

RESOURCE UTILIZATION IN EDUCATION: USING IGBO RADIO PROGRAMMES TO IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT: *There are approximately 7000 languages in existence (UNESCO, 2003). Nigerian languages are put at about five hundred and twenty one (521) (Crozier and Blench, 1992; Ikegbunam, 2010). Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are considered the country's major languages due to their having speakers in excess of 18 million each. Many Igbo families have settled in various parts of Nigeria where they work and raise children. This puts pressure on many Igbo families who increasingly bring up their children to speak English rather than Igbo. This study looked into utilization of Igbo radio programmes to improve the knowledge and positive attitude of Igbo secondary school students towards their indigenous language and culture. It aimed at producing some packaged Igbo radio software based on Nigerian secondary school Igbo curriculum which was used to teach some given topics in the class and also be broadcast on the radio station. Purposive sample of four hundred (400) Igbo secondary students were drawn from ten secondary schools in Lagos State on the basis that they offer Igbo language as one of their school subjects and are using radio facilities in addition to conventional methods of teaching and learning. Instrument for data collection was questionnaire on attitude and motivation of students on the use of Igbo radio programmes to improve their knowledge of Igbo language. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics- frequency and percentage.*

KEYWORDS: Indigenous Language, Radio Programmes, Igbo Language And Culture ,Native Language Attitude.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is always at the centre of existence for any society, developing or developed and where the flow of information and the channels of communication are not adequate for the tasks of national needs, they must be built up to meet such needs as educating, informing, teaching, entertaining and changing the behavior of the masses. Modern media especially radio has been used due to its mass appeal to bring knowledge to millions of people all over the world. For example, on his assessment of the role of mass media communication in developing country, Diobu (1964) said that media communication is the prime mover of national development. On a worldwide scale, it is the medium of radio that has been man's most potent communication

innovation since the development of writing. This is the reason why radio is good if not the best, communicating medium to interact with the masses.

Igbo language which remains a crucial aspect of the life of Igbo native speakers of South Eastern Nigeria has to be built up to the level whereby students who are Igbo native speakers would improve on their linguistic and communicative competencies especially in the areas of idioms and proverbs, innovations in the numeracy system, meta-language and so on, traditions especially those cultural norms and traditions pertaining to other dialects of Igboland different from theirs.

In fact, the areas of improvement encompass all those aspects of Igbo language and cultural heritage which would help them to interact fully and freely with their fellow Igbo students and other Igbo people whenever the need arises. The focus of this study is to investigate whether the utilization of radio programmes as a resource teaching aid would help to promote the knowledge of Igbo language and cultural heritage among Igbo native students resident in Lagos State, Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of using radio programmes to communicate to the people

In Africa, probably the most useful mass medium next to simplified forms of print and the poster is radio. According to Onabanjo (2002), radio is portable, accessible without electricity, relatively economical and almost universally available. Of course, large percentage of all state of the society access radio as a matter of course on a regular basis for entertainment, news, weather information, cultural programmes and regular service.

According to Anzalone (1997), radio particularly increases access to and improve the quality of instruction to the listener/audience, and access to these modern mass media (radio, television, films) is also linked to individual modernity, hence behavioural change of the audience. Koike (2000) opined that educational radio programmes was basically established as part of a formal school system, however, it may be outside the classroom and yet remain instructional. Jamison and Mc Anay (1978) buttressed this when they remarked that the characteristics of using radio broadcast to communicate to the people could be said that they are message – centred; do not attempt to teach complicated concepts or behavior, but rather to motivate and get access to modest amount of information, and one often geared to some simple behavioural change.

Koike (2000) asserts that the use of radio programmes on indigenous language has implications for curriculum development, course construction, teacher training in a correctly balanced teaching system. He further explains that radio programmes however, will be used to improve knowledge when they have a unique contribution to the learning process. Most importantly, using radio programmes to teach will no longer be isolated from the conventional methods having to justify its use and its own merits.

Atamane (2006) suggests that if appropriately exploited, radio can bring authentic content to the classroom especially in the environment where it may not be easy to meet and communicate with native speakers of the language.

Using Radio Programmes to Influence Attitudes and Motivation

Attitude and motivations are strongly implicated in all modes of learning and behavioural change. Silverman (1978) defines attitudes as a general term that refers to driven behaviour that seeks to fulfill a need. He adds that motivational traits involve needs, attitudes and interest. Raffini (1993) agrees with Silverman that attitudes and motivation are crucial element in all learning and behavioural changes, including those learning gotten from mass media. Gardener et al (1994) opined that effort, desire and affect are three elements of motivation. Effort refers to the time spent studying the language especially, through media and the drive of the learner/listener. Desire indicates how much the learner wants to become proficient in the language, and affect illustrates the learner's emotional reactions with regard to that language being studied.

OAU cited in Njaraoge (2000), emphasized the need for restoring and perfecting our languages for education and broadcasting. Vernacular broadcasting in Africa (Nigeria inclusive) has been thought to have development potentials as all messages disseminated in local dialects have the additional advantage of being able to endow message with warmth and humanity. Salawu (2006) suggests that using radio broadcasting in indigenous language to communicate to the target audience is more preferable and can yield the desired result more than the other media. Olaleju (2002) concludes that the best of the beauty of the indigenous language is merely displayed in the media especially in some radio programmes. Thus, literature says less than what one would like to know, this is because our native languages are presently being forced to disintegrate even in the school setting, with limited media both print and electronics. This Salawu (2004) concurs with when he asserts that

... For the survival of indigenous African language and culture (Igbo language inclusive) there must be a deliberate and sincere effort to learn and teach the language in its proper form both formally and informally.....

Salawu (2003) agreed that governments of Africa, private on natives especially the media have an important role to play in this. The media in turn will be helped in this bid if serious attention is paid to our indigenous languages and the indigenous media.

The future of every people lies with their children. The future of the essence of Africa (Nigeria inclusive) lies with the children, the young stars of Africa. While we expose our children to the wisdom of the North, couched in its (Norths) language and culture, the children of Africa must also be made to appreciate the essence of our being as contained in our language and culture.

Conceptual Framework

There is an inter-relationship between the media (radio) and the society. As the society impacts on the media – their nature and content – so do the media reflect the society and impact on it. There is of course a notable mutual gain between communication and development. Therefore, this work is guided by the conceptual framework of using indigenous languages in mass media

communication. Mc Namara (cited in Salawu,2006) opined that there are myriad studies which confirmed the effectiveness of radio programmes using indigenous language for instructional purposes. So, it does not matter the level of corrosion or corruption a native language has suffered as a result of the influence of a foreign language, the native language still remains the language that speaks in the idiom of the people. Thus, Salawu (2006) supported that without using the language of the people, development will only be communicated at the people, not to the people, and not with the people. Salawu (2004) echoed similar thoughts when he stressed that the media through which the communication is done cannot be important specifically, the mass media that use indigenous languages are important for the purpose of information, mobilization and continuity (survival of the languages and culture). Thus, the language in which a development message would be disseminated is a very important aspect of the language treatment which will help to prevent that language from being at the verge of extinction. He further posited that the indigenous language of any community is the best suited for the purpose of conveying any message, whatever to the said community.

So, based on the above conceptual framework, using radio programmes to improve the knowledge of Igbo language and cultural heritage among the student Igbo native speakers resident in Lagos should achieve positive results. This is because they would understand the message being conveyed to them better since it will help to change the non-challant attitude of some of them towards their indigenous language. Hence, it would help to make them develop positive attitudes towards Igbo language and cultural heritage and enable them to communicate in Igbo whenever the need arises.

Statement of Problem

Student Igbo native speakers resident in Lagos face the problem of diminished opportunities to use their indigenous language and to improve on their knowledge of the language and its cultural heritage. This is because the language of communication in the important domains of work, government bureaucracy, education, commerce and industry is mainly English. Many students of Igbo origin now in Lagos do not have the opportunity of studying Igbo language and cultural norms in their schools. Due to lack of manpower, some schools in Lagos are not teaching Igbo language and culture in their schools. Students of Igbo origin therefore lack knowledge in certain important areas such as vocabulary, myths and legends, cultural norms and practices etc. Even some of these students who are studying Igbo language in the secondary schools still have gaps in all those areas. Again, the student Igbo native speakers develop non-challant attitude towards their language because they are residing in Lagos – a place far away from their natural homeland, where language of the environment or official language (English) becomes the language of communication and prestigious language.

This study therefore looked into utilization of mass media – radio to improve/promote knowledge of Igbo language among Igbo secondary school students resident in Lagos.

Significance of Study

In terms of usefulness, this research will create awareness that there is room to use radio programmes as a lifelong learning tool to broaden, deepen and update knowledge of Igbo language and culture among Igbo secondary school students resident in Lagos State, Nigeria.

It will make them participate fully and belong to the society by educating and informing them in those areas such as politics, religious issues, HIV/AIDS and other adolescent health matters which are current concerns of the society.

Also, with information, education, and communication of modern trends like sports, music, drama, computer, telephones, being communicated to them in Igbo language through radio, they can now begin to appreciate their native language and cultural heritage better.

Purpose of Study/Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out:-

The extent to which utilization of radio programmes will assist Igbo secondary school students (student Igbo native speakers) to improve on their knowledge of Igbo language and culture;

The extent to which the use of radio programmes in Igbo language will motivate student Igbo native speakers better to learn the language.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. To what extent will the utilization of Igbo radio programmes assist the student Igbo native speakers to promote/improve on their knowledge of Igbo language and culture?
2. To what extent will the Igbo radio programmes motivate the student Igbo native speakers better to learning the language?

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This method was deemed the most appropriate design for this study because it involves selecting chosen samples from a large population to discover the relative incidence distribution and interrelations of some important variables.

Population and Sample

Two education districts were chosen out of six education districts in Lagos State, Nigeria and ten schools were purposively chosen as the samples for the study. They were chosen because they were doing Igbo language as one of their school subjects and they also use radio facilities to complement their conventional strategy of teaching and learning of Igbo language. A total of 400 (four hundred) students participated in the study. They comprise student Igbo native speakers of mixed sex from the ten schools chosen purposively from two educational districts of Lagos State.

Instrumentation

A Questionnaire titled Using Igbo Radio Programmes to improve knowledge of Indigenous language and a checklist constructed by the researchers was the major instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: A and B. Section A contains the demographic information of the respondents while section B is a close ended questions designed in line with the objective of the study.

Validation of Instruments

The face validity of the instrument was carried out by experts/colleagues in the field; thereafter a pilot study was later conducted with 40 students from two different schools which were not part of the study group to revalidate the instrument. With respect to reliability of the instrument, cronbach alpha method was used and the reliability yielded a coefficient of 0.85.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher undertook a familiarization visit to the schools used for the study with an identification letter duly signed by her principal supervisor. She met the principals of the schools and acquaints them with the purpose of the study and also seeks their consents and cooperation in using their JSS 2 Igbo students for the study. During the visit, the researcher solicited the assistance and support of their Igbo classroom teachers in fixing the date for the commencement of the Igbo radio broadcast lessons.

The researcher prepared package of talks/lessons based on the schemes of work of secondary school Upper Basic II on Igbo Language which was also broadcast on the air. Before the commencement of the study, the subjects (the students involved) were advised to listen ardently to Igbo educational broadcast on air every Saturday for five (5) weeks. The above procedures were possible with the aid and helpful support of the classroom Igbo language teachers who always gave their students a sort of revision lessons after each broadcast lesson to concretize their learning.

Again, broadcast of those educational Igbo programmes on air was also possible because the researcher was working with a radio station and was the producer as well as the presenter of those educational Igbo radio programmes. Again, those Igbo radio programmes are also station based programmes. That is to say, the station has already allotted time for those programmes to be aired. So whether there is sponsorship or not the station – Bond 92.9 FM of Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, Ikoyi Lagos – Nigeria must broadcast those Igbo educational programmes.

The student questionnaire on the impact of Igbo radio programmes on the knowledge of student Igbo native speakers was administered to them at the end of 5 weeks. It was designed to gather background information, attitude and motivation of the students concerning the utilization of Igbo radio programmes to improve their knowledge of Igbo language and culture.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed with descriptive statistics involving the use of frequency counts and percentage ratio.

RESULTS

s/no		Yes	%	No	Percentage
1.	I do listen to Igbo programmes	388	97%	12	3%
2.	Igbo radio programmes make me to develop more interest and positive attitude towards Igbo language.	392	98%	8	2%
3.	Listening to Igbo radio programmes improves my knowledge of Igbo language and culture.	360	90%	40	10%
4.	Igbo radio programmes motivate me to use standard Igbo while conversing instead of just my Igbo dialect.	300	75%	100	25%
5.	My school allows the use of Igbo language in my school environment.	160	40%	240	60%
6.	The lessons taught in Igbo radio programmes are suitable and interesting.	380	95%	20	5%
7.	My teacher's explanation after the radio programme makes me to understand the topic more.	300	75%	100	25%
8.	I would like our teacher to be using Igbo radio programmes always in the class.	360	90%	40	10%
9.	Igbo radio programme improves my knowledge of Igbo cultural norms and values.	340	85%	60	15%

From the table above, almost all the students listened to Igbo radio programme with the exception of 12 students that constitute 3% of the sample. Eight students disagreed that Igbo radio programmes helped them to develop interest and positive attitude towards Igbo language while the remaining three hundred and Ninety two (392) agrees with the statement. Three hundred (300) students agreed that listening to Igbo radio programmes motivated them to converse using standardized Igbo instead of their dialects while one hundred(100) students disagrees with the students.

Two hundred and forty (240) students confessed that their school environment do not support the use of Igbo language while one hundred and sixty (160) students said yes to the statement. On the issue of Igbo radio programmes being interesting, three hundred and eighty respondents said yes while the remaining twenty (20) said No to it. Three hundred respondents agreed and confessed that their teacher's explanation after the radio programmes make them to understand the topic more and the remaining one hundred (100) said No to the statement. Concerning their response on the issue of preferring their teacher to be using radio programmes always, only forty (40) respondents said No while the remaining three hundred and sixty (360) affirmed positively to the question.

Lastly, Three hundred and forty respondents agreed and said Yes that Igbo radio programmes improve their knowledge of Igbo cultural norms and values.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results with respect to the use of Igbo radio programmes to improve knowledge of Igbo language and culture among secondary school Igbo students native speakers show that the 98 percent of the students developed more interest on Igbo language, while 90 percent of the students improved on their knowledge of Igbo language and culture through listening to Igbo radio programmes. The findings are in agreement with some earlier studies which confirmed the effectiveness of mother tongue or indigenous language (L1) for instructional purposes (Mc Namara, 1965; Klein, 1994; Okombo and Rubgumya, 1996). They opined that it does not matter the level of corrosion or corruption a native language has suffered as a result of the influence of a foreign language, the (native) language still remains the language that speaks in the idiom of the people. Also it agrees with Salawu (2006), who supported that without using the language of the people, development will only be communicated at the people; not to the people, and not with the people.

On the issue of using Igbo radio programmes to motivate and change the non-challant attitude of Igbo students native speakers towards their language, the results shows that 75 percent and 85 percent of the sample were able to comprehend and enjoy the lessons taught during the Igbo radio programmes. Also through listening to Igbo radio programmes, Seventy five percent of the samples were motivated to use standard Igbo during conversation instead of their dialects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made in order to improve the knowledge of Igbo language and culture using Igbo radio programmes.

- i) Situational analysis: This has to be made about the school environment because some basic information are essential like time allotted for the teaching and learning of the language, qualified personnel (Igbo teacher), social and cultural background of the learners, parental expectations and requirements, values and attitude, resources for learning, etc. However, it should be borne in mind that this stage of situational analysis is very demanding in terms of preparations, provision of support, monitoring the extent of advancement of the programme, personnel and equipment available and how to coordinate the programme to achieve the desired result. Even at the radio station, the situation analysis would be considered in terms of financial /sponsorship support and airtime allocation, for this is the major conspicuous challenges in the broadcasting of radio programmes. For this study, there was provision of support –it is a station based programme and so airtime is allocated to it whether there is sponsorship or not.
- ii) There must be some set of objectives and goals in focus, the broadcasting station –Igbo service Unit, Bond Fm 92.9 Radio Nigeria, Ikoyi Lagos- has some objectives for indulging into such programme and so are striving to accomplish them, that also prompted the researcher to indulge into this study. Some of these objectives are include to motivate the secondary school students improve on their knowledge of Igbo language and culture; to inculcate in them the need to preserve our language and protect it from extinction; etc. These objectives however will help in the selection of the content.

- iii) The method of presentation/instructional strategy is very important. This entails the means by which the subject matter is communicated to the listeners/target audience. It requires the consideration of several variables like the characteristics of the students (target audience in this context), the specified general goals and objectives and the instructional objectives, etc. But in all, since it is a radio broadcast, it must be borne in mind that radio is a blind medium and as such while communicating, it is for the ear (not for the eyes). Method of presentation usually involves reading from a script, or it may be unwritten or delivered extempore (this is particularly when the subject matter is very familiar and the presenter is an expert). The programme has to undergo thorough script editing so that no important point is left out, and all information and arguments are presented in a logical order using simple and short sentences. This gives the presenter /radio teacher confidence in delivering of the subject matter. The pyramid style of presenting a programme in descending order of importance is therefore preferable.
- iv) Finally, feedback and evaluation is very crucial because they actually help to know what the audience wants and the part of lesson they need more so as to improve more. The presenter /researcher after each radio lesson gave out her mobile phone number and e-mail address for the opinions, questions, answers and observations.

CONCLUSION

This study has been able to confirm that radio could be very effective in promoting the development of indigenous languages in Nigeria. From this research, it was seen that the Igbo secondary students residing in Lagos improved on their knowledge of Igbo language and culture. It is hoped that the findings of this research will constitute a step forward in effort to understand the concept and the challenges inherent in using mass media -radio to improve the knowledge of indigenous language among students (Igbo language to be precise).

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