

About the Book

The contemporary world is afflicted with pervasive insecurity of varying degrees, structure, magnitude and proportions. Commonsensical wisdom and empirical observation have shown that where there is pronounced insecurity, development is always on recess. This is why virtually all countries of the world deploy a lot of their resources to enhance their national security and by extension pave the way for the development of their national economies. In Nigeria, insecurity in contemporary times has threatened all facets of her national life which trend has impeded the spate of development in the country. The emergence of Boko Haram in the country has further heightened the degree of insecurity in the country.

This book entitled *National Security and Development in Contemporary Nigeria*, which derives from a National Conference that was hosted by Al-Hikmah University set out to examine all aspects of insecurity in the country and how the evident insecurity impact on national development. Given the strategic importance of national security to both national and international development, we wholeheartedly recommend the book to all scholars and practitioners who are interested on the subject matter of national security and development in Nigeria in particular and the world in general.

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Bello-Imam, I.B. is a Professor of Political Science and Strategic Studies with specialisation in Public Administration and Management. Bello-Imam has won more than 8 National and International Scholarships and written more than 100 published works, locally and internationally. He is currently the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria. Most significant of his published works are *Local Government Finance in Nigeria* (ed.); *Local Government in Nigeria: Evolving a Third-tier of Government; Politics and Administration in Nigeria; Governance in Nigeria: Economy, Politics and Society in the Adjustment Years, 1985-1995; Democratic Governance and Development Management in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, 1999-2003* (eds.); *Perspective on National Economic Management and Administration in Nigeria* (eds.); *The War Against Corruption in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects; The Local Government System in Nigeria; 50 Years of the Nigerian Project: Challenges and Prospects* (ed.); *Yar'Adua's Seven Point Agenda: An Assessment* (eds.); *The Deregulation of the Downstream Sector of the Oil Industry in Nigeria* (ed.); *President Jonathan's Transformation Agenda: An Assessment* (ed), etc.



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NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

Edited by
Bello-Imam, I.B.

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Chapter Twenty-Six

DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY: THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN DISSEMINATION OF MEDIA CONTENT IN NIGERIA

by

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and

Aishat Abdulrauf-Salau

Abstract

A number of scholars in the last two decades have emphasised the centrality of the indigenous African languages to any discourse on development particularly in Africa. The importance of language as a fundamental element of human communication is indeed beyond dispute. In the case of mass mediated messages, the media's powers of shaping the people's perception of reality on issues bordering on national security and sustainable development in general can obviously not be achieved without the use of language. While scholars generally agree on the fact that the media are useful vehicles in promoting development, one issue which remains unresolved however is that of "what roles are assigned to which language in the media". This is especially as the logic of administrative convenience clashes with the logic of linguistic diversity. In a multilingual society such as Nigeria, indigenous languages are an important tool capable of empowering and mobilising large sections of the populace, particularly those who are not literate in English, which serves as the official language of many Nigerian media organisations. With the present state of insecurity in the nation, no group of people, whether literate or non-literate, should be denied access to vital issues related to security and development. This paper seeks to bring to the fore the imperative of promoting indigenous languages in media content with a view to

exploring the links between indigenous language, communication for development and mass mobilisation on issues of national security.

26:1 Introduction

For any development plan of a country to succeed, the communication element has to be added and carefully planned. Communication should interrelate with the various segments of the development plan to promote and achieve holistic national development (Anaeto and Solo-Anaeto, 2010). Hence, the imperative of communication to development, as it concerns creation of awareness and attitude change cannot be overstated. It should be noted though that communication is just a variable in the development calculus as it cannot on its own bring about national development without working hand-in-hand with other factors. Nonetheless it is a very crucial dependent variable around which other factors revolve. Communication should be for speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people. Okunna (2002) cited in Oyero (2007: 372), however, notes that the desired change can only take place through provision of adequate knowledge and information so that the people are persuaded, through sound reasoning to change towards certain direction. Thus the method of packaging and dissemination of the messages is of utmost importance.

Unfortunately, an examination of development messages in Nigeria shows an alienation of most of the people who the messages are meant for. The reason is that the messages are packaged in the language that not everyone understands – English language. This clearly leaves the non-literate at a disadvantage. Consequently, Oyero (2007:373) observes that "not only does the language of packaging make the messages foreign and elite-oriented; it also results in the uncommunication of the people who the messages are meant for."

While language serves primarily as a means of conveying meaning from one person to another, the acceptability of language of communication to the audience equally calls for great concern. Since language is an integral part of a peoples' culture, in Nigeria it is one of the criteria for successful national security awareness campaign. This stresses the significance of indigenous language to development communication because it is the most acceptable language to the audience since it part of what defines their culture. Corroborating this, Wallace (1996) cited in Oyero (2007:374) emphasizes that "a native language, when used in the media ... is powerful in bringing about changes in the lives of people. Indigenous language has been proved to be very potent in creating a critical mass of real communication for substantial change. It is and also a veritable instrument in mobilising the vast

majority, who are unlettered in the English language, to be involved in the political process. Moreover, the Nigerian nation is a pluralism of more than 250 autonomous ethnic groups with different languages and cultures (Uche, 1989 cited in Anunike, 2012:161). This paper therefore calls for a rethink on modes of message dissemination by directing attention to the significance of indigenous language in communication for development.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on three theories, the social responsibility theory, agenda setting theory and development media theory. The social responsibility theory propounded by E.S. Siebert, T. B. Peterson and W. Schramm in 1963 proposes that the media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to society and that whatever might lead to crime, violence, civil disorder or offence to minority groups, should be avoided by the media. The theory suggests that media should reflect its society's plurality, giving access to various points of view and granting all the right to reply (Anaeto, Onabajo, and Osifeso, 2008). The following propositions of this theory clearly show how the media could aid in successful development communication on national security issues. The media is a public trust and should be responsible to the society. However, even though there are questions on the applicability of this theory in the light of the unrealistic environment within the media in Nigeria, the media can realistically be as responsible as the society makes it possible for them

Additionally, the Agenda Setting theory propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw in 1972 and 1973 respectively proposes that few media agenda, which were chosen by professional gatekeepers, lead people to perceive given issues as important. The agenda setting theory proposes that the facts which people know about public issues tend to be those which the mass media present to them. Also the significance which they ascribe to the same issues tends to be proportionate to the amount of attention given to the same issues in the media. Here, it is assumed that the media sets the agenda for our general discussion. The media may not always determine what we think, but what we think about. Although we have a right to think what we want to think, but surprisingly, we tend to think most of those things the media highlights as important (Anaeto, Onabajo, and Osifeso, 2008:89). In Nigeria, as in other parts of the globe, the mass media occupy a very strategic position. This is because they are the custodians of information and as such have access to news, which they are also expected to disseminate to the public. The information they relay determines the direction the society moves. Consequently the coverage and type of coverage

given to news on national security issues by the media will go a long way in determining the agenda for discourse by the public and possibly eventual action. Furthermore, the Development media theory which is an off-shoot of the concept of development journalism proposes that the media must accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with national established policy. The theory was propounded by Dennis McQuail in 1987. McQuail suggests that the media should give priority in their content to national cultures and languages. In fine tuning McQuail's suggestions to fit perfectly into the situation of developing countries, Folarin (2002) proposes among others that, the media should accept and help carry out the special development tasks of national integration, socio-economic modernisation, promotion of literacy, and cultural creativity. In addition he proposes that "National" media should give priority in their content to the national macro culture, then regional cultures and then to local culture, all in a descending order of priority. "Regional" media are of course normally expected to accord priority to regional cultures (and languages) while "Local" media give priority to local culture(s) and language(s).

Correspondingly, the proposal of the development media theory is that the mass media have a role to play in facilitating the process of development in developing countries. Thus, it advocates mass media support for the development goals of a country. The theory is of the view that for developing nations, government and media should work in concert to ensure that media aid the planned beneficial development of the country (Baran and Davies, 2009 Anaeto, and Solo-Anaeto, 2010). The theory argues that until a nation is well established and its development well underway, media should support and promote national development programmes.

Also, in elaborating the application of this theory Helster (1987 cited in Josiah, 2012:86) observes that "journalism does more than mere passive reporting of what goes on or just interpret it- it attempts to bring the light of exposure to destructive situations to help clean them up." Hence, the media is meant to report about developments projects and mostly informs the audience about events that will lead to national development. For this reason the media in Nigeria, is to promote the country's developmental goals such as economic and social development, political stability, cultural development, national integration, and national security and to direct a sense of national purpose. Mass media must not pick apart government efforts to promote development but, rather, assist government in implementing its policies.

Mass Media and Development

There is a tacit link between communication and development as communication plays a vital role in the development of any given society. It is an undeniable fact that communication is a veritable tool for social mobilisation, economic transformation, political emancipation, socio-cultural integration, religious harmony and educational development. These broad-based roles of communication have given rise to what communication theorists refer to as Development Communication or Development Support Communication (Josiah, 2012). Development communication is concerned with planned use of communication resource to pursue development goals, (Anaeto and Solo-Anaeto, 2010), and some of the most vibrant vanguards of this type of communication are the mass media.

The mass media represent the methods by which information is transmitted or exchanged between the source and the receiver. They include all the media used in carrying out media functions such as newspapers, magazines, journals, periodicals, press agencies, books, paper bags, cinema, radio, television, film, billboards, handbills and vehicular media (Wilson, 2003). The mass media which have the power to reach such a vast number of people at one time can help tremendously in fostering the development of desirable values and habits. This is possible because as Orhewere and Onosu (2012: 256-257) explain "modern mass media have variously been described as the media of mass dissemination of information ...". They are media which make it possible for the message to reach far beyond the immediate proximity of the sender (Bittner, 1989 as cited in Nwabueze, 2006). Alabi (2003:30) agrees that "the mass media have the advantage performance and repeated exposure; this makes them a potent tool for sending development messages with the potential of reaching a large number of people."

The basic functions of the mass media are to inform, educate and entertain, but they are also veritable channels for mobilising people for a wide range of development campaigns. To Okuna (1999), the mass media encourage and ginger people to achieve the goals of society by promoting such goals in the media and stimulating the aspirations and activities of people towards achieving such goals.

Most developing countries like Nigeria, direct a lot of their efforts to achieve development. In planning development programmes however, there is a need to make communication an integral part. The importance of integrating communication into development programmes cannot be overlooked because inadequate or unplanned communication makes development slower and more

difficult. It equally impedes popular participation. To avoid this Br-lit (1996 cited in Alozie, 2012: 52) advised that communication policies adopted by a country must be "planned systematically, implemented and coordinated." and as Anaeto and Solo-Anaeto (2010:30) warns, "the lack of clear national communication policy to guide communication systems within a country results in inadequate development of that country's communicative capacities and their appropriate utilisation of communication resource for development."

As a result, the need for the communication policy of a country in planning communication for development is important. A communication policy is designed to support and project the goals and ideals of a country. The communication policy should promote structural changes that make for horizontal flow of messages and information, involving the active participation of people and communities. It should correct and adjust existing structures for democratisation of communication. Communication policies should be formulated in such a way that the media of 'information' becomes the media of 'communication'. This means that media will promote access, participation and exchange by the people. Communication policy must take into account the demographic factors and their consequences at different levels for development strategies. It must provide the development of resources needed to satisfy the requirements of various population sectors.

Unfortunately, the National Communication Policy in Nigeria, seeks way of using mass communication institutions and channels to achieve the growth and transformation of the society at different levels. It states that the print media are to carry out functions in such a way as to reflect the centrality of development efforts in the country and the electronic media be used for the preservation and promotion of nation's culture and values. They are to enhance national capacity for producing high-quality indigenous broadcast programmes. Pertaining to film/video, the policy states that the integration of traditional and modern communication media structures is imperative to communicate new realities and possibilities effectively to the different segments of the societies in the language and form best understood and appreciated by the people. These provisions of the policy show that it also advocates for use of indigenous language in disseminating media content.

National Security and Development: The Nigerian Situation

There is no single universally accepted definition of "National Security", the variety of definitions provide an overview of the many usages of this concept. However,

the concept still remains ambiguous, having originated from simpler definitions which initially emphasised the freedom from military threat and political coercion to later increase in sophistication and include other forms of non-military security as suited by the circumstances of the time.

Nevertheless, this paper focuses on the spate of insecurity in Nigeria which has generated national security concerns. Therefore, national security could simply be defined as the protection or the safety of a country's secrets and its citizens hence emphasising the overall security of a nation. This protection extends to safeguarding a nation against domestic and foreign threats. National security is best described as a capacity to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion of a given community believes necessary to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and wellbeing. Similarly, national security according to (Nzimiro, 1988; Gambo, 1999; Akinfeleye, 2001; Akinfeleye, 2008:3) may be regarded as "the collective security of the people in a particular nation and not the security of the person or the political party in power. The summary therefore is as follows - that national security is the extent to which a nation safeguards itself from dangers, both internal and external."

National security is essential for development to take place. Development means different things to different people hence it is defined in a number of ways. To economists particularly in the past, development meant economic growth measurable in aggregate terms. In other words, a growth in the Gross National Product (GNP) is equivalent to development. However, others see development from the human factors and it is in this light that several years ago, Rogers (1975 cited in Alabi, 2003:30-31.) defined development as a "Widely participatory process of social change in a society intended to bring about social and material advancement including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment."

Recently, Anaeto and Solo-Anaeto (2010:4) defined development as "... the total process of growth and improvement which involves growth in economic, social, political and cultural sector of a society." Whatever the definition, the central theme is that development embodies positive growth in a society and this growth cannot be sustainable without national security.

The wanton insecurity, criminality, kidnapping, instability and terrorism currently ravaging Nigeria have affected development in the country. Abysmal Poverty, hopelessness, joblessness, frustration, unprecedented levels of corruption,

arrogance of power, complacent and retroactive Security Agencies, lackadaisical and corrupt judiciary, porous borders, covert foreign interests etc have a butterfly-effect on the unparalleled levels of crimes, insecurity, instability and terrorism currently bedeviling Nigeria. There is also a Crude Oil, radical religion-cultural angle to the mix (Okereke, 2013). Supporting this, Gambo (2008:14) "identifies one of the most serious social problems facing us today is the dangerous rise or high incidence of armed robbery and other violent crimes across the country. Infact, armed robbery has become so rampant that no day passes without an incident of armed or other violent crimes reported in our national newspapers in some parts of the country." Sadly, this trend has continued unabated in recent times.

Albeit, insecurity has been with us probably since we became a Republic, however, it is rapidly on the increase and taking new dimensions in the country today. Threats to the general peace may range from low-level civil disorder, large scale violence, or even an armed insurgency. Threats to internal security may be directed at either the state's citizens, or the organs and infrastructure of the state itself, and may range from petty crime, serious organised crime, political or industrial unrest, or even domestic terrorism. Foreign powers may also act as a threat to internal security, by either committing or sponsoring terrorism or rebellion, without actually declaring war. Summarising this, Adejumo (2012) points that what we are talking about is not merely petty crimes, armed robberies, etc., but terrorism and bombings, armed insurgency. Sadly, the Niger Delta problem, which seemed to have died down a bit of recent, after all the hullabaloo of Amnesty is gradually emerging again, Jos ethnic/religious killings, kidnappings, Boko Haram massacres and bombings in Abuja, Maiduguri and other northern cities are on the rise. All these and many more present national security problems for Nigeria today.

Language: An Imperative for Effective Communication

Communication remains one of the most indispensable traits of man. Human beings from time immemorial have "sought to clarify, express and explain themselves" (Adedimeji, 2009:135). The term communication simply refers to the transfer or sharing of ideas, thoughts or messages from a source to a receiver. It is an action that we engage in virtually every second of lives either as individuals or groups within a society. Hence, we have different types of communication such as verbal/non-verbal communication, intra personal, interpersonal or mass communication. However, as simple as the sharing of information or messages may seem, communication is sometimes rendered ineffective. This is because communication is a two way process which requires active involvement of both

the sender and the receiver. As such communication is said to be effective when there is shared meaning such that the intended message sent by a source is interpreted or decoded correctly by the receiver.

Effective communication involves ensuring that the recipient of a message gets to understand it and is able to take appropriate or recommended actions. Regardless of the effectiveness of a communication process however, one vital element that all forms of communication share is "language". Language is most often synonymous to communication. According to Babatunde (2009), the primary function of language is its use for communicative interaction in the society. Adedimeji (2009) describes language as a powerful and unique endowment which defines humanity as it remains a vital instrument for facilitating human activities and bridging the gap between knowledge and ignorance. Language can be regarded as a vital age long instrument of the communication process. Its evolution can be traced as far back as between 3000-2000B.C when the first symbols in form of primitive alphabets of over 600 characters came into existence (Bittner, 1989).

Norquist (n.d) defines language as "a human system of communication that uses arbitrary signals such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols". To Sapir (1921) Language is a purely human and non instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. Language comprises two fundamental skills required for the functionality of talking beings; these are the receptive skills and the expressive skills (Adedimeji, 2009). The receptive skills are the skills of listening and reading, while expressive skills refer to writing and speaking. Fromkin and Rodman in Babatunde (2009) posit that knowledge of a language by being able to speak it and understand others who equally speak that language makes one capable not only of producing sounds that have particular meaning but also of being able to understand or interpret sounds produced by others. In essence, ability to speak and understand a language makes it possible for individuals and groups to interact freely and communicate ideas amongst themselves.

It is important to note that languages can either be native/indigenous or foreign to individual users. In Africa, some languages such as English, French, Arabic, Swahili and Hausa are recognised internationally, while there are numerous indigenous languages spoken by people of various countries within the continent. The English Language in particular is one popular International language used daily by seven hundred million people among which only half are native speakers (Quirk, 1985 cited in Babatunde, 2009). This language serves as the official

Language of communication in Nigeria. It is therefore used in most public places such as workplaces and administration, education and of course; the media.

Today, while some Nigerian media content are produced with indigenous languages, majority of media messages are transmitted or published in English. Although, the current globalization trend may necessitate and justify the use of English in the dissemination of media messages, it is important to consider the recipients of such messages in order to ensure effective communication. Being a multilingual nation with considerable low level of literacy, sole use of English language in disseminating mass media content may render such communications ineffective. Besides, as Salawu (2006:3) puts it, "while we cannot wish away the fact of history, as represented by colonialism, which has made English and French languages (especially) to be global and connecting linguistic modes, yet we, as people of less dominant cultures, cannot afford to lose the whole essence of our being, that is, our languages".

Nigerian Media and Indigenous Language for Development and National Security

Indigenous language as used in this paper refers to the native languages of Nigerians. Nigeria is a multilingual nation which according to scholars has between 200 and 400 languages (Oso, 2006). Nigerian indigenous languages fall into three categories. Adeniyi and Bello (2006) identify these as those languages with national outlook i.e. Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba; those that are regional such as Edo, Efik, Tiv, Nupe and Fulfulude among others and lastly; those that are limited to the locality in which they are spoken. Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba which are languages of the three major ethnic groups in the country; are widely spoken in many parts of the country while other languages belonging to minority as among are less spoken compared to the first three. (Oso, 2006). Generally, however, indigenous languages reflect individual cultures of given societies. Maja (2007) describes a person's language as a vehicle of his particular culture. According to this writer, language mirrors ones identity and it is an integral part of culture. While language remains a primary medium of most types of communication, the fact still remains that several elements come into play for any communication function to be successful. One of these components is the suitability of a particular language to the context and audience or recipient of the message. In the use of language for development communication, scholars have identified indigenous languages as playing very vital roles.

The importance of indigenous language use for dissemination of national security messages for development in Nigeria cannot be overstated. Packaging and disseminating these messages through the mass media will in no small way help in creating persuasive awareness that will result in substantial change in citizens. Moreover, considering the low level of literacy in the country thus far, indigenous language is ideal in communication of developmental messages. In addition to the fact that it gives better understanding and meaning to people, the liking people have for their native tongue and sense of pleasure and satisfaction derived in communicating in native languages could make communication in indigenous languages effective. While noting that the language of dissemination is a crucial aspect of message treatment, Salawu (2006) submits that the indigenous language of a community is best suited for conveying messages to such communities. "Specifically, the mass media that use indigenous languages are important for the purpose of information, mobilisation and continuity" (Salawu, 2006:8). Today, while the indigenous languages feature in some of our Nigerian Media, particularly the broadcast media majority of media content still comes in English.

Modern journalism in Nigeria however has its origin in the publication of indigenous or local language newspapers. The pioneering effort in newspaper publication was started by Rev. Henry Townsend, an Anglican Missionary, in Abeokuta in 1859. He started the publication of a Yoruba newspaper titled *Iwe irohin fun awon ara egba ati Yoruba* (meaning newspaper for the Egba and Yoruba nationals). The paper, which was first published on 3 December 1859, was the first newspaper in Nigeria. Publication in other indigenous languages soon followed years later like *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo*, *Alaroye*, *Unwana Efik*, *Obukpo Efik* etc. Although, they have gone into extinction, *Onuora*, *Ogene* and *Akuko Uwa* are also publication in Igbo Language (Ikwebuzo and Nnabuihe, 2006). Some indigenous language newspapers in circulation include *Alaroye* (Yoruba), *Ogene* (Igbo), and *Aminiya* (Hausa) (Ifeduba, 2012).

Salawu (2006) notes that a lot of currently existing newspapers are irregular, obscure and unknown. Presently most of these papers are still not published daily. The fact however remains that the use of indigenous language for developmental purposes cannot be overemphasised. This is due to the fact that the powers of the media in communication will only be rendered useless when a language that is alien to the recipients of a developmental message is used. "Indigenous language media offer one clear way of bridging the gap between the urban and the rural, in that they publish in local language and so, naturally, appeal to the literate, rural and urban 'indigenes' to which they are targeted". (Olukotun, 2006: 127).

Consistent with this view, Alabi (2003: 30) submits that "Notwithstanding the inadequacies of vernacular newspaper, like other media of communication, they can serve as useful vehicles to promote development. Indeed, if there is anything media scholars are agreed on, it is the fact that media can be used to promote development." Alabi (2003:18) contends "...indigenous language publications can be used to mobilise the populace and orientate them towards developmental goals." The renewed interest in indigenous language publications of recent (particularly Yoruba papers e.g. the resuscitation of the first Nigerian Newspaper *Iwe-Irohin* after 140 years) could be a pointer to this. The recourse of indigenous language publications may be in keeping with the 1980 Yaoundé Declaration, which urged African governments to start publishing indigenous language newspapers to mobilise the people particularly the majority who are not literate in the English language or the official language of the different countries, which are mostly foreign.

In broadcasting, with particular reference to radio, Oyero (2003) reveals in a survey that the use of indigenous language is very significant as it gives the people better understanding and meaning of radio messages. Majority of the respondents indicated their preference for indigenous language programmes. These respondents agreed that they understand radio messages better in their own indigenous tongue and that it makes for ease of assimilation and message recall. Majority also professed to have a natural liking, good feeling of enjoyment and sense of satisfaction when radio messages are relayed in their mother tongue. These attributes make for effective development communication.

However, while a wide range of federal, state and private broadcast stations disseminate development messages in indigenous languages, considerable lapses still exist. Onukaogu (2002) cited in the Salawu (2006) found that out of 7,560 minutes of weekly broadcast programming in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states only 425 minutes was allotted for indigenous language programmes while programmes in English language had the remaining 7,135. The use of Yoruba and Hausa however appear to be more popular among broadcast stations, especially those dominant in the locality they are transmitting from. For instance, *Koko inu iwe irohin* (a review of English Language newspapers) is a Yoruba programme featured on Bond FM, Metro FM and Radio Nigeria 2 all in Lagos... similar programmes also exist in programming of stations such as Broadcasting Corporation of Oyo State (BCOS), and Gateway Radio 1 in Abeokuta (Salawu, 2006:13-14). Such reviews in Yoruba Language are also part of programming on Kwara State Television Authority KWTV, Radio Nigeria: Harmony FM, Kwara

Broadcasting Corporation (Radio Kwara AM and Midland FM) as well as local FM, all in Kwara state. Aside from the reviews, other programmes such as news and discussions as well as entertainment and some empowerment programmes are also featured in indigenous languages in considerable numbers on broadcast stations in the country. The use of Hausa language by northern stations such as Radio Nigeria Kaduna, Nagarta Radio and Kada FM (to name a few) is equally quite commendable as quite a number of programmes are transmitted in this language. What is more, even foreign broadcast stations have recognised the need for indigenous language broadcasting in Nigeria. For example, there is the BBC Hausa Service.

With regards to national security in particular, Okeke (2012:9), writing on the effective use of language for national security points out that "language, national security and development have intricate relations". This scholar identifies effective and appropriate use of language as a subtle and powerful means of attaining positive national development and maximum security. According to Okeke, this can be achieved through the right choice of words which are not capable of creating "threat, anxiety or danger to human existence". Although Okeke's study centered on the use of English language, the paper in an analysis of some "careless and unguarded statements" made by some Nigerian politicians, showed that inappropriate use of language can indeed be inciting and could thus lead to national insecurity. Given this power of language in communication, it can thus be inferred that at the appropriate use of indigenous languages can equally be explored for positive development and maximum security.

Inani (n.d.) contends that "The most contentious issue and perhaps the most important if indigenous languages are ever to be used as development tools, is their relationship to education and if, as seen as the gateway to informing new generations about development and the world around them, is best done in the mother-tongue." When likened to national security, the fact that indigenous languages can be used to enlighten, educate and sensitise even the non-literate in the society makes it an added advantage towards ensuring that every citizen is adequately informed about all issues bordering on development and national security.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The mass media are powerful agents of communication. This makes them suitable for disseminating messages on issues of national security and development. The obvious reason is that only the informed possess the requisite knowledge and an attitude to participate effectively in activities that can promote and sustain

the security and development of a nation. The same can equally be said about getting people to refrain from all activities or behaviour that could result in insecurity or stand as impediments to a nation's developmental efforts.

In a multilingual society like Nigeria, the role of indigenous language in any developmental effort cannot be overlooked. As noted severally throughout this paper, communication in a people's native language is often better appreciated and understood.

Hence, this paper concludes that, to use the Nigerian media effectively for national security and development, there should be a synergy between the use of indigenous languages and the mass media in packaging development related messages as well as issues bothering on national security in particular. In other words, when such messages disseminated through the media are strategically planned and packaged in the native language of the recipients, the messages are capable of having the desired effects on the recipients.

It is therefore recommended that in addition to English versions of key development and national security related messages in the mass media, national and as many regional and other local languages should equally be employed. When media messages are conveyed both in English; our official language, versions of such messages should also be produced in suitable local languages based on the needs of the target audiences. This way, the messages have wider reach. Such messages tend to accommodate not only the elite or educated in the society; it equally accommodates every other segment of the society irrespective of their literacy level. This is the only way the media can truly be used to achieve effective development.

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Chapter Twenty-Seven

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR NATIONAL COHESION

by

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Abstract

This paper gives a cursory look at the challenges in the present Nigeria, and observes that the trend is taking a dangerous dimension which needs to be urgently curbed. Consequently, the paper posits that proper and adequate communication strategies need to be carefully employed to stop the ugly incident which has maimed the reputation of the country in the global perspective. It also critically examines the roles the English language plays, particularly in the multi-lingua, multi-cultural Nigeria, giving a third eye to Confucius' position on the unifying role language plays in any society. The paper recommends effective communication strategies for national cohesion and mutual understanding, particularly in a crisis-ridden country like Nigeria.

27:1 Introduction

Nigeria was supposed to be economically viable and politically stable because of her diverse natural endowment. Unfortunately, however, the endowments that ought to be a source of strength for the country are a potent cause of diversity in her purported unity. For instance, economically, Nigeria is a potential powerhouse, a large population, 167million by the last official estimate, arable land, more than 300,000 square kilometers, and 13,000 square kilometers of fresh water. In addition, the country has gas, oil, solid minerals, forests, fisheries, wind power and potentials for tourism and hosting of international sporting events (Muhammadu Buhari, 2013)