Ibom States). Also, Sanni (2000 : 5) is of the opinion that Arabic (a language of Islamic religion) should be wiped off from all Naira notes since the Federal Government recognizes English language as its only official language, otherwise Tiv, should also be written on the notes.

While discussing those factors that must be considered in any nation before choosing a national language, Bamgbose (1991 : 19 - 25) identified the following which are nationalism, national identity, vertical integration, acceptability, population and language development status. According to him, the factor of nationalism would make a nation to choose a LWC for political integration and efficiency functions while any choice borne out of consideration for nationalism gives premium for socio-cultural integration and authenticity by adopting an indigenous language. The logic of vertical integration according to Bamgbose points to the adoption of one or more indigenous language. On the issue of acceptability, such a language to be chosen must be acceptable to the different ethnic groups and the population factor has to do with the number of speakers of the language while the factor of language development status has to do with the stage of development of a particular language as regards its use in mass media, school subject, medium of instruction, state of scientific study, publications etc.

Bello (1999 : 144) also notes that any language chosen as a national language must reflect the entire citizenry and that incorporating the different social beliefs in one language would be an effort in futility. An assessment of the language development status carried out on 51 Nigerian languages Brann (1975) in Bamgbose (1991 : 26) revealed that Yoruba had the highest development index at 26, Hausa had 23.5 and Efik had 20. Obanya (1999 : 478) while reporting the number of written languages in Africa observes that Nigeria has 22 written languages. He also suggests that the major cities in Africa are linguistically heterogeneous and as a result, education in indigenous language cannot succeed in urban areas. That is to say, education in indigenous language would be possible in homogeneous communities. Choosing a Nigerian language as a lingua-franca may no doubt be seen as an imposition.

Ashworth (1985 : 23, 24) found that urban children do not see any need in retaining their local language and using it in their daily lives within the speech community. However, children who grow up speaking their ancestral language have not only a ready channel of communication to their elders, the language also serves as the source of cultural values and tradition including an additional

means of intellectual development and self-expression as well as acquiring a sense of group identity.

Lewis (1981 : 262) emphasizes the fact that any language plan especially in the educational system must consider attitude of those likely to be affected because according to him for any policy to succeed, it must do one of these three things:

Conform to the expressed attitudes of those involved;

Persuade those who express negative attitudes about the rightness of the policy;

Seek to remove the causes of the disagreement.

Romaine (1989 : 270 - 271) in a study on attitudes toward the nature of the link between language and cultural identity found that all respondents believe that language and culture are closely related and that without language, culture cannot be preserved. One of the respondents even stated categorically that people who do not use their language 'had lost their identity'.

The above has therefore prompted this researcher to embark on the present study to investigate the issue of ethnic identity in Nigeria and the extent to which an identity will affect the attitude of students in Lagos Secondary Schools toward evolving a lingua-franca in the country with respect to their sex, language, status and religions.

Research Questions

Which Nigerian language is preferred by the students as a lingua franca for Nigeria?

What is the general opinion of the students on the need for a lingua franca in Nigeria?

Will there be any difference between the attitudes of male and female students towards the desirability of a lingua franca in Nigeria?

Will there be any difference between the attitudes of speakers of major and minority languages towards having a lingua franca in Nigeria?

Will there be any difference between the attitudes of Christians, Moslems and Traditionalists towards having a lingua franca in Nigeria?

Methodology

Sample

The sample consisted 147 SS II students (68 males and 79 females) randomly selected from three Secondary Schools in Lagos State.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire on Ethnic Identity and Attitudes Towards Lingua-Franca (EDITOL) was constructed for data collection. It has two sections, A and B. Section A sought information on the respondents' backgrounds (tribe, linguistic, school and class etc) while section B contains items that sought information on the respondents' attitudes toward lingua franca in Nigeria.

The reliability of the instrument was established at 0.72 using the Cronbach Alpha statistical method.

1.3 Data Analysis

The analysis, was done by computing the response in percentages where necessary and by computing the mean scores and standard deviation. The differences between pairs of mean scores were assessed by the use of the t-test while ANOVA was used in testing the fifth hypothetical research question.

1.3a Research Question One

Which Nigerian language is preferred by the students as a lingua-franca for Nigeria?

Table 1.3a below shows the analysis:

Table 1.3a: Language Preferred As A Future Lingua-Franca For Nigeria

Item	Statement	English	French	Hausa	Igbo	Yoruba	My local Language	Total
21.	My language of preference is	105 (71.34)	10 (6.80)	03 (2.04)	10 (6.80)	11 (7.48)	08 (5.45)	147 (100%)
22.	My much hated language is	-	49 (33.33)	26 (19.05)	30 (20.14)	29 (19.73)	11 (7.48)	147 (100%)
23.	The language(s) I use at home	74 (50.34)	01 (0.68)	05 (3.40)	17 (11.56)	28 (19.05)	22 (14.95)	147 (100%)
24.	The major local language in my state is	15 (10.20)	04 (2.72)	12 (8.16)	35 (23.81)	50 (34.02)	31 (21.09)	147 (100%)
25.	The language I would prefer as a future lingua franca for Nigeria is	112 (76.19)	19 (12.93)	03 (2.04)	04 (2.72)	06 (4.08)	03 (2.04)	147 (100%)

From Table 1.3a above it could be seen that 112 students representing 76.19% of the sample opted for English language as a future lingua franca in Nigeria. Next to that is French which is preferred by 19 of the subjects and which represents (12.93%). Those who showed preference for local languages could be considered as being negligible. A look at item 21 also shows that 105 students (71.43) has English as their language of preference while in item 23, 74 (50.34) of them speak the language at home.

1.3b Research Question 2

What is the general opinion of the students on the need for a lingua franca in Nigeria?

Table 1.3b: General Opinion Of Subjects On The Need For Lingua-Franca In Nigeria

Statement	SA/A	%	D/SD	%	Total
I am quite familiar with the national language policy that requires every student to learn one of the three major Nigerian languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) apart from his/her mother tongue at the JSS level and any of the three at the SSS level.	125	85	22	15	147 100%
The government policy as explained in 1. above is a good one.	100	68.3	47	31.7	147
Speakers of the three major languages may see the policy as being good but I don't see it that	85	58.5	61	41.5	147 100%
What Nigeria needs is a national language as lingua franca	93	63.27	54	36.73	147 100%
For national integration, a lingua franca is needed in Nigeria.	114	77.55	33	22.45	147 100%
Introducing a lingual franca would not solve the problem of ethnic strives in Nigeria.	65	44.22	82	55.78	147 100%
Adoption of one Nigerian language as the lingua franca will break Nigeria up.	57	38.78	90	61.22	147 100%
Only a neutral language like English will be acceptable in Nigeria as a lingua franca.	117	79.59	30	20.41	147 100%
The Nigerian child needs his mother tongue (MT) as his language of instruction at all levels of education.	50	34.01	97	65.99	147 100%
One of the three major Nigerian languages should be adopted as a lingua franca, by the minorities	39	26.53	108	73.47	147 100%
Adoption of one of the major Nigerian languages as lingua- franca would be seen as an imposition by the minorities.	55	37.41	92	62.59	147 100%
Personally, I hate using any of the major Nigerian languages because this makes me feel that my language is inferior.	49	33.33	98	66.67	147 100%
I feel like speaking all the languages in Nigeria because I like feeling at home in any part of Nigeria.	130	76.87	34	23.13	147 100%
What Nigeria needs is the development of local languages as language of wider communication at local and state levels.	99	67.35	48	32.65	147 100%
I prefer speaking my local language to any of the major Nigerian languages.	92	62.59	55	37.41	147
I feel more comfortable when I communicate in my language anywhere and any time.	97	65.99	50	34.01	147 100%
Though my language is developed, I hate using it outside my local environment.	50	40.82	97	59.18	147
If my local language had been developed, I would have preferred it to any other language.	96	65.31	51	34.69	147 100%

From Table 1.3b above, 125 (85%) expressed their awareness of the national language policy as stated in item one while only a negligible number 22 (15%) are unaware of the policy. 100 of them representing 68.3% agreed that the policy is a good one while 47 (31.7%) disagreed. 93 students (63.2%) agreed that what Nigeria needs is a national language as lingua franca and 114 (77.55%) also agreed that for national integration a lingua franca is needed in Nigeria.

On the issue of whether the introduction of a lingua franca will solve the problem of ethnic strives in Nigeria 65 of them (44.22%) agreed while 90 of them (61.22%) disagreed. However, 117 (79.50%) of the respondents agreed to it that only a neutral language like English will be acceptable in Nigeria as lingua franca while only 30 of them disagreed. As a follow up of this 108 (73.47%) of them disagreed emphatically with the statement that one of Nigerian languages be adopted as a lingua franca. Most of the respondents seem to believe in the continued existence of the country as 130 of them like speaking all the languages in Nigeria in order to be able to feel at home anywhere in Nigeria. Equally, 113 of them (73.87%) like the speakers of the major Nigerian languages including other aspects of their culture. 99 of them (67.35%) share the belief in the development of local languages as Language of Wider Communication (LWC) at the local and state levels. 92 of them (62.59%) also prefer speaking in their local languages to any of the major Nigerian languages. Summarily while majority of the respondents wants a national language as lingua franca; they also believe that a neutral language like English would be a better option for a lingual franca.

Research Question Three

Will there be any significant difference between the attitudes of male and female students towards the desirability of a lingua franca in Nigeria?

Table 1.3c below presents the analysis:

Table 1.3c: Comparison of Male and Female Students' Attitudes Toward the Desirability of a Lingua Franca in Nigeria

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SL	SD	DF	Calculated t	Critical t	Decision
Male	68	38.09	56.01	6.18	145	0.89	1.96	Not significant at 0.05
Female	79	43.55	55.13	5.68				

$P > 0.05$

From table 1.3c, the calculated t of 0.89 is less than critical t value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of confidence. This indicates a no significant difference between the two variables. That is there is no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female students toward the desirability of a lingua franca in Nigeria. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

Research Question Four:

Is there any significant difference between the attitudes of speakers of major and minority languages toward having a lingua franca in Nigeria?

Table 1.3d below gives the analysis:

Table 1.3d: Comparison of Attitudes of Speakers of Major and Minority Languages toward having a Lingua franca in Nigeria

	N	Σx	X	SD	DF	Calculated t	Critical t	Decision
Major languages	97	54.21	55.89	5.99	145	0.41	1.96	Not significant at 0.05
Minority languages	50	27.79	55.48	5.56				

P > 0.05

Table 1.3d above, the calculated t of 0.41 is less than the critical t of 1.96 as a result the null hypothesis that "there will be no significant difference in the attitudes of speakers of major and minority languages toward having a lingua franca in Nigeria is therefore not rejected.

Research Question Five

Is there any significant difference between the attitudes of Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists towards having a lingua franca in Nigeria?

Table 1.3e: Summary of ANOVA on Attitudes of Religious Groups Towards a Lingua Franca in Nigeria

	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean of Squares	F	Remark
Between groups	2	19.36	9.68	0.27	Not significant
Within groups	144	5149.06	35.76		
Total	146	5168.42			

In Table 1.3e above the critical f value at (2, 144) = 19.49 is greater than the calculated f of 0.27 at 0.05 Alpha value. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the attitudes of Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists toward having a lingua franca in Nigeria is not rejected.

Discussion of Results

The study has revealed that majority of Nigeria Secondary School students believe that a national language is desirable for national integration but that a lingua franca may not solve the problem of ethnic strife in Nigeria which suggests that there must be other factors other than language that account for inter and intra ethnic wars in Nigeria of today. For instance 112 respondents (76.91%) in

Table 1.3a and 117 (79.5%) of the respondents as displayed in table 1.3b would want a neutral language like English to be the national language. In fact 108 subjects representing (73.47%) are emphatic in their resolve that no Nigeria language would be acceptable as a lingua franca as this would be seen as an imposition on other linguistic communities. These findings agree with the views of Ohasanjo and Mabogunje (1991), Tiffen (1975) in Fadelaye (1996) and Bello (1999) who believe that searching for a national language instead of making do with international language like English in Nigeria would be an effort in futility.

The fact that 92 respondents representing 62.59% prefer communicating in their local languages to those major ones as shown by item 17 in Table 1.3b indicates the same ethnocentric tendency or ethnic identity and solidarity expressed by Baba (2000) who wants his own language Fulfulde in the North to be recognized and Sanni (2000) who contends that Arabic inscriptions should either be wiped off all Naira notes or other Nigerian languages be inscribed.

For the hypothetical question, no significant difference was recorded between the attitudes of male and female students on the issue of having a lingua franca in Nigeria. It can be explained that since most of them are united in their views, although the mean score of males 56.01 is higher than that of females 55.13, there can't be any significant difference between in their attitudes. There is no significant difference between the attitudes of the speakers major and minority language speakers as indicated in Table 1.3d although the mean score of the speakers of major languages is higher than that of the minority language speakers. This shows that while speakers of the three major Nigerian languages would not want a language other than theirs to be imposed on them, speakers of the minority languages too are also on guard against linguistic imposition. The same goes with the attitudes of the religious groups. No significant difference exists in their attitudes as indicated in the ANOVA Table 1.3e. This explains further the stand of Sanni (2000) who sees the Arabic inscription on Naira notes as a ploy to impose Arabic language and religion on other religious and linguistic groups.

1.5 Conclusion

From this study, one can draw a number of conclusions. In the first place, it is evident that the various ethnic groups are sensitive to the issue of lingua franca. While most ethnic groups believe that a lingua franca would have aided in bringing about national integration, none of the groups is ready to allow the imposition of any of the indigenous languages.

Speakers of the minority groups would want their languages to be developed like those of the major Nigerian languages as most of them feel comfortable to communicate in their own languages anytime and anywhere.

In the light of the above, this researcher is of the belief that any search for a national language being chosen as a lingua franca should be dropped due to the emotive nature of the issue. However, there is the need for the government at the

ous levels to set the machinery for developing all the undeveloped languages nation. In addition to that the Language of Wider Communication (LWC) at local government level can be identified and developed to the status of language of instruction and a teaching subject. This could also be done at both states and regional levels. It will not be out of place if such languages are as languages of instruction for all the levels of education at the local state regional levels.

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