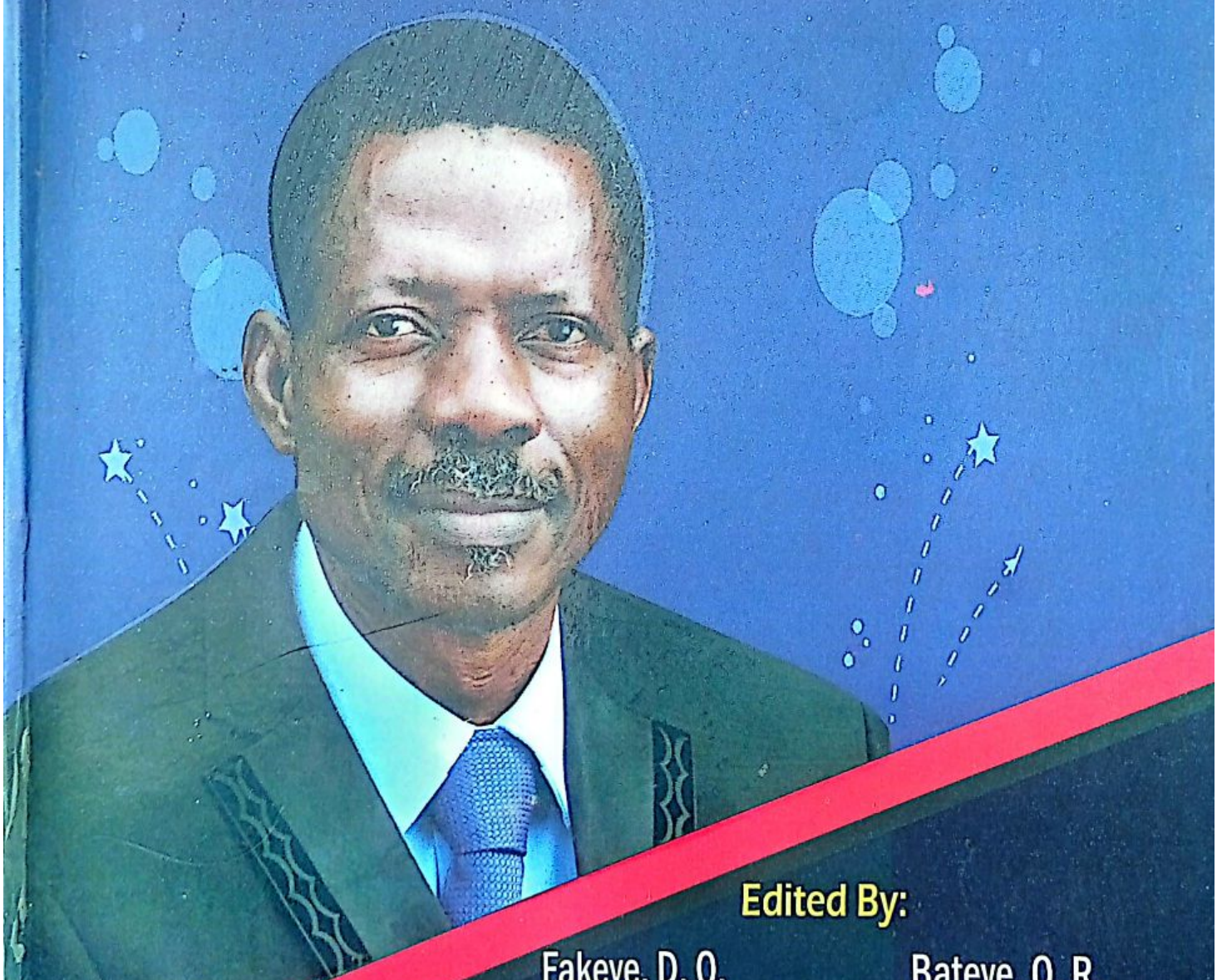
FURTHER THOUGHTS ON LANGUAGE, EDUCATION AND THE CURRICULUM NEXUS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

A Festschrift in Honour of

Professor Clement Olusegun Olaniran Kolawole



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Oladunjoye, S.A.O.
Alade, I. A.
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THE LANGUAGE-CURRICULUM-EDUCATION NEXUS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: LANGUAGE AS THE SPINAL CORD

Samson Olusola Olatunji

Introduction

Sustainable development is a very popular subject-matter in the field of education and educational research worldwide. Education, through correct implementation of culturally relevant curriculum is a major instrument for attaining the lofty goal. Language is a component as well as the vehicle for cultural transmission. Thus, to have a culturally relevant curriculum, Nigerian indigenous languages have roles to play beyond what currently obtains. This piece is thus an engagement with deeper insights into the anatomical position of language as the spinal cord of the type of curriculum in the education system that can deliver sustainable development to Nigeria.

Interrogating the Concept of Sustainable Development

Development is a concept that is synonymous with social change, growth, evolution, progress, modernization and advancement (Ingemar and Saha, 2016). But since linguists have pointed out that a state of absolute synonymy is impossible, it should not be surprising that growth is somehow different from development though the two have a level of meaning similarity. While growth focuses majorly on increase in size, development significantly has to do with increase in ability or capability. For example, a child may experience physical growth as a result of age and other favourable factors but the same child may exhibit mental retardation or deficiency in one or two areas of capabilities expected of a normal person of his or her age. Such a child is said to be growing but getting underdeveloped. Similarly, a small community that manifests numerical increase as a result of uncontrolled procreation but lacks socio-economic, educational and technological advancement can be said to be growing without developing.

Similarly, change does not necessarily always have the same meaning as development. While a change for the better connotes

development, a change for the worse is the opposite of development. Also, progress in the wrong direction takes the person or society making it far away from development. So, development is complete only when all the synonyms provided by Ingemar & Saha (2016) are combined: social change for the better, desirable growth, evolution, progress in the right direction, modernization and advancement

Among various definitions of development in extant literature, Mustapha's (2010) definition of development as the improvement of people's lifestyle through improved, qualitative and functional education; incomes, skills development and fulfilled employment shall be a major anchor for this current discourse. Improvements can be observed in certain spheres of the Nigerian life. But such improvements do not amount to sustainable development because they rest on consumerism but not qualitative and functional education and skills advance. Wholesale importation of material technologies instead of acquisition of intangible technologies for generating indigenised life-improving technological products depletes the country's external reserve.

Sustainable development must be globally endorsed, positive, encourage ecological and socio-cultural, political and economic in dimensions, context-bound and strategic in implementation (Mavesera, 2011). It is thus imperative that the multilingual and multicultural identities of Nigerians are significantly encouraged for the country to experience sustainable development. This is to ensure that development is context-bound linguistically and culturally. If otherwise, the same people that are target beneficiaries of the developmental strides will be the ones that will antagonize it.

Language

A straightforward definition of the term "language policy" is not as common as its various descriptions and discussions (Johnson, 2013). One of the major attributes of Language that runs through all the definitions and descriptions is that it is used principally for communication. This, by extension, means it is used for the preservation and transmission of socio-economic, cultural, and professional values. Without language, there can be no education,

curriculum or development among humans. Therefore, language is a factor that runs through all of human endeavours. The ideas that constitute a curriculum, the expression of same, the implementation, evaluation and revision of same cannot take place without the use of language.

The teacher who was not at the meetings at which the curriculum was developed can implement it as desired because language has been used to transmit it to him or her through printed language. He or she too implements the content by employing language in interaction with the learners. So, language must be used for mutual understanding at every stage of the curriculum's lifespan.

Curriculum

Lopes' (2016) acknowledgement of the intellectual complexity of the task of defining the term "Curriculum" is based on its multifaceted, multilevel, . multidisciplinary and far-reaching nature. Barrow's (2015:3) submission that curriculum study is a confused field" and curriculum is a rather broad term used differently by various practitioners corroborates this. The curriculum, according to Henson (2015), is the basic instrument with which schools actualize their goals. In the current study, however, curriculum shall be conceived as all planned and unplanned learning contents, activities and programmes that learners are exposed to overtly or covertly to assist them to develop all their potentials for usefulness to self and society.

Curriculum used to be popularly regarded as one of the offshoots of education. But advances in knowledge have shown the enormity of the concept of curriculum that it is now accepted to be coextensive with the broad domain of educational studies (Barrow, 2015). It is through the instrumentality of the curriculum that the government can introduce and sustain educational reforms that are to impact on other aspects of life in a society.

The different school subjects contained in a curriculum used to be treated as separate and unrelated entities. But over the years, this view of the curriculum has changed progressively. The

interrelatedness of the different school subjects in developing the total personality of the learner is being factored into curriculum design, development and implementation to achieve a sort of desirable synergy. The separate-subject approach to curriculum design, development, implementation and review has been proved to be grossly inadequate in tackling the knowledge and skill challenges of this dispensation.

The separate-subject approach to curriculum issues can be held responsible for many students' distaste for some school subjects arising from inability to see such subjects' relevance to academic success and improved living. Students cannot be expected to perform well in such subjects that they erroneously find irrelevant. This results in high drop-out rates. Even when many students successfully graduate from colleges or universities, there is no evidence that they have been positively affected by any school subject that is not within the narrow confines of their chosen disciplines. Nigeria is thus filled with many university graduates that are not fit to be referred to as truly educated or functionally literate. A truly educated person is expected to demonstrate evidence of possession of the right values and virtues like integrity, religious tolerance, open-mindedness, and others. It is thus not surprising to hear some Boko Haram members, their sponsors and supporters speak English, showing that they are recipients of the same Western education that they have turned round to attack.

Boko Haram literally means "Western education is bad" (Omede, 2011:90) or Western education is an abomination or anathema. This clearly shows two facts, among others: (1) membership of the group is largely constituted by those who are non-recipients of Western education. (2) Members of the group that have been exposed to Western education failed to understand and imbibe the essence of the education received, meaning they are merely basically literate but not functionally. The sustainability that a good curriculum would establish in its recipients is that which empowers them to live well and attain dynamic balance with others and their environments (Gadotti, 2016). It is safe to conclude that as many of the Boko Haram members, their sponsors and sympathizers as have been

exposed to the curricula of different levels of the Nigerian education system have not been able to acquire the skills required for wholesome living and balance with their socio-cultural environment.

If the current education system is to develop the totality of a Nigerian, it must first restore the cultural values that engendered mutual respect and love among various religious groups in the pre-colonial era Nigeria (Thomas, 2015). Before the advent of English-medium Western education, religious differences did not pitch any Nigerian against another. In fact, Ogun worshippers rejoiced with Ifa worshippers, the adherents of Oya would willingly offer sacrifices to Esu when instructed. They had sufficient understanding of their respective faiths because the languages of religious instructions and worship were indigenous. But nowadays, Nigerians are killing one another because of differences in religious convictions because the popular languages of religious instruction and worship activities are English for Christians and Arabic for moslems. Unscrupulous power-hungry people now capitalize on people's inadequate understanding of religion to use the latter to perpetrate terrorism in the guise of religious crusades. The devastation, destruction of lives and property resulting from such terrorist acts take Nigeria many years back and away from sustainable development (De Campos and Olatunji, 2015).

Christison and Murray (2014) describe a curriculum as constituted by socio-cultural artifacts reflecting the target population's local needs, values and beliefs about language and language learning. But the failure of a curriculum to aptly respond to the felt needs as well as the changes in the society is at best described as "learning how to operate a car without putting it in traffic" (Henson, 2015:8). This simply means a curriculum's failure to reflect local contents is like a dislocated limb. Beacco, Fleming, Goullier, Thürmann, and Vollmer (2015), too, have asserted that success at school and critical thinking rest unavoidably on students' mastery of the language of school instruction. McCarty and Nicholas (2014) thus advocate an urgent reclamation of indigenous mother tongues, especially in education, a need which they acknowledge has been a popular preoccupation of studies in educational inquiry and social practice.

Curriculum integration, the application of knowledge to questions and concerns of both personal and social importance (Beane, 2016), blurs the lines of demarcation among the various school subjects and activities in the curriculum. But it is more than simply disregarding the dividing subject lines in the traditional view of curriculum. It is a process of introducing "concrete unity and coherence" into learners' acquisition of knowledge and skills (Beane, 2016). The nexus that run through and connects all the subjects constituting a curriculum must be identified and exploited to achieve the necessary synergy of bits of knowledge from the different subjects so that the total personality of the beneficiaries of the curriculum can be developed. Consequently, the society would become a better place for sustainable development to take place.

Education

The word "education" is often misinterpreted by Nigerians to mean the ability to speak English, understand conversations in it through oral medium or the written (Okediran and Olatunji, 2011). Ukeje's (1984) definition of education as the process that equips the young with ample understanding of the past in order to contribute meaningfully to current developments while getting prepared for future positive contributions is an apt description of the concept of education for this study. Eneh (2016) codifies the past-present-future dimensions of the functionality of education into education as a process, as a product and as a discipline.

Education plays vital roles in a nation's pursuit of and attainment of sustainable development (Roorda and van Son, 2016; Gadotti, 2016). Education, when carried out as expected, should develop the total personality. It should touch the intellectual, moral, spiritual, affective, psychomotor domains of the recipients' development. It is divided into three according to the forms and contents of delivery as well as goals. The three types are formal, informal and non-formal education. Formal education majorly prepares people for white-collar jobs, the informal deals basically with the socio-moral aspects while the non-formal usually deals with the inculcation of skills for

daily bread through manipulation with hands. The roles of language in all the three forms of education cannot be overemphasised.

Considering Archer's (2017) assertion that the education system that would engender sustainable development must be technology-driven, the potentialities of Nigerian indigenous languages to foster such education can be reasonably doubted because the English is the dominant language of technology and technology-driven advances like the Internet (Chapelle, 2003; Kolawole and Olatunji, 2006). However, it is people who been able to internalize basic education in their mother tongues that are prepared to move on to adequately master the English medium contents of technology. Also, if Nigerians are sound in indigenous-language-medium formal education, they can succeed in contributing to the world of technology through the media of their indigenous languages. Considering the fact that some languages have started to challenge English on the Internet (Kelly-Holmes, 2006; Goldsmith and Wu, 2006), Nigerian indigenous languages also have the same opportunity to make their marks on the Internet and in the world of technology in general. But such feat cannot be achieved while operating with a borrowed language.

Language as Spinal Cord of Curriculum and Education for Sustainable Development

The conviction that language is the most predominant basis for understanding and intellectual development is found in all cultures of the world (Wright and Boun, 2016). Intellectual development is built on transmitted bodies of knowledge from previous generations through proverbs, aphorisms, folktale as well as factual historical accounts that are relevant to the socio-cultural peculiarities of each community. The process of preparing the future generation of leaders in the area of intellect, too, can be carried out only through the use of languages. Omolewa (1996) thus concludes that any error in decisions regarding the language for curriculum implementation will result in inevitable failure of such a curriculum.

There is wisdom in according substantial attention to certain seemingly extraneous factors that have material impact on curriculum content (Barrow, 2015). Language factors, even if

erroneously regarded extraneous to curriculum in some disciplines such as the sciences, deserve as serious attention as is given to the learning contents in such disciplines. This, perhaps, gave rise to the paradigm shift from the differential to the uniform credit level pass requirement in English Language for admission into Arts and Sciences programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Decades ago, an ordinary pass in English Language used to be accepted for admission into science and technology programmes in Nigerian tertiary institutions while at least the last credit level was mandatory for access into arts and humanities disciples. But currently, a credit level pass in English is required irrespective of the proposed field of study.

English has been rightly widely recognised as a means of mutual understanding among the various nations that constitute Nigeria. But this bequeathal from the former colonial masters has not been effective in eradicating ethnic sentiments, suspicions and oppositions in the political terrains. Unscrupulous politicians have thus always seized this opportunity to manipulate people against governments' programmes (Ifionu, 1993; Bamgbose, 2006). One can then reasonably wonder if the manipulative politicians and the manipulated have never been exposed to curricular contents that border on political literacy in schools.

Cultural heritage and value, cultural diversity, language and communication are fundamental factors that can determine Nigeria's attainment of sustainable development (Opara, 2010). If the curriculum aimed at engendering development is alien to the learners' cultural orientation, they are faced with the challenge of gaining mastery of the concepts involved before struggling with actual processes. The development, too, cannot last because the final consumers may find it inaccessible because it has no place in their experience.

If the concerned educationists can raise an alarm over the observed disconnect between technology and music in the Australian curriculum (Crawford and Southcott, 2017), their Nigerian counterparts should have reasons to be more aggressive in

advocating more considerable attention to the issues of language in, of and language for education in the curriculum. Negative consequences cannot be averted from students' educational achievement and development when they are denied the right to their indigenous languages and cultures in school (Wiley, 2009). When people do not understand the connection between science and literary arts, they mystify science, regarding it with trepidation and paralysing reverence. This happens because science has been removed from the mainstream culture (Dillon), most possibly by presenting scientific facts in a borrowed language. Policy makers and curriculum planners thus have the responsibility of situating science and technology in the context of culturally relevant literacy and this cannot be fully achieved without employing actual language of the indigenous culture.

Khan (2016) identifies language as the clearest expression of knowledge, wisdom, freedom and culture of the peoples and of their innovative spirit and concludes that it is fundamental to the type of educational process that can result in sustainable development. In all nations, the issue of languages-in-education is more far-reaching to seemingly unrelated matters of national development than can be fathomed through casual observations (Tupas and Martin, 2017). It is thus not an overstatement, though it may not be apparent to non-linguists, to assert that a nation that desires sustainable development must take the issues of language use in curricula and other spheres of life serious.

Nigerians, however, cannot achieve sustainable development while remaining unproductive large scale consumers of tangible scientific and technological products. Intangible technology can be copied to come up with tangible products adapted to peculiar local context. This is the only way sustainable development in science and technology can be achieved (Olatunji, 2015).

There cannot be sustainable development where morality education is ineffective. Corruption has been variously blamed for Nigeria's underdevelopment. As observed by De Campos and Olatunji (2015), when a nation is predominantly populated by morally bankrupt

people produced by a deficient school curriculum, a lot of resources will be wasted on avoidable repairs of public properties rather than new development projects. Also, most politicians that rob Nigeria of economic advancement through misappropriation and outright embezzlement of public funds speak the English language eloquently because they are beneficiaries of Western education. But the morality contents of the education they have received do not have adequate connection with the recipients' cultural roots. As people with Western education increase in number, the moral fortitude that helped most pre-colonial Nigerians to withstand moral temptations reduces drastically. It is noteworthy that in addition to direct instructions in morality offered to children in the pre-colonial days, moral values were effectively inculcated through leisure hour activities like tales by moonlight, riddles, tongue-twisters, oral poetry, and so on. These were very effective in achieving lasting didactic results through linguistic and artistic aesthetics.

Stinson (2015) concludes from ample review of literature that the connection between art or aesthetics and morality has been confirmed. She emphasizes the fact that aesthetics transcends conventional reality, appealing to such inner resources of the individual such as passion, imagination and conscience, helping the individuals to situate themselves in others' shoes. But the benefits of the moral education afforded by art or aesthetics cannot be readily accessed and adequately exploited and utilized when linguistic barriers are present. Manan, David and Dumanig (2016) thus warn that the cultural, literary, aesthetic and sociolinguistic dynamics of the indigenous languages should not be downgraded.

It is a well received fact that science and technology play significant roles in attainment of sustainable development. Therefore, Nigeria can be sure of catalyzing her drive for sustainable development by gearing her curricula at all levels of education towards preparing learners to become innovative science and technology practitioners. In doing this, the country would do well to be guided by a critical look into the language-for-education policies of frontline nations in scientific and technological advancements. The nations that are not mere consumers of tangible technology but producers and

innovators are those that employ their mother tongues extensively for curriculum design, development and implementation (Okediran and Olatunji, 2010). Science education curriculum, therefore, should be carried on through the medium of languages that learners have adequately mastered. The literary aspects of such a language should also be linked with the endeavours to achieve total personal development of the science learners.

When people do not understand the connection between science and literary arts, they mystify it, regarding it with trepidation and paralysing reverence. This happens because the use of a non-indigenous language for science removes it from the mainstream culture (Dillon, 2016). Policy makers and curriculum planners thus have the responsibility of situating science and technology in the context of culturally relevant literacy and this cannot be fully achieved without employing actual language of the indigenous culture. It is high time Nigeria borrowed education for sustainable development (ESD) as an explicit guiding approach which Olsson, Gericke and Chang Rundgren's (2015) finding shows has been producing positive effects on learners' sustainability consciousness in Sweeden.

Considering the need for sustainable development to have a level of global relevance and approval (Mavesera, 2011), one faces the temptation to jump into the hasty and erroneous conclusion that an international language must be the medium of education to engender it. But Taylor-Leech's (2012: 56) observation that community participation in development programmes can be fostered most effectively through the medium of indigenous languages should be instructive enough that no solid development for global prominence except it is grounded in the participants' mother tongue. The education, its linguistic medium and the attendant sustainable development can then be empowered to go "glocal" in scope. "Glocalisation" occurs when a local product of a community gains worldwide acceptance (). A nation that is currently achieving this at an amazing rate is China.

Cabansag (2016), too, has observed that mother tongue based multilingual education is a practical and effective mechanism for empowering its recipients for significant contributions to the globalized and intercultural world. When early primary education is given pupils through their mother tongues, a good start in creative thinking is offered. Subsequent learning, even if through the medium of another language, will be made easy because the pupils' mental capacity for concept mastery must have been adequately developed.

There is ample evidence in extant literature that mother tongue based multilingual education is an excellent catalyst to the realization of curricular goals for sustainable personal and national development everywhere it has been implemented (Kamwangamalu, 2016). Some examples of such countries are Bangladesh (James, 2016), Philippines (Alberto, Gabinete and Rañola, 2016), India and Germany. But Nigeria and other countries that conduct elementary education through the medium of the languages of their former colonial are those lagging behind in matters of sustainable scientific and technological development (Okediran and Olatunji, 2010).

In what seems to be in consonance with the well established fact that the use of children's mother tongues as media of instruction at the basic education level, the National Policy on Education (2013) states that the pupils' mother tongues or the dominant language of the school's immediate environment shall be media of instruction until the end of the fourth year of primary education when English shall progressively take over as medium of instruction. It should be noted with a degree of appreciation to the Nigerian government that this is an improvement on the earlier editions (1998 and 2004) that stipulated the end of the third year. But considering the poor performance of even secondary school leavers in English Language and their general obvious lack of mastery of communication skills in English, one may wish to ask if pupils in Primary 5 are actually ready to master instructional contents in the language.

This policy statement seemed to have been made in oblivion of a much earlier submission by UNESCO (1953: 11) that:

> Mother-tongue instruction should be the best way for children to learn as it bridges the gap between home language and language of instruction. Every language is sufficient enough to give high cognitive skills to its users and there are no major or minor languages. Therefore, mother-tongue instruction should be extended as long as possible. A Lingua Franca or a language of wider communication cannot be a substitute for the mother tongue, and it should be avoided until the child fully acquired their mother tongue

UNESCO's (1953) strong recommendation of the extension of the use of children's mother tongues as media of instruction was based on research. Nigeria, with the evident human and material resource deficit in the education sector, should know that the Nigerian child may not be able to fully acquire either the mother tongue or the English language for comprehension of school instruction in the latter by the end of the fourth year in the primary school. So, it will not be too late to switch over to English as medium of instruction at the end of primary education. This should not sound outrageous because there are countries that use indigenous languages for education throughout (India, China, Germany) and they still occupy prominent positions in the world of sustainable development. Papua New Guinea uses indigenous languages for instruction up till the end of secondary school education and there has not been any cause for regret.

Studies have shown that even at the early primary school level when there is a clear policy statement that pupils' mother tongues or the languages of the immediate environment should be media of instructions, most Nigerian teachers and pupils still prefer English medium education (Olatunji, 2013). As in Pakistan (Manan, David and Dumanig, 2016), English is generally viewed as a sure ticket to well-paid employment and upward social mobility in Nigeria, too. Trudell (2016) had a very similar finding in a study of primary classrooms of Eastern and Southern Africa. One of the questions Trudell (2016) asks is if English is really the villain in the context of the pupils' preference for English which many of them cannot speak

over their mother tongues that they speak well. The same question is relevant to the Nigerian context.

One of the facts that can be deduced from the foregoing is that the Nigerian government's concerns about the language issues as regards making the school curriculum work should transcend mere policy formulation. A lot of resources should be deployed into aggressive advocacy, propaganda and public enlightenment to sensitise parents and pupils and parents to comprehend and embrace the reality of the supremacy of early childhood curriculum implementation in the mother tongues. One of the findings by Manan, David and Dumanig (2016) in a study on a sample of students of high secondary level, teachers and school principals in 11 low-fee English-medium private schools in Quetta, Pakistan shows that comparative lack of social prestige and economic value cause the general apathy to Pakistan indigenous languages as media of instruction. This demonstrates the impact that government policies in other spheres of national life have on language preferences directly and successful curriculum implementation by extension.

Kamwangamalu (2016) advises that the decision to use children's mother tongues as media of curriculum implementation should not be subservient to issues of political sensitivity, technical difficulties, economic limitations, societal tensions, and the established practice. It is noteworthy that of all the hinderances to mother tongue based multilingual education identified by Kamwangamalu (2016), economic limitation is the factor that has been most cited by anti-mother-tongue-based-education spokespeople. But citing financial implications as justification for shying away from mother tongue based multilingual approach to curriculum design and implementation will be sufficiently proved as baseless if it is considered against the background of facts, perhaps empirical evidence, of what the country loses by not making the required investment in extensive use of indigenous languages at least up till the end of secondary school. It should be noted that, as asserted by Emeke (1996), developing a curriculum in itself is not all there is to

the education process but ensuring that the curriculum succeeds in achieving its desired goals.

Hungi, Njagi, Wekulo and Ngware (2017) carried out an experiment on 1867 learners from low-income urban households, attending 147 low-cost private pre-primary schools located in low-income areas of Nairobi in Kenya. The findings showed a significantly greater posttest achievement of learners taught literacy skills using Kiswahili than their counterparts taught using English. This is concrete evidence of successful curriculum implementation through indigenous language compared with a much less successful enterprise through an international language.

It is even against the principle of social justice to make it difficult or impossible for children to acquire basic education in their mother tongue because doing so leads to deprivation of social, political and economic development as well as participation in the global neoliberal economy and the state. A student denied mother tongue based early education may not be able to optimise understanding of power, advocacy as well as engagement in family and community relationships (García and Lin, 2017). For example, a person needs to imbibe the spirit of communalism in order to be loved in a Nigerian setting. But being exposed to Western education in the medium of education has high propensity to make the student individualistic because the language of instruction cannot be completely divorced from the culture of the original speakers. Most students of the English-medium Western education from too early years of life have thus grown to become "cloned Americans or Westerners" (Salawu, 2006:3), potentially "driving the masses to the brink of disaster" in the near future because of "the collapse of societal norms" resulting from their disorientation from their cultural roots (Das, 2004:172).

One of the serious reasons the elites in government may be tempted to continue to pay lip service to the enforcement of the language policy stipulating the use of indigenous languages for instruction at the basic education level since it is an instrument for maintaining the status quo. English is a weapon with which they mesmerize those who have not fully acquired formal education. But "sustainable

development does not look for maintaining the *status quo*, on the contrary, is looks for acknowledging tendencies and the implication of change" (UNESCO, 2005:39). The system of education that would engender sustainable development is that which removes language barriers to enable all citizens to develop selves and contribute to the development of the society at large. Providing education at least to the end of the secondary school level or its equivalents in people's indigenous languages is one sure way of achieving this.

Language, Curriculum and Tertiary Education for Sustainable Development in Nigeria

At the tertiary education level, it is reasonable to expect that students must have been sufficiently equipped to engage academic rigours through the medium of the English language. Therefore, English-medium tertiary education is not an aberration. This is, however, based on the provision of highly competent and adequately motivated specialists in the learning content knowledge and pedagogic skills at the lower education levels. A government that is serious about addressing the issue of the importance of language to a successful curriculum implementation would spare no efforts to ensure that no incompetent personnel find any way of escape into its schools.

However, considering the enormous contributions expected from this level of education to the actualization of sustainable development (Barth and Rieckmann, 2016), Nigeria cannot afford to to continue to limit access to tertiary education. It was this realization that gave rise to the defunct 6-3-3-4 system of education that was designed to give much attention to substantial access to tertiary level technical education. One of the most terrible contributors to the undoing of the technical education part of the system was the declaration that it was for the students who might be too intellectually weak for further academic pursuits. So, going to a technical college became stigmatized. Many students that had obvious flair for technical education would rather continue to struggle with other disciplines.

Sustainable development could be attained much easier and earlier than envisaged if the Nigerian government provides special indigenous-language-medium tertiary education in the various disciples, most especially in the fields of science and technology. Such institutions should not be stigmatized as places for those whose brain capacities cannot accommodate English language proficiency. It should be treated with as much dignity, honour and seriousness as the English-medium ones. This will be a great way of harnessing a lot of crude talents and developing them to full capacities for maximal contribution to sustainable national development. The government needs to do this urgently because there is no alternative to the provision of functional literacy for all and sundry in the pursuit of the various indices of sustainable development bordering on the socio-economic planes (Kolawole and Adepoju, 2007).

Burkina Faso has a similar programme in which non-formal education is offered to adults in various fields of technical and entrepreneurial endeavours like agriculture (livestock rearing, crop farming, and market gardening) and basic financial management of individual and/or group socio-economic activities. The programme is conducted both of their national languages. The certificates awarded are not made inferior to those obtained through the mainstream education sector. Oyetade (20115) testifies that the programme has tremendously positive impacts on its beneficiaries. The one being advocated here should be provided, not only in national languages but in indigenous languages.

Conclusion

The importance of the language factor ,in the conception, development, design, implementation, assessment and review is central. Therefore, any wrong step taken about language at any stage would render the curriculum, in fact the whole education system, unfit for successful pursuit of sustainable development. Therefore, all stakeholders need to synergise efforts at getting it right with language. All petty sentiments and opinionated ideas need to be suppressed to employ the right language policy that can make

posterity heartily sing "The labours of our heroes past shall never be in vain".

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This book is a collection of articles by various academics in different sub-fields of Education and other associates of Prof. Clement Olusegun Olaniran Kolawole, a man who has done excellently as a teacher, researcher, mentor and administrator of no mean status and achievements. The title affords each contributor the rare privilege of making rejoinders to the submissions made by Prof. Kolawole at his inaugural lecture about two years ago. It is delightsome to present to you other academics' further thoughts on Prof. Kolawole's inaugural lecture which was titled Language, Education and the Curriculum Nexus: Pathway to Sustainable Development in Nigeria. It is hoped that the contents of the book would be useful as reference materials for researchers, policy ingredients for educational administrators and additional study materials for diligent students.

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