

**HAUSA: A LANGUAGE FOR FOSTERING UNITY AND
PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN ADAMAWA STATE
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This research pays attention on the use of language (i.e., Hausa language) for fostering unity and progressive development in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The all-round development of humankind relies significantly on effective communication, with language as the bedrock of the communication system. Language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of idea into thoughts. Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates. This study is very important in the sense that, when members of society are united it brings progress development. Unity is being together or at one with someone or something. It is the opposite of being divided. It is the quality or state of not being multiple. This study is in two parts; where descriptive approach is used in guiding the data collected. The researcher applied interview and observation techniques in gathering data. This study found out that, apart from peace unity is the bedrock of progressive development of any society, it is also found out that, with a unity members of the society are living in peace and cooperative. This study recommends amongst others that, to use Hausa as language of instruction in teaching the significance of unity in the society. Government should also introduce a team of awareness: to enlighten people on the negative effect of disunity in these



4th to 7th March 2024

Science and Humanities: Bringing the Divide for Human Development

areas.

Keywords: Hausa, Language, Fostering, Unity and Development.

Introduction

This research pays attention on the use of language (i.e. Hausa Language) for fostering unity and progress development in Adamawa state, Nigeria. The all-round development of humankind relies significantly on effective communication, with language as the bedrock of the communication system (Sarfi, 2007). According to the New Encyclopedia Britannica (2007), Henry Sweet, an English phonetician and language scholar started that, language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words; words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of idea into thoughts. Cristal (2005) says language is the expression of emotions, feelings; language is one way of representing reality. Lyons (1981) opines that, languages are the principal communication systems used by particular groups of human beings within the specific society of which are members. From the above definitions, we realized that, language is playing a vital role amongst different ethnic groups in a given society; society cannot exist without the use of language.

Hausa on the other side, is a language that has largest ethnic group in West Africa, and the primary language spoken in all Northern State in Nigeria, with a population of over one hundred speakers and with another wider regional thirty million bilingual speakers from Niger, Northern Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Sudan, Togo amongst others (Girei, 2022). Hausa language is one of the widely spoken African language. It is one of the three languages of Nigeria accorded the status major the other two being Igbo and Yoruba (Abubakar, 2000).

Unity on the other hand, is generally regarded as the attribute of a



4th to 7th March 2024

Science and Humanities: Bringing the Divide for Human Development

thing whereby it is undivided in itself and yet divided from another (Harley, 2005). In other word, unity refers to the state of being united or working together towards a common goal. It is essential to work in collaboration with others to achieve success and progress. Adamawa State is a multilingual society that made up of about eighty-seven different languages. The researcher observed that, unity fosters a sense of belonging, which can enhance progress and development, and it promotes mutual respect and understanding amongst ethnic groups. Whenever people come together, they learn from each other and develop their society. This study talks about the use of language (i.e., Hausa language) for fostering Unity and Progress Development in Adamawa State, where we selected two local government areas in three Senatorial Districts of Adamawa State as our scope of study (i.e. MayoBelwa and Demsa from the South, Girei and Song from the Central, Maiha and Mubi South from the North). The paper also examines a brief historical background of Adamawa State, aim and objectives of the study, model of operation, review of some related literature, research methodology, analysis of data and discussion of result, research findings amongst others.

A Brief Historical Background of Adamawa State

The name “Adamawa” came from the founder of kingdom, Modibbo Adama, a regional leader of the Fulani Jihad organized by Usmanu Danfodiyo of Sokoto in 1804. Adamawa was created out of Gongola State on 27th August, 1991 as one of the nine new States created by the Federal Military Government. Adamawa is one of the largest States of Nigeria and occupies about 36, 917 square kilometers¹. Adamawa shares border with Borno State to the Northwest, Gombe State to the West and Taraba State to the Southwest. It eastern border forms the National



4th to 7th March 2024

Science and Humanities: Bringing the Divide for Human Development

Eastern border with Cameroon Republic. Prior to its creation in 1991, it was part of the North Eastern States from 1967 to February 1976, and Gongola State 1976-1991 (Girei, 2021). Linguists have discovered that, there are over 80 ethnic groups found in Adamawa State. Some of this indigenous languages includes; Fulfulde, Kanuri, Chamba, Kugama, Batta, Bille, Balli, Verre, Tambo, Kwah, Lunguda, Waja, Lilba, Mwama, Marghi, Higgi, Fali, Gude, Lala, Hoba, Ga'anda, Kanakuru, Gwoba, Bura, Yandang, Mboi, Yungur amongst others. There are 21 local government areas in the State namely; Demsa, Fufore, Ganye, Girei, Gombi, Guyuk, Hong, Jada, Lamurde, Madagali, Maiha, Mayo-Belwa, Michika, Mubi South, Mubi North, Numan, Song, Shelleng, Toungo, Yola South, and Yola North. The major occupation of the people is farming; in terms of population, the State has 3, 178, and 950, (Population Census, 2006) projected to 4, 248, and 400 in 2016. People in the State practices Islam, Christianity, and traditional religions.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to use language (i.e. Hausa Language) for fostering Unity and Progress Development in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Moreover, the objectives of this study is to examine and analyze this Unity and Progress Development situation in Adamawa State, using Hausa language as an example.

Model of Operation

This study assumes the theoretical of descriptive linguistics that, profounded by Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and Bloomfield in (1960) who were first leading linguists of American structuralism to emphasize the importance of descriptive approach to the study of language. Here the researcher used Hausa language as a medium and discusses the Unity



and Progress Development situation in Adamawa State.

Review of Related Literature

This section discusses some of the related literature of Plato (1992), Marcus (1982), Jung (1971), Parsons (1991), Maslow (1987), Rousseau (2012), Harley (2005), Dechont (2005), amongst others, on the concept of Unity and Progress. Plato (1992) discusses the concept of unity in his work "The Republic" where he presents the idea of the forms or ideas as the ultimate source of unity and reality. Unity is the state or fact of being united or combined into one, as of the parts of a whole; unification absence of diversity; unvaried or uniform character (Marcus, 1982). Harley (2005) opines that, unity is generally regarded as the attribute of a thing whereby it is undivided in itself and yet divided from another. Jung (1971) says unity is the process of individuation and the integration of the psyche. Unity is regarded as self-actualized individuals experience a sense of unity and integration (Maslow, 1987). Dechont (2005) argued that, unity is the opposite of being divided. This means unity is all about togetherness or oneness.

From the above definitions, the researcher observed that, unity is the stage of being united or working together towards common goals. It is essential to work in collaboration with others to achieve success and progress. Unity brings progress and development more especially in a multilingual society like Adamawa State. It promote mutual understanding amongst different ethnic groups. Society and it members cannot move forward when there is disunity.

Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher applies an interview and observation techniques in gathering information for the reason of conducting the



research. Other method that has been applied is the use of relevant library materials.

Analysis of Data and Discussion of Result

As mentioned earlier, Adamawa State is a multilingual and multicultural society or settlement that comprises of over eighty different ethnic groups with their different cultural identity across the twenty-one local government areas in the state. There is need to use language accordingly in order to get more unity amongst different ethnic groups for unity and progress development. Unity is playing a vital role in any society. Disunity has destroyed many societies and nations in the world. Hausa language is serving as a “language of communication” in all part of Northern Nigeria. With this development, Hausa language is playing a significance role in maintaining unity and progress development in Adamawa State and Nigeria as whole.

Our discussions centered on the use of Language (i.e. Hausa Language) for fostering Unity and Progress Development in Adamawa State, Nigeria based on three issues:

- (a) Language as a medium of communication.
- (b) Cultural aspect.
- (c) Religious activities.

The researcher took two local government areas each from the three Senatorial Districts in the State i.e., MayoBelwa and Demsa (Southern), Girei and Song, (Central), and Maiha, Mubi South (Northern) as sample areas.

Language as a Medium of Communication

Language is a very common and easy source of communication; it is the



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basic of human civilization, which would have been impossible without it. Human community or society can hardly exist without the use of language. Language is a symbolic system used for communicative purposes. Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which the members of a social group interact with each other. Language is a human system of communication that produces and maintains the oneness of a people. Language is very important means of establishing and maintaining relationship with other people. Language serves as a vehicle of people culture. Adamawa State is a multilingual society that comprises of over eighty different ethnic groups across the twenty-one Local Government Areas; there is need for unity amongst these ethnic groups in order to get progress and development. Unity is the state of different areas or groups being joined together to form a single society, organization and nation. The unity and progress development in these areas is very interesting; there is mutual respect and understanding amongst these ethnic groups.

For example: languages spoken in MayoBelwa Local Government comprises of Fulfulde, Yangdang, Kugama, Chamba, Mumuye and amongst others, while in Demsa there are Mbula, Batta, Bille and Bali (Southern Zone). Song Local Government Area there are Yungur, Mboi, Gudu, Fulbe and Batta. In Girei Local Government the languages comprises of Fulfulde, Tambo, Kwah, and Batta (Central Zone). While in Maiha there are Nzayi and Fulfulde, in Mubi South there is Gude (Northern Zone).

This study observed that, people of these areas are living together in unity. People agree and act together for a particular purpose. They learned from one another and developed deeper appreciation for progress and development. Despite that Hausa native speakers came from far North, some Hausas were there before the amalgamation of



4th to 7th March 2024

Science and Humanities: Bringing the Divide for Human Development

Northern and Southern part of this country (i.e. before the birth of Nigeria). Hausa is serving as a Lingua franca/ language of communication in maintaining or fostering unity and progress development in Adamawa State. People of these areas use Hausa language in almost all their daily activities (i.e. settlement places, Schools, market, businesses shop, places of worship and sometimes houses etc.).

Cultural Aspect

Culture is one of the most important human attributes and endowments that are essential to the development of any society and nation. Culture is always regarded as a symbol of identity. No culture can exist which does not have at its centre the structure of natural language (i.e. culture and language are interwoven). Culture is one of the complicated issues in Adamawa, because the State is a multicultural one. Culture refers to society and its way of life. It is define as a set of value and belief or a cluster of learned able as well as livable; culture is an essential element in understanding how social systems change, because culture influences both the norms and values of such systems and the behaviour of groups in their interactions within and across systems. Culture consist of the values, beliefs, systems of language, communication, and practices that people share in common and that can be used to define people as a collective entity. Therefore, culture means the whole life of an individual or group of individuals. Adamawa State being one of the multicultural society in Nigeria with cultural differences people of different cultures use to understand each other. With the help of unity they use language to foster their cultures where, Yangdang ethnic groups learned from Chambas likewise, Chambas learned from Yangdangs. Same applicable to Batta, Bille, Bali, Fulbe, Gudu, Yungur, Mboi, Kwah, Nzayi and Gude



respectively. Unity is always brings progress and development. Society that is not united used to loose human and capital progressive development.

The researcher observed that, these multicultural communities used to spread their cultures through inter-marriages, and during cultural festivals. Every cultural group presents their way of life, in both music and dance; sometimes they displayed food items to the audience. These issues foster unity amongst different ethnic groups in the State.

Religious Activities

Religious activities is one of the important issue that brings different ethnic groups together in Adamawa State. Religion is the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude; as far as they apprehend themselves to stand, in relation to whatever they may, consider the divine. Religion is also seem as the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, a concern which qualifies all other concerns as preliminary and a concern that in itself provides the answer to the question of the meaning of our existence. Religion like culture is a symbolic transformation of experience.

This study indicates that, Adamawa State being a multi-religious State those members of it and different ethnic groups practices different religion. Unity among the ethnic groups brings religious tolerances. According to the traditional saying “these people were practiced traditional religion” at time, Arabs traders introduced Islamic Religion to the Hausa land and Europeans introduced Christianity to the Southern part of Nigeria through missionaries later Hausas and Southerners spread these two religion to Adamawa State . This research observed that, people of the same family background (i.e. Chamba, Kugama, Bille, Mboi, Bata, Gudu, Nzayi and Gude) practices different religion, in the



society. These places of worship use language (Hausa Language) in fostering unity and progress development in the state.

Hausa a Language for Fostering Unity and Progress Development in Adamawa State

Nigeria as a nation is been blessed by multilingual and multicultural entities. Adamawa State is one of the State that has over eighty spoken indigenous languages. When members of different ethnic groups are united, it foster unity and progress development, and disunity leads to crisis. In order to foster unity and progress development in Adamawa State and Nigeria, there is need for Nigeria and Nigerians to understand and realized that, it is good and necessary to use our indigenous language(s) (i.e. Hausa Language in the Northern Nigeria) in carrying out all activities. Indigenous language is a language that is native to a region and spoken by indigenous people, often reduced to the status of a minority language. In other word, Indigenous languages are the tribal, native or local language spoken. The language would be from a linguistically distinct community that has been settled.... In the context of Nigeria, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are regarded as national languages. Hausa language is one of the core indigenous language that is always serving as Lingua franca language of communication in Northern Nigeria. Moreover, the use of Hausa will help and assist in fostering unity and progress development in Adamawa State. For instance, the significance of unity and effect of disunity can be instructed using Hausa language, so that each ethnic groups can understand such situations. Use of Hausa during businesses activities by different ethnic groups can help in fostering unity, and to emphasis on the negative impact of disunity among people; it will avoid misunderstanding in our society. Religion leaders should use Hausa to carry out their religious activities. Use of



Hausa can also help our traditional leaders to tackle misunderstanding among the ethnic groups during cultural and festivals activities.

Findings

From this study, the researcher discovered and observed the following findings:

1. The researcher found out that unity is the bedrock of progressive development of these societies.
2. This study discovered that because of these unity members of these ethnic groups are living in peace and cooperative.
3. It is also observed that members of these ethnic groups learned from one another (i.e. their different cultures).
4. The researcher found out that because of these unity inter marriages has taken place amongst them.
5. There is religious tolerances amongst the different ethnic groups in these societies.
6. This study also discovered that disunity destroyed communities and nation at whole. It causes conflict amongst members of the communities.

Recommendations

Unity is a word for togetherness or oneness. When there is unity, there is progress and development and language plays a vital role in uniting different ethnic groups in Adamawa and Nigeria.

This study recommends the followings:

1. Ethnic groups' leaders should continue to call on the important of living in unity.
2. Traditional leaders should call upon people that disunity is always destroying the whole society.



3. People should understand that when society is united, there is progress and development.
4. Religious leaders should continue to preach on unity and they should use Hausa language to pass their messages.
5. People in these areas should continue to work together to bring more progress and development.
6. Government should organized seminar/workshop on the significance of unity in Adamawa State and Nigeria.

Conclusion

This research pays attention on the use language (i.e. Hausa language) for fostering unity and progress development in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The research discusses on the use of Hausa Language for fostering unity in three areas: Language as a medium of communication, Cultural aspect and Religious activities. Two Local Government Areas where been used in three Senatorial District of Adamawa as the scope. Unity builds peace, progress and development between different languages and cultures. Unity promotes mutual understanding amongst different ethnic groups. It foster a sense of belonging, which can enhance progress and development. This study reviews some related literature of different scholars on the concept of unity and progress. This study also discussed on a brief historical background of Adamawa State, aim and objectives, model of operation, research methodology, analysis of data and discussions of result amongst others. This study found out that, unity is the bedrock of progressive development and members of the ethnic groups learn from each other. The researcher recommends amongst others that, ethnic groups' leaders should continue to call on the important of living in unity. Government should organized seminar/workshop to call on the significance of unity in these societies.



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