

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AS SYNERGY FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Trends in historical evolution indicate that the nation-state of Nigeria came into existence since 1914. Her territorial boundaries were fixed with prejudicial colonial interests without considering the interests and aspirations of the traditional ethnic groups involved. Since then, the nation has been governed and exploited by the feudal-bourgeoisie, privileged to inherit the nation from the colonial masters. Worst still, the various machineries at different periods and republics charged with the responsibility of ruling the nation has proved anti-social, adopting in their distribution of values, formulas detrimental to the general welfare of the citizenry. Thus, we are left with a fragile nation, drifting apart and her people resorting to communal and individual self-definition. The persistent call for national conference among the various ethnic groups to resolve the national question gives credence to the deduction that the nation was founded upon vested colonial interest, without consulting the component ethnic groups. The issue of national integration has become a re-assessment of the pre-requisite for Federalism towards the continued existence of the sovereign nation state in Nigeria. Thus, the focus of this paper is how to adopt a paradigm shift from the previous abortive methods that have been employed so far, to the pragmatic resolve of using language and culture in attaining the long elusive national integration in Nigeria.*

KEYWORDS: language, culture, integration, Nigeria, diversity

INTRODUCTION

Unarguably, the historical background of the Nigerian nation is intertwined with colonial incursion into Africa. The region of west Africa being referred to today as Nigeria, used to be the natural homestead of some two hundred and fifty (250) different ethnic groups- Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo, Efik, and others too numerous to mention . Before the colonial encounter, these ethnic groups existed as communal enclaves with distinct cultural identity, system of governance and local means of economic sustenance. These communities coexisted peacefully without western democracy and civilization. However, by 1800, the Europeans had initial contacts with places like Calabar and Lagos in what started as evangelization of Africa and establishment of trade links, which culminated in a conquest. By 1914, the Southern and Northern protectorates were amalgamated and named Nigeria. Thus, the British government established indirect rule by administering the country with colonial officers through the local warrant chiefs.

Ever since the marriage of inconvenience of amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates by Lord Lugard in 1914, resulting in the birth of the nation of Nigeria, things had started fallen apart, so much that the centre could no longer hold. The import is simply that the imperial forces of Britain came, in the disguise of missionary work and then suddenly, there were impositions of protectorates. The British Union Jack was hoisted upon Nigeria, thereby forcefully uniting the visions, missions, religions and politics of different people together.

Paradoxically, the people of the Southern Nigeria were heavily shortchanged in the deal, as they were the obedient servants who allowed themselves to be evangelized by being converted to Christianity. However, these same Southern Nigerians who received western education and religion with great enthusiasm, were betrayed by their white masters, who upon their departure ironically but willingly gave political power to the Northerners, who had shown no interest whatsoever in British evangelism or western education. The out-going British imperialists considered the Hausa-Fulani dominated Northerners to be harmless, docile and less-rebellious. They tilted the population of Nigeria in the favour of the Northerners. Thus, the northerners have come to accept the political sagacity conferred upon them as their birthright as manifested in the former motto of Sokoto State “Born to rule”. This has been the foundation of the instability of the Nigerian nation state until the political turmoil of June 12, 1993, when political power could not but began to rotate around the six geo-political zones of Nigeria, starting from May, 1999, with Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the President of the Fourth Republic of Nigeria.

However, far beyond the political imbroglio that has enmeshed the country since 1914, through the independence of 1960, culminating in the civil war of 1967, the aggregation of the problems of Nigeria lies in the ubiquitous and vague term symbolically styled “the national questions”. These unresolved or unanswered national questions are tearing the nation apart and the retardation of the national progress can be traced to these questions from which the Nigerian ruling elites tend to be shying away.

Granted that all nations of the world have their own national questions, it is at the level of dealing with national problems that one nation differs from another. Britain, Nigeria’s former colonial master, for example, continues to experience and cope with monarchical anachronism, continuing into the third millennium, soccer hooliganism, religious divides vis-à-vis racial and racist imbroglios replicated in the hydra-headed Northern Ireland question. The United States of America also has numerous American questions. These include criss-crossing of racism, race and racist induced violence and judicial prejudices, Northern Korea alleged possession of nuclear and biological warfare, juvenile and adult delinquencies, gun trotting, drug addiction among her youths, etc. Similarly, while South Africa can hardly exercise herself of the incubi of xenophobia, Germany is facing the unemployment of her numerous employable population, as well as chronic alcoholism among other socio-political malaises, Russia also has its endemic food insecurity, incurable alcoholism vis-à-vis its negative repercussions, excessive expenditures on armament and militarism at the expense of humanity, and paradoxical

communist institutionalized corruption. Other national questions peculiar to the Arab/Israelis' crises as well as ultra ethnic nationalism and religious dichotomies erupting in the Balkan wars are relevant examples that can be cited analytically (Iji, 2004:20).

In the same vein, the Nigerian national questions that have impeded her national integration over the years are no less endemic and debilitating to the national development imperatives as they hold the citizenry on the jugular continually. Nigeria being the largest black nation in the world is indeed the barometer of African development or underdevelopment. Nigeria has the potentialities of being a world power on African continent. She has continually been seen as a potential America on the continent of Africa. Thus, the leadership of Africa rests squarely upon Nigeria. However, the Nigerian national question has continued to threaten her fragile federalism, fragile unity vis-à-vis her centrifugal and centripetal forces as collective and individual destinies.

Currently, the myriad of Nigeria's problems include the imperative of the Nigerian federation implicated in fiscal or the true federalism, power equation or devolution of power, implicated in the so-called north-south dichotomy, culminating in the need to rotate the presidency and other key leadership positions, not only among the three major tribes- Yoruba, Hausa and Ibo-but also to include the minority collective positions, regarded as the largest of the quadrangular conglomerations that make up Nigeria as dictated in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. Paramount also in these dichotomies are the issues of marginalization bogeys of the Niger-Delta Regions and the ethnic bugbears of the Igbo fractions.

Other national questions that beg for immediate answers include endemic corruption profiles vis-à-vis imperative of retribution and restitution with the allied efficiency in the management of public affairs or common wealth, poverty acceleration, incessant military incursion or military aberration in Nigerian polity, the need for the separation of religion and the state, as well as the ever-escalating religious fanaticism cum mushrooming of crimes and immoralities, increasing insecurity of lives and properties, implicated in the concurrent service to both God and Mammons, recurrent scandalous leadership deficiency and bankruptcy in the imperative of checks and balance vis-à-vis the upsurge of new tribalism or ethnocentrism, resulting in various tribes or ethnic groups crying for secession, and debt overhang versus remission controversies and contradictions. All these and many more, undoubtedly, justify the recurrent stringent calls for the convocation of a pragmatic national conference, sovereign or non-sovereign to address and redress the hydra-headed national problems that have bedeviled the nation, Nigeria, and which have continually impeded her progress and development since independence.

Having painted the picture of Nigeria's myriad problems vividly, the problem that comes to mind is: how can we possibly get out of all these quagmire that Nigeria is currently enmeshed? How can the cultural and the linguistic sectors individually or synergistically, contribute to the

abatement or eradication, as much as possible, of these collective national malaises plaguing the Nigerian national socio-political, economic, psycho-social and metaphysical wellbeing, thus bringing about developmental strives and imperatives into the country? In an attempt to answer these questions, we need to delve into the crucial roles of language and culture in the society and see how we can apply same to effect national integration in Nigeria.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AS IMPERATIVES FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION

Language is an important aspect of human existence. Language over the years has become the fundamental means of communication used by man to express himself. Man would not be different from other animals without his use of language. We use language in speaking, writing, listening and reading. We even use language in thinking. It is the tool with which we build, destroy and re-build an individual and social identity. Language is a human feature which importance to the sustenance and corporate existence of the human race cannot be underestimated. Human language, whether spoken or written, can in principle be employed in expressing anything and everything; whether real or imagined. It is not limited to certain topics, views or ideals but it is free to include any message that can ever be conceived by man. This feature makes language possible for human beings to produce and understand words and sentences that have neither been produced nor heard before. This feature of creativity enables man to say something and mean another as exemplified in Dada (2010:52) where he asserts that “man has the ability to create symbols, ascribe meanings and interpret messages”.

Some scholars have described language as a social act because it is an integral part of social process. Language holds the society together since it is a means of communication. It keeps the social wheel rolling through the exchange of ideas and thoughts. Akinawonu (2003:3) citing Kaminsky (1969) asserts that “Language maps more than physical characteristics of lands and people; emotions, attitudes and values. World views are also being mapped by language. In fact, using language is the most common form of social behavior because it is the only way by which the social experiences and values of a group of people are perceived and understood”

Social experiences however, differ because of cultural differences in world views. This goes on to affect language. Yule (2007:246) affirms this stance by saying that “it has become clear that different groups not only have different languages, they have different world views which are reflected in their languages”. To him, cultural differences account for linguistic variation and linguistic variation is tied very much to the existence of different cultures. It is pertinent to say that the existence of different world views does not only affect language usage, but also becomes a vital focus of study in language varieties.

THE LANGUAGE SITUATION IN NIGERIA

Nigeria's language situation is a complex one, as the number of languages spoken in the country cannot be given with any exactitude. Yusuf (2006:19) claims that "the diversity in ethnic groups in Nigeria has given rise to multiplicity of languages, thus making the country multilingual". Bamisaye (2006:15) also lends credence to this claim when he asserts that "Nigeria has not got an accurate census of her languages" and that the "statistics about Nigerian languages varies among scholars". However, there is ample evidence to lend credibility to an estimation of about 400 indigenous languages in the country. Thus, Bamigbose (1971:36) asserts that;

It is estimated that there are about 400 different languages in Nigeria. Three of those languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) are often referred to as the major languages of the country; but very few persons speak more than one of these languages.

However, the Ethnologue of world languages (2017) puts the number of languages in Nigeria at 527. Of these 527, 520 are living and seven (7) are extinct. Of the living languages, 510 are indigenous and 10 are non-indigenous or foreign. Furthermore, 20 are institutional, 78 are developing, 350 are vigorous, 28 are in trouble and 44 are dying (Ojo,2017). Summarizing the language situation in Nigeria Elugbe (1990:1), affirms that "linguistics diversity is one of the better-known attributes of Nigeria, a fact recognized by the composers of the original national anthem who agreed that tribes and tongue differences exist in Nigeria".

It is noteworthy, that the languages spoken in Nigeria are not evenly distributed. For instance, in the south-western part of the country, Yoruba is largely spoken. Igbo is predominantly spoken in the South-Eastern part while Hausa is the dominant language in the North-Western part of the country. However, the situation is not the same in the North central, North-western and the South southern part of the country. The various languages have been categorized on the basis of the population of the speakers and the relative importance into major, minor and minority languages. (Yusuf, 2007:19). For instance, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are major languages while such languages like Fula, Fulfude, Efik, Ibibio, Tiv, Izo, etc are also categorized as constituting other class of major languages but smaller than those in the first category. The minor languages include Edo, Nupe, Igala, Urhobo, Edoma, Ebira, Itsekiri and a host of others. Other languages not included in this minor group are referred to as the "minority languages".

Explaining the diversity, Bamisaye (2006) says that the pattern of the linguistic situation in Nigeria is one which is characterized by the existence of a major or dominant language in each group. As such, the dominant language in Yoruba-speech community is Yoruba, Igbo is the dominant language in the South-East while Hausa is the dominant language in the North. These three major languages are accorded recognition in the 1999 Constitution as regional languages but they jostle for national recognition as national official language. There have been divergent views on the selection of one of these languages as the national language of Nigeria.

While some scholars are in support of one of the indigenous languages, some are against this stance because of the fear of ethnic marginalization among other factors. The latter group is of the opinion that a non-indigenous language should be adopted as a uniting linguistic property of Nigeria. They argue that the adoption of English language will avert any tension which the choice of an indigenous language might create (Akindele and Adegbite, 1999:6) However, Bamisaye believes that any of the major indigenous languages is linguistically qualified to be a national language in view of the fact that a native language will “truly serve as a vehicle for expressing independent nationhood” He however opines that the problem about a choice of an indigenous language is the selection.

NEED FOR LANGUAGE PLANNING/EDUCATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY

The important role which language plays in the society has informed many countries of the need to plan “how” and “what” a language should do in their countries. Language planning according to Crystal (2002:268), is “a deliberate systematic and theory attempt to solve the communication problems of community by studying its various languages and dialects, and developing an official policy concerning their selection and use.” To Weinstein (1980:56), “language planning is a government authorized long-term sustained and conscious effort to alter a language’s function in a society for the purpose of solving communication problems”. From Crystal’s and Weinstein’s definitions, it is established that language planning is aimed at solving communication problems by developing a policy that will proffer lasting solution to the problems.

Though, the goal of language planning differs from country to country, depending on the nation, Akindele and Adegbite (1999:75) say that it is basically for National Development. Nigeria is not left out in language planning for national development as the country has made several attempts at harnessing her linguistic resources for national development. These planning exercises include the 1924 Philip Stokes Commission Report which prescribed that local languages should be used at the lower elementary schools, the lingua franca of African origin be used in middle class while the language of the colonizing European nation be taught at the upper level of education. Others are the 1927 British Government’s Advisory Committee on Education, the 1943 Colonial Office’s Memorandum of Language in African Education and the severally revised National Policy on Education (1977 and 1981), which all conformed to the recommendations of Commission and Committees cited earlier and gave dominant roles to English language(Dada,2010)

However, Oyetade (2003) opines that language policies and planning in Nigeria have hitherto not been realistically responsible to the linguistic diversity in the country. Rather, they have succeeded in language accentuating ethnic consciousness and vitality with language as a mere symbol. In fact, according to him, “there has not been a comprehensive language policy for Nigeria as a deliberate and planned exercise. Indeed, language planning as an organized and

systematic pursuit of solutions to language problems has remained largely peripheral to the mainstream of national planning". He goes further to say that what can be regarded as our language policy came about in the context of other more centrally-defined policy on education and the drafting of a constitution for the country. "It is in connection with these two documents i.e. the National Policy on Education and the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that we can talk about language policy and planning in Nigeria" (Oyetade 2003:105).

From Oyetade's submission, and as it is the custom of some countries, the language policy of Nigeria is usually contained in the constitution of the country as well as the national policy on Education. In Nigeria however, there is no single independent document that can be called national language policy but there are language provisions in the national policy on Education and the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. These provisions are taken as the National Language policy. The 1979 constitution (Sections 51 and 91) and 1999 constitution (Sections 55 and 97) recommend a policy of multilingualism which provides that "the business of the National Assembly in Nigeria be conducted Primarily in English, and in the three major languages when adequate arrangements have been made". The 1999 constitution states that "the business of the National Assembly shall be conducted in English and in Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba when adequate arrangements have been made thereof".

Thus, the language policy of Nigeria is not limited to the legislative business alone, it also extends to education. In the National Policy on Education (1981), Section 3:15(4) of the policy states that "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". The section of the policy also provides that students in junior secondary school will learn English, the language of their environment and any of the three major languages in Nigeria, subject to availability of teachers. Senior Secondary School students are mandated to learn English and one Nigerian language. Thus, the nation's language policy is, without doubt, a multilingual policy which seeks to make an average Nigerian versed in English, the Mother Tongue and an indigenous language different from his first language. Regardless of this multilingual policy statement however, most Nigerians are bilingual, who speak English and their Mother Tongue language.

The emphasis on the use of English at all levels of education is an indication that English language has come to stay as an official language in Nigeria. This perhaps is as a result of the uniting role which the language plays among the different tribes and tongues of the country. Consequently, the dominant status accorded English is not surprising. This is why Oyetade (2003:34) cited in Dada (2010:421) says:

English has become Nigeria's official and dominant educational language. It is used in its written form as the language of administration from the federal to the local government level. It is the

language of commerce and industry, its knowledge therefore is an essential prerequisite for effective participation in the day-to-day running of Nigerian government.

There is no doubt that the need for effective participation and the acquisition of formal education may have influenced the attitudes of Nigerians towards the use of English language. However, the need to reappraise the language policy in favour of one of the indigenous languages in Nigeria, or at best a combination of the three indigenous languages is the preoccupation of this segment of this paper. Effective language policy is crucial to the implementation of the educational system of any country. It involves the creation and the implementation of an official policy about how the languages and linguistic varieties of a country are to be used (Effiong, 2007:140). Whether a country is monolingual, bilingual or multilingual, the development of an effective language policy is very important in the attainment of the nation's objectives and goals of education, commerce and technology.

Having said all these about language and the need for a veritable and pragmatic language policy for Nigeria, one may then ask: "what has language got to do with culture in the move towards integrating the nation? To proffer a reasonable answer, it would be necessary to see how language and culture have been defined. Ferdinand de Saussure (1916:26), a founding father of modern linguistics, defines language as "a system of distinct symbols corresponding to distinct ideas". His definition must have been one of the earliest concise, scientific definitions of language.

Block and Trager (1982:5) can be said to have followed Saussure's footsteps when they define language as "a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates". These two definitions can be said to summarize all definitions that have been attempted in terms of highlighting the essential nature of language as a system of vocal symbols by which human beings convey or exchange ideas. Some other definitions that have been attempted by other linguistics and anthropological linguists seem to deal more with the purpose of language. For example, Sapir's (1921:7) definition would seem to fall into this category since he sees language as "a method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires". However, what is most significant is that over the years, the various definitions of language highlight the fact of it as a system for conveying ideas, thoughts, emotions and desires of persons and groups. That is, human beings use language to express thought and feelings.

Similarly, over the years, there have been as many definitions of culture as individuals who have attempted to define it. For the purpose of this study, we however accept Edward B. Tylor's (1871; 21) impeccable definition of culture which sees culture as:

...that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Tylor goes on to distinguish between material and non-material culture. Material culture according to him is said to consist of "objects, physical traits, instruments and tools which are made and used by people in various

aspects of their community life”. Non-material culture, according to him, “refers to ideas, attitudes and ways of doing things which constitute the people’s way of life”. Culture as a distinguishing and consolidating phenomenon makes the society and without it, the society will cease to exist, although the impetus and power of culture itself is derived from the society. Culture generally includes people’s religion, politics, festivals, traditions, rituals, rites, social expectations and demands, reward system and punishment, administration, moral codes and ethical standards which are mostly unwritten and conversationally located in various cultural and the survival of the society.

The definitions of language cited earlier characterize it as a system of symbols for conveying thoughts. In other words, since language is the medium for the transmission of non-material culture, it can be argued that language exists for as long as it can be put to use of ideas and thoughts. We can therefore affirm that language and culture are components of the same unit and their inter connectivity and inseparability cannot be in doubt. One serves to transmit the other and both are markers of individual or group identity. Ager (1990:16) sums it all up when he states that:

Language has a special role within the definition of culture; it is a component part, on the same level as values or beliefs. It is a product of culture, transmitted as part of the socialization of the new generation. It forms culture, in that our beliefs and norms are formulated in language; and it is the transmitter of culture, enabling individuals to internalize their understanding of their society.

The relationship between language and culture is best captured with the view of language as symbolic action that is socially acquired and used. Language determines the world views of its users. In a great deal, it influences the variation of culture in any multi-ethnic society like Nigeria. The cultural disposition of these ethnic groups are enabled through the use of language .Thus, language becomes a significant test or instrument of communicating ideas, thoughts and beliefs of a particular set of people.

Nigeria is a multi-cultural and multi-linguistic nation. From every indication, the Nigeria government has taken pains to issue declarations at demonstrating its resolve at infusing doses of Nigerian cultural knowledge into the Nigerian educational system. Nonetheless, the institutions of learning continue to operate in total disregard of these stipulations. It is therefore lack of cultural content in foreign languages, especially the English language teaching that we consider as indicating of the colonization of the programmes in our educational system. There is no doubt that the Nigerian government deserves to see culture occupy a pride of place in its educational system as well as in national life. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1977, revised in 1981) contains specific clauses relating to cultural education in respect of Higher Education. The NPE in section 37(V) P. 34, reads:

Widespread ignorance among Nigerian group about each other and about themselves will be remedied by instituting a compulsory first year course in the social organization, customs, culture and history of our various people. The awards of degrees will be made conditional upon the passing of the paper in this course.

That the policy makes the course compulsory and a prerequisite for the award of a university degree may be taken as reflecting the seriousness which government attaches to the study and sound knowledge of Nigerian cultures. The same year that the NPE was formulated, Nigeria hosted the Festival of Black and African Arts and Civilization (FESTAC) in Lagos which brought together from all over the world, hundreds of the most talented black intellectuals and Artists. Also, as a mark of its serious interest in culture, Nigeria not too long ago, gave itself to the Cultural Policy of Nigeria (CPN). In section 4.2.2(p.222) of the CPN, it is stated that:

Its objective is not to ossify or mystify, but to ensure harmony with contemporary realities and demands of change and development and to prevent a mindless sweeping away of our cultural heritage, a situation which can only result in disorderly change and societal instability and eventual creation of a people completely cut off from its cultural roots.

In section 5.1.2 of the cultural policy, it is also stated inter alia;

The state shall encourage the promotion of culture right through the school system to the universities.

In section 5.2.1, of the same document, it is stated that;

The state shall ensure at all levels of education, a curriculum featuring aspect of education which will enhance the common heritage of Nigeria.

It thus becomes obvious therefore, that at every level of the Nigerian educational system, the study of Nigerian culture is not supposed to be merely incidental to learning. On the other hand, it is expected that it would enjoy a pride of place.

It is regrettable however, that in spite of all the laudable policy statements and the huge amount of money that goes into the annual cultural festivals, in the states and Abuja, implementation still lags far behind declarations. It would therefore appear that although everybody speaks about culture, nobody does anything concrete about it.

The fact of Nigeria being a multicultural nation must therefore be put to the advantageous use of the country. The recognition of multiculturalism must actually be fostered as a national value in a nation of 400 ethnic nationalities. These ethnic nationalities have lived peacefully together through a much longer pre colonial period than these past fifty-seven years, which shows that the problem is with our national cultural engineering and not in the fact of our multiculturalism. These differences we now face in our national polity can fade away if we evolve another set of super values in the same way that the USA has created the free enterprise economy to unite its multicultural immigrant nation. This will also involve a redefinition and renegotiation of power relations and citizenship rights within the many ethnic nationalities in the country.

Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1993) articulates multiculturalism as a celebration of difference and a creation of a confetti-culture which we daily experience in our national lives, in such area as food, arts, music, healing, sports, advertising and consumption, thus creating a rainbow society. Concluding, he asserts, rightly that:

Cultural diversity is not an obstacle or handicap but an asset to be nurtured and developed. Handled effectively, and combined with forward policies, culturally diverse societies have the potential to become rapid growth economies (399).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the foregoing, it is thus the belief of this researcher that the Nigerian union fathered and midwived by Lord Lugard in 1914 has failed to stand the test of time, thus refusing to thrive either under military or democratic system of government. The present fragile state of Nigeria is only but a manifestation of the weakness of a titled matrimonial vessel unevenly loaded with numerous vested colonial interests. The present political class remains the ally of the colonial masters who plunged independent ethnic groups into a crises-laden nation. The political class remains tribalistic and therefore antisocial.

In this information age where the dynamics of globalization threaten to destroy cultural heterogeneity and particularism, one of the basic counter responses by minority peripheral cultures is the move towards globalism. A genuine ethnic diversity and multiculturalism based on mutual respect, equity and a culture of true democratic discourse can lay more formidable foundation for a true Nigerian nation, equipped to join the globalization train. The cultural engineering to bring this about has to be initiated and lunched from the custodians and moulders of our national culture. Our approach has to be local, holistic and postmodern by understanding that every local story is point of a global big picture. We can open up space for dialogue and sharing of experiences- especially across barriers of language, nationality, gender, race and class (Rachel Kamal in Dirlik, 1996:317).

Nigeria has rich and vibrant cultures, wanting to be harnessed ideologically for development. The theatre is at the centre of cultural activities. It is indeed a cultural nursery where the budding national flowers are nurtured before being transplanted into the nation. Theatre has been a potential tool for socio-political mobilization and instrument of change. Therefore, the age long function of the theatre as a viable weapon for the critical objective and result-oriented analysis of a nation crying for a rebirth is highly recommended for the resolution of national integration in Nigeria. Nigerian dramatist should as a matter of urgency start writing and publishing plays with strong thematic base propagating the geographical re-definition option. Stage productions and directing techniques should portray failure of the present federalism and revenue allocation formulas. The national troupe of Nigeria should embark on a nation -wide tours propagating the above recommendations in their plays and dances.

It is also recommended that the philosophy and principles of Cultural Adjustment Programme be taught at all levels of our educational system. Theatre should be included in the syllabus of primary and secondary schools, where it should be one of the courses in West African School Certificate Examination and the General Certificate of Education as well as NECO.

In Nigeria, cultural pluralism presupposes the need to manage differences constructively within an environment which is marked by tolerance, appreciation and the means of conflict resolution is through language. Hence, the plural character of the country is a blessing because the various ethnic groups coexist in a state of mutual accommodation. Despite several varying socio-cultural characteristics, cutting across its territories, members of a group having a common identity, share a core of experience and individual identity criss-cross in more than one way. Therefore, the proper planning, clear perspective and imaginative action for a nation with rich varieties of languages like Nigeria, can exploit the situation towards developing insight into utilizing the multi-cultural network for national development.

Considering the role that language plays in an ethno-cultural diverse society like Nigeria, as regards economic development, social ideals and cultural identity, an adoption of an indigenous language as a national language or lingua-franca is long over-due in the country. Nigeria should learn from countries like India, Russia, Germany, which have their national languages and just use the English language as their second language. This, to a very great extent has aided their national development in no small measure. A nation that has no national ideology can never be a truly developed state. No national ideology interprets to mean no national goal. The national goal of any nation is embedded in its language and culture. What is immobilizing Nigeria towards a glorious goal, is lack of national ideology. Also, our educational system should have vibrant cultural content. That is the only way our education can be relevant to societal needs.

There is also the urgent need to translate the Nigerian constitution to the three Nigerian major languages, so that every individual can understand the contents therein.

Above all, Nigeria urgently needs a language policy, quite different from the one subsumed in the Nigerian Education Policy.

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