

# LANGUAGE EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC REHABILITATION AND SELF RELIANCE

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## **Abstract**

A number of policies have been formulated to uplift the standard of economic strategies in Nigeria. However, these policies sometime failed due to communication problems arising from the language barrier. This paper examines the general overview of language education for economic rehabilitation and self reliance and however to enumerate the economic problems and recommend for the accomplishment of these economic rehabilitation.

## **Introduction**

Language according to Waddowson (1973:3) is defined as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols which permits all people in a given culture or other people who have learned the system of that culture to communicate or interact.

In view of this, language helps us to identify each other's problems and find solutions to them. Language is a vehicle for academic achievement and no society or nation will develop without a communication system. Without language communication becomes impaired when a speaker is unable to make his listeners understand or feel something he wants them to do or get them to do.

Communication is an essential aspect of living and for communication to be functionally effective, the use of language is the appropriate vehicle.

Cystal (1987: 78) defines languages as: A means by which human relate themselves to the world, to each other and to the community of which they are members.

As regard to this definition, language is communication and at the same time life itself. It is a system of units, realizable in some sensory medium; and hardly can any nation prosper without this priceless possession called language.

## **Definition of Economic Rehabilitation and Reliance**

Economic rehabilitation according to Osuala (1998) is the service of preparing disabled person for enumerative employment through diagnosis, guidance, physical restoration, training and placement. Reliance is the state of restoring an economy after serious illness or disability.

In line with this definition, when a nation is ill, it simply means that she is facing a lot of problems which could be inflation, low acquisition of skills or technical know-how, disunity, unemployment, in proficiency for public service, etc. which in one way or the other affects the economy of the nation due to lack of proper communication services which makes language to play a vital role.

'The Associate-ship Certificate in Education service' *Language Arts Methods*. (1983:1), discussing the concept of language, stresses that:

Language is man's unique accomplishment, more than anything else, it sets man apart from the animal world. Without language there would be no progress, no civilization, no culture.

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With this, we are convinced that language is an instruction of helping and restoration to the nation's economy.

## **The Role of Language Education in Economic Rehabilitation**

Language education brings unity and when there is unity, progress always reign. This reminds us about what the National Policy on Education professes.

It is seen as the way of preserving the people culture. Having the firm belief that learning of a

language is a weapon for nation unity. No community, society or nation can succeed without being united hence united we stand, divided we fall. It was in respect of this that the National Policy on Education emphasizes that each child should be encouraged to learn one of the three major languages in Nigeria, that is Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo.

**The Policy States:** That government will see to it that medium of instruction of primary schools initially the mother tongue or language of immediate community. This would be followed by the learning of any of the three major Nigerian languages as a second language for the promotion of national unity and economic welfare.

The above attestation expresses that language (indigenous language) play vital role in the educational system and as a matter of uniting the nation together improves the economy respectively.

Since most of the Nigerian languages are baby languages in terms of using them as a medium of instruction. The government policy concerning the economic situation has it as a great impediment in passing any law hence the information will riot be will understood by the speakers of local languages of the nation and as a result will not reach them.

Language is used to create awareness of any economic change from the government or from the citizen in order to restore the economy or keep it forging ahead. In Nigeria today, we have freedom of speech and this can only be expressed through language. So, that is to say that every citizen of the nation has to contribute directly or indirectly to the restoration of the nation's economy by saying no or yes to any law passed in the country through a medium called language.

### **The Economic Situation in Nigeria Today**

From time to date, the economy of Nigeria is not something to write home about. But the economy became so bad in the recent years that the masses find it difficult to adapt. Money has no value again as result of this there was high cost of living. But then, in order to restore the nation's economy the government has to increase the price of fuel which the masses fail to understand due to communication barrier more especially people in the outskirts of the nation. They .were complaining because of the increase not knowing the economic benefit of it. That is to say in this regard that language plays an important role in the economic situation of the nation.

Some banks like Savanna Bank, National Bank, Co-operative and Commerce Bank (CCB) were closed down due to their failure to meet up with the demand of the Central Bank. This is really telling on the economic situation in the country.

In terms of foreign exchange, naira has no value in the world market and this makes the cost of importation of foreign goods to be very high. There is no establishment of new industries as far as the county is concerned. Most of the old ones have been closed down. As a result of all these, the country depends wholly on importation of foreign goods which will now become very costly and increase the cost of living. Everybody in Nigeria is aware that the country cannot boast of production of any quality good unless it comes from foreign country. Most of these things contribute greatly to the fall of the nation's economy instead of restoring it.

When you talk of National Electoral Power Authority (NEPA) in Nigeria it is not something to write home about. Light is not constant and the authority takes off the light indiscriminately without any genuine reason. This leads to communication barrier between the authority and the masses thus graduation to misunderstanding between the two parties. In respect of this, the NEPA policy should be translated into all local languages so that all will be aware of everything concerning the electricity issue. This is where language plays on important role.

### **Recommendations**

Since education is a viable tool for economic, social and political development of a nation and language as an integral aspect of education plays an important role in economic rehabilitation should be put in place that will facilitate the emergence of a language that will rehabilitate the economy of the nation.

To this, the paper is recommending the following:-

- a Encourage the graduates of language education by granting them employment opportunities,
- b. Qualified teachers or lecturers for language teaching should be provided in order to acquire  
necessary skills needed for economic awareness and rehabilitation,
- c Incentives and bursary award should be given to teachers and students who study language  
more than those who study other subjects.
- d Committee on language education should be set up that will critically observe the language education and recommend options that are viable and that have prospects of restoring the nation's economy.
- e Language experts should be saddled with the responsibility of communicating the government policy to the society, by using the indigenous languages to reach the grassroots.

### **Conclusion**

I suppose that the nation needs just little effort to develop or prosper in her economy through language only if she can adopt these recommendations mentioned above.

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