

Globalization and Minority Language Loss in Public Tertiary Institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria

¹Bassey Ene Effiom, ²Agba Linus Agba

^{1,2}Chief Lecturer, Department of English, School of Languages, Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa-Nigeria

Abstract - This paper argues that minority language and cultural loss in Nigeria did not begin with globalization, as it was, but traceable to a creeping process where colonial attrition and annexation of indigenous cultures began. The heightened perspective of cultural language loss emerged in the wake of the globalization wind which ushered in a new social milieu characterized by unlimited access to all people, all places and all situations, a condition of global inter-connectivity. The paper aims at unravelling the overall perspectives of minority language loss among students' categories in public tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. The problem of identification is pronged on the recognition that most youths in the society are placing less value on their indigenous cultural values including their mother tongue. This trend is obviously viewed as the possible reason for arrant behavioural patterns among the younger generations of our society and is seen as a malady that should be curbed or controlled for the essence of a better tomorrow. The background explored the various paraphernalia of the overt expression of this cultural alienation by the youths particularly at the tertiary institutions level when they exercise maximum levels of independence. The review was carried out based on such thematic headings as general view of issues pertaining to linguistic loss or extinction, content of linguistic loss by minority groups, the basis of globalization and linguistics loss and the inherent issues/perspectives of linguistics extinction in historical contexts. Under methodology, field enquiry design was adopted, a multistage sampling scheme was used to draw a sample of 300, Indigenous Language Proficiency Test (ILPT) using local guides and a well-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. This data was then analyzed using the Chi-square statistical technique at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed the values of $x^2_{calculated} = 103.058$, $x^2_{tabulated} = 32.6705$, at $(r - 1) * (c - 1) = (4 - 1) * (8 - 1) = 21$ Degree of Freedom (DF) and 0.05 level of significance. Since $x^2_{calculated}(103.058)$ is greater than $x^2_{tabulated}(32.6705)$, we therefore reject the null hypothesis H_0 in favour of the alternative hypothesis H_1 . Impliedly, the data provided sufficient evidence to adjudged that there is significant variation in the impact of

globalization on the minority language loss of students in tertiary institution in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Globalization, Minority Language, Cultural loss, Tertiary Institution students.

1. Introduction/ Background

European colonial incursion into Africa Nigeria in particular, ushered in a new phase of cultural orientation. The entire gamut of the peoples' cultural milieu was transformed. Language being the purveyor of cultural display suffered more of the onslaught of this change.

In Nigeria, English language became the lingua franca (official language) of the country. Through language gerrymandering, native or mother tongues became less fashionable and appealing to the new generation of youths that were tutored in western education. To further worsen the cultural disorientation approach, vernacular was banned in classrooms and schools in minority language districts while in majority language domains such as Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and others it formed part of the curricular content of schools. This was the fundamental starting point of linguistic disembeddedness among the minority folks in our educational systems that culminated in the present state of our linguistic and overall [17].

In line with the above, [15] noted that the present education, legal and power structures reflect western ideas and philosophies. Trailing this perspective is the assumption that the values and ideologies of the global north will provide a suitable framework for the new knowledge economics of the developing Global south [17]. This tendency is actualized not just in the language identity loss but in the entire life modes of most youths such as style of dressing, 'hairdo', music choice and the overall consumerism and personality of these young fellows.

The magnitude to which western life ideals have permeated the minority groups in the developing global south is what [11] called westernization or macdonalization of Society. Today in many towns and domestic environments many youths are bereft of any good knowledge of their mother

tongue. The 'I no grow at home' syndrome is a common phraseology among them when they are accosted.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Language is the bastion of life and sustainable existence. It is the foundation of precepts which engenders the basis of concept formation which inculcates meaning to environmental perception [7]. The source further noted that linguistic identities underlie the essence of individual 'Geographies' which explains the basis of culture and environment. Every society ascribes meaning to life from the standpoint of existential realities.

In essence, meaningful human social and mental development demands a clear appreciation of 'mother tongue' which is at the background of Milieu appreciation. Therefore, in order to properly understand perspectives of others, one must of essence begin by adequate evaluation of his own perspective.

This proposed inquiry is saddled with the concern to clearly unravel the extent and direction of native linguistic alienation among students of tertiary institution in the state and to also examine ways by which this orientation is beneficial or otherwise to their individual social and academic prowess. Alongside recommendations for appropriate modes of reversal will form parts of the justification for the undertaking?

1.2 Justification

Language is the hallmark of all human endeavors. It is the vehicle of social interaction at all levels. Without language there will be no communication and life will be meaningless. Language provides life codes and symbolism which gives direction to every human activity.

The dire necessity and imperatives of this study derive from the fact that linguistic extinction of minorities will lead eventually to loss of cultural identifies and uniqueness. The notion of "topophilia" or "land of birth" will be abandoned if attention is not paid to the current tendency of abandoning one's "mother tongue".

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study is primed by the following objectives

- i. To investigate the students level of appreciation of the value of their mother tongue or native culture.
- ii. To examine the extent to which minority language extinction has occurred among the subjects under investigation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 An overview

Language is an important facet of culture. Impliedly concerning linguistic extinction or cultural extinction, Social anthropologist has vigorously investigated the overall trend of cultural annihilation in several societies. In most cases contact between the larger culture and a minority culture will of essence lead to a situation of the larger culture dominating the minority one. In other words the large overwhelms the minority culture leading to an eventual extinction of the minority. From existing findings and/ or reports, it is the younger generations that are less resistant to change.

2.2 Antecedents of cultural/ linguistic loss

[18], in his review of modernization problem in independent Africa reported on how linguistic assimilation can be employed as an instrument to displace the existing indigenous language. He said in West Africa, Creole and pidgin have been developing and spreading to displace the original native dialects. This provides a clue to the antecedents of mother tongue displacement in the western coast of Africa where Nigeria belongs.

British imperialism introduced English language as a medium of communication in all spheres of Nigerian life. Initially, the language assimilation process was rather slow until relatively recently when the upsurge in 'globalization' drive has led to the whole- sale transformation of life styles reflecting the global current which is couched on the concept of "globalization".

[9] had tended to lend colour to the phenomenon of globalization by saying, "Globalization can be seen as revolutionary trend which is systematically interactive phases among nations by breaking down barriers in the area of culture, commerce, communication and several fields of endeavor, In a similar explanation, [4] held that "Globalization implies the compression of the world as a whole and has such products as emergence of global division of labour and a deregulated world economy.

[15], believes that globalization began in the west and therefore it is their ideas, ideologies, values and lifestyles that are promoted and evangelized throughout the rest of the world. Thus, according to the source, dominant culture tends to supersede all others.

It therefore follows that the global good is taken into account, as long as the "global" that is being referred to means the dominant culture. This creates what is known as mono-culture, one ideology, one culture and a homogenous pool

where society resides [15]. In this sense the dominant society uses technology in facilitating its cultural evangelization process, actions which constitutes the tenet of a universal Global culture or Mc Donalization of society,[15].

2.3 Globalization and language loss

Social Anthropologists and others involved in ethnographic sciences have vigorously investigated the roots, process and patterns of cultural loss among indigenous people in different parts of the world. Their findings reveal that the process of cultural/ linguistic loss is intricate and tortuous.

Evidences of these investigations were reported by a group of scholars who worked on the native Amazonian of Brazil in the early forties and fifties.(Murphy and [8], in his findings stressed the imminent loss of north American Indian languages, values and material culture to gain public support from the majority immigrants and salvage Ethnography. Following Boas thesis, the concept of "acculturation", was invented, [8].

2.4 Acculturation came to be known as the loss of the culture of minority groups

Acculturation is the incorporating of another culture or alien lifestyle to the neglect of one's culture. This tendency could lead to the loss of a minority culture and the promotion of a major/influential culture. This trend is said to have played a pivotal role in cultural anthropology because the effect represents the irreversible loss of humanity's heritage and diversity, [14], [6].

Acculturation has taken on varied explanations over time but currently the term connotes the loss of culture of minority group and its replacement by the culture of majority group [13]. The finding of the group of scholars [8]who worked on the native Amazonians revealed in part that acculturation has been pervasive among the native Amazonians which led [13],to state that the "Mundurucú" society of Brazil "were moving to its demise" and concluded by blaming "the technology of industrial world" for ultimately destroying Mundurucú society.

This opinion blends properly with the context of our society today where globalization fever has gripped both the young and old but more seriously our youths.

This also agrees with [17], who maintains that "There is an assumption that the values and ideologies of the "global North" will provide a suitable framework for the new knowledge economies of the developing "Global South" [15] commenting on the negative impact of globalization held that "Miss-representation, stereotyping and the risk of loss of

cultural property rights are the consequences of unmonitored access brought by globalization.

One area that is pervading with regards to the influence of globalization is the shift of heightened interest in English language Education Worldwide [2]. Furthermore, it is stated that in response to the emergence of English as a World wide-linking global language, an increasing number of schools have stepped up English Language requirement even at under graduate levels.

2.5 Issues/ perspectives on linguistic loss or extinction

The basic tenets of issues and perspectives on language extinction relate to elements such as the importance of mother language, sustainability of indigenous language, language policy issues, language revitalization and so on and so forth. Vigorous studies have been carried out along these lines and the facts are prodigiously extrapolated to different fields.

It has been reported that the 20th century linguistic rights has led to the multilingual policies of many countries, while some are maintaining the policy of monolingualism such as Brazil and Turkey,[1].

The true perspective of language extinction process is gleaned from the report by [12], who assumed that around half of the world's languages have expired in the last five hundred years and that as many as 60 to 90% of the world's approximately 6, 900 languages may be at risk of extinction within the next hundred years. Arguments are ongoing concerning what is the most decisive factor in language extinction. On this note linguists emphasize some internal and external factors which lead to minority language loss such as politics, economic forces, religion, demographic factors, mass media, Social identifiers, ecology and natural disasters, [16].

From the political standpoint language policies have caused the death and /or loss of certain languages such as the Naviageo whose language has been relegated by the white colonialists [16]. On a similar note [10] informed that there are just two fluent war speakers, spoken in Western Australia, and that a dozen of other people can speak ura today and that Marie is the last person enjoying Eyal, spoken in Alaska and that Tefvik Esare is assumed to be last speaker of Ubykh language in Western Caucasus [10]. Accordingly, [16] reported that Quechua language speakers in Peru decreased from 31 percent in 1940 to 11 percent in 1982. And deriving from Ethnologic evidence there are less than 450,000 Aymaram speakers living in Peru today.

The solution to the minority language relegation led to the Universal Declaration on Language rights of 1996. The declaration stated interalia, 'language are collectively

constituted and are made available within a community for individual use as tools of cohesivism, identification and communication and creative expression, [16]. This declaration spurred the establishment of revitalization programmes in many countries whose results were eventually observed to be less significantly effective. Thus,[16] went on to state categorically that there is a difference between languages that are learnt at home and that are learnt at schools and that because socio-economic issues have equally been reported in language regression or progression.

A case in point is the Irish language which was revitalized following its independence from England Irish language was recognized even in the European Union, but according to [3],following the immigration to Ireland after the development of the economy. Many English speakers returned to Ireland and so Irish language was undermined by English.

Several steps have been employed in Language progress or regression such as "Linguistic understanding and multi-Cultural approaches" and so on. The bottom line remains that, willy-nilly, language acculturation, language endangerment and language extinction are occurring 'in exorable' different societies leading to the loss of unique identities of peoples.

3. Methodology of Study

3.1 Study Design

The design of this study is field enquiry design aimed at investigating the degree of culture loss premised on native language incompetence by students of tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

3.2 Area of Study

The study area refers to the entire domain of Cross River State, Nigeria Cross River State is one of the 36 geopolitical entities that make up the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The State is one of the States that make up the South-South geo political zone of Nigeria. The State has two broad ecological biomass, the forest biometo the South and the grassland/savannas biome to the north. The State is hearth of multi ethnics' territory and a corresponding multi linguistic mosaic of people.

The tertiary institutions under investigation are the Federal and State-owned institution existing in the area.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population comprises all final year tertiary institution students at the level of under graduate.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

Multi Stage Sampling Scheme was adopted in drawing a sample size of 299 students as follows.

- i. Area or cluster sampling involving the selection of campuses on Zonal basis.

The overall selection involved institutions namely:

- ii. University of Calabar and Cross River State College of Education from the South.
- iii. Institute of Management and College of Nursing from the Central and,
- iv. Federal College of Education and Faculty of Management Sciences from the North.

3.4.1 Purposive sampling

This involves selection of one final year class and selection of indigenous under graduates from each campus/institution.

3.4.2 Stratified sampling

This focused on selection of male/female from each class already sampled based on equal ratio of the respondents:

3.5 Instrument(s) for data collection

Instrument used for data collection was,

- i. Structured questionnaires for languages ability test

3.6 Method/procedure for data collection

The method involved

- ii. Pre-field reconnaissance visits to establish contacts or rapport with the authorities and subjects.
- iii. Indigenous Languages Proficiency Test (ILPT) using local guides.
- iv. Questionnaire administration and data collection.

3.7 Method of data analysis

Data was analyzed using chi-square X^2 statistical techniques.

3.8 Data presentation

The field data collected is presented in table 1below for analysis using the Chi-square (x^2) statistical techniques.

The instrument employed in eliciting information corresponding from the respondents is the structured questionnaire which was prepared using the four point liker scale rating such as: A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree,

D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree. These options formed the rating scales which are presented on the right axis of the table 1, while the parameters of language loss are on the left as shown in the table. The number of respondents engaged in the interview Three Hundred drawn from the three representative tertiary institutions in the area.

Statement hypothesis: The hypothesis was slated in the null form as:

Ho: there is no significant variation in the impact of globalization on the minority languages of students of Tertiary Institutions in Cross River State Nigeria.

Table 1: Minority language loss among students of Tertiary Institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria

S/N	LANGUAGE LOSS PARAMETERS BY STUDENTS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN CROSS RIVER STATE	RESPONDENTS RESPONSES				TOTAL
		A	SA	D	SD	
1.	Are you in the habit of combination English languages with native language?	76	88	75	60	299
2.	Have you adequate grasps of idioms and proverbs in your native language?	40	62	101	95	298
3.	Can you hear and understand English Language but cannot speak your native language?	86	59	69	82	296
4.	Is it more convenient to you with the use of English rather than your mothers tongue?	65	85	80	66	296
5.	Beside English language are you also proficient in another language?	46	63	86	99	294
6.	Do you possess some elements of distaste for your mothers' language?	49	54	89	104	296
7.	Can you speak your native language fluently?	74	76	94	54	298
8.	Do you come from a background where English language is more used than your native language?	80	96	69	53	298

Data was analyzed in line with the formulated hypothesis above using the Chi-square statistical techniques.

Table 2: Chi-square of the impact of globalization on minority language loss among students' of tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria

O_{ij}	E_{ij}	$(O_{ij} - E_{ij})$	$(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2$	$\frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$
76	68	8	64	0.941
88	76	12	144	1.894
75	80	-5	25	0.313
60	74	-14	196	2.648
40	46	-6	36	0.782
62	52	10	100	1.923
101	72	29	841	11.68
95	79	16	256	3.241
86	67	19	361	5.388
59	76	-17	289	3.802
69	80	-11	121	1.512
82	74	8	64	0.864
65	67	-2	4	0.059
85	76	9	81	1.065
80	80	0	0	0.00
66	74	-8	64	0.865
46	66	-20	400	6.060
63	75	-12	144	1.92
86	79	7	49	0.620
99	73	26	676	9.2602
49	67	-18	324	4.836
54	76	-22	484	6.368
89	80	-9	81	1.013
104	74	30	900	12.16
74	67	7	49	0.731
76	76	0	0	0.00
94	80	14	196	2.45
54	74	-20	400	5.405
80	67	13	169	2.522
96	76	20	400	5.263
69	80	-11	121	1.513
53	74	-21	441	5.960
χ^2				103.058

Decision rule:

This data was then analyzed using the Chi-square statistical technique at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed the values of $\chi^2_{calculated} = 103.058$, $\chi^2_{tabulated} = 32.6705$, at $(r - 1) * (c - 1) = (4 - 1) * (8 - 1) = 21$ Degree of Freedom (DF) and 0.05 level of significance. Since $\chi^2_{calculated}$ (103.058) is greater than $\chi^2_{tabulated}$ (32.6705), we therefore reject the null hypothesis H_0 in favour of the alternative hypothesis H_1 . Impliedly, the data provided sufficient evidence to adjudged that there is significant variation in the impact of globalization on the minority language loss of students in tertiary institution in Cross River State, Nigeria.

4. Results/ Findings

From the result of the Chi-square analysis carried out, the value of $\chi^2_{calculated} = 103.058$ while that of $\chi^2_{tabulated} = 32.6705$, at $(r - 1) * (c - 1) = (4 - 1) * (8 - 1) = 21$ Degree of Freedom (DF) and 0.05 level of significance. Since $\chi^2_{calculated}$ (103.058) is greater than $\chi^2_{tabulated}$ (32.6705), we reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept the alternative hypothesis H_1 , which is an indication that the data has provided enough evidence to adjudged that there is significant variation or differences between globalization and the minority language loss of students in tertiary institution in Cross River State, Nigeria.

In other words, the impact rate on individual subjects is divergent or near heterogeneous. This findings is conformal with existing studies already carried out with regards to minority languages loss of persons.[18], while postulating on ‘‘modernization problems in independent Africa’’ apathy reported on how linguistic assimilation could be employed as an instrument to displace existing indigenous language.

Furthermore, he reported how in West Africa Creole and pidgin have been spreading to displace the original native dialects.

In reality, the above expression tend support the existing trends in language development in many dialects in South Eastern Nigeria. In truth, Pidgin English has significantly displaced and corrupted the native languages expressiveness among the aged and youths in parts of Cross River, Akwa Ibom, both in Nigeria and most areas in South East Nigeria. It is dominantly the language of commerce and communication in different circles. Poignantly enough, even the highly educated ones have fallen victims of the use of grafted linguistic expressions in their daily interactions. Among majority of the students of tertiary institutions in Cross River

State and beyond, correct sentences usage and a free flow regular of English diction is a great problem.

Other studies conducted by social anthropologist on ethno Sciences led to the conclusion, that the process of cultural linguistic is intricate and tortuous, [8]. The intricacy maybe a function of several parameters such as age, sex education and so on. From the existing findings above the near homogeneity in the linguistic defect among the students category may be explained based on the gross similarity in their age and value systems. Most youths and other educated adults to day prefer western ideas and life styles while the aged and less educated are culture cohesive.

The above agrees with certain current findings regarding the globalization trends and changing world perspectives. In this sense [17] maintains that there is an assumption that the values and the ideologies of the “global North” will provide a suitable framework for the new knowledge economy of the developing “global south”. This introduces the North–South dichotomy, the center-periphery model or the North –South divide. This new orientation is the basic explanation for a shift in value orientation by the aiding economics of the “South” towards western values or priorities.

This trends led [2] to state that “one area that is pervading with regards to the influence of globalization is the shift in the heightened interest in English language education worldwide.

This pervading influence of English language over the native tongue is clearly reflected in the patterns of response rating by the students on table 1 above. The patterns show that majority of the subjects engage in linguistic grafting; a good number of still proficient in symbolic expressions such as idioms and other allieous; a significant but percentage would hear and understand but may not speak their dialect and reasonable number finds it more pertinent to use English than their own native tongues.

Running through the entire gamut of the parameters featured in the interview procedure there is a glaring drift of interest from mother tongue to English language. This overall drift of interest may not be merely speculated on basic allure of the English diction but rather other internal and external factors may be responsible such as politics, economic force , religion , demographic factors, mass media, social identifiers” ecology and natural disasters [18].

Overall, this new orientation and drift of interest have found expressions on the assertions made by some notable scholars in the field. This trend led [15] to believe that globalization began in the West and therefore it is their ideas, ideologies, values and life styles that are promoted and

evangelized. In this sense, the dominant culture tends to supersede all others. [15] further asserted that what follows is that the ‘;global good’ is taken into account, provided what is global refers to the dominant culture that is [11] cultural universalization or westernization or rather still McDonalization of society which involves whole exportation of American culture to different parts of the world, hence McDonalization is synonymous with Americanization of society.

5. Conclusion

The entire world is being rapidly drawn into one global world economy in the current phenomenon of globalization thereby producing a universal global culture leading to loss of individual cultural identities. This trend is viewed by some scholars as significant loss of humanities and heritage.

Linguistic extinction is one area where there is visible imprint of cultural loss, (instance already cited in literature). Unless there is pragmatic reversal of this trend through nationalistic and otherwise multilingual programme, society may eventually land back of the pre-tower of Babel stage of existence where conspiracy against God will re surface. We can see the emergence of ‘antichrists’ in our world of excess civilization.

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