



Epistemic and Axiological Analyses of Nigeria's 2022 National Language Policy

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ABSTRACT

Original Research Article

As a heterolingual society, Nigeria's language policy should focus on managing the country's linguistic diversity while promoting unity and educational advancement. Thus, this study conducted an epistemic and axiological analyses of the language education provisions in the proscribed 2022 Nigerian national language policy by examining the philosophical assumptions about knowledge, learning, communication, cultural identity, values and ideological underpinnings that underlie the policy. To achieve the objectives of the study, focus group discussions and a review of the contents of the policy were used for data collection. An epistemic analysis of the proscribed policy reveals that it agrees that knowledge is best acquired in the learner's first language during early education. The axiology of the proscribed policy is hinged on values like national unity, cultural identity, linguistic equality, educational accessibility, modernization, and social integration. However, majority of the respondents expressed a lack of preference for significant items in the language education provisions of policy and contended that they are not implementable based on existing realities. This study recommends that the provisions in the 2013 National Policy on Education should be retained in a way that would guarantee linguistic inclusion.

Keywords: Epistemology, Axiology, Language Policy, Nigeria.

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Introduction

In 2022 the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) developed and launched Nigeria's first complete National Language Policy as a single document that spells out policy prescriptions for language use in a range of sectors and domains. Language education is an important part of the policy. The 2022 policy states that the medium of instruction from early childhood education to the end of primary school will be the mother language (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2022). This is a deviation from the 2013 National Policy on Education which stipulated English as the language of teaching from Primary Four. The preference for the use of English as the language of instruction after the early primary years is in line with arguments by scholars who voiced misgivings about the increasing influence of English on the vocabularies of indigenous languages, while also

recognising the prominent place of English in contemporary global language-policy discourse (Ahn et al., 2023; Bamgbose, 2020). More generally, language concerns are of much scholarly and public interest and can be sites of dispute or conflict across geographical and sociocultural contexts (Mowbray, 2012). Language should therefore not be seen just as a means of communication but also as a tool for the creation and transmission of knowledge, cultural identity, social values and power. The fact that these functions are mostly allocated to a language other than an indigenous language may contribute to linguistic dependency, inequity, prejudice and even progressive endangerment of local languages (Gil, 2022). Therefore, the attitude of speakers and the planning, policy and administration of languages affect the development, decline and functional extension of a non-indigenous language in a given community. Given the largely

multilingual character of Nigeria, language policy has crucial consequences for education, national development, governance, cultural continuity and social cohesion. Thus, the development of language policy and the future direction of particular languages should consider the practicalities such as language practices, demographic shifts, economic change, the impact of globalisation, social movements, technological development, environmental issues and other factors (Pennycook, 2021). Thus, the language-education provisions of Nigeria's National Language Policy must address linguistic variety in ways that simultaneously encourage national cohesion and educational growth.

In this context, the present paper carries out an epistemic and axiological analysis of the language-education requirements in Nigeria's 2022 National Language Policy. The analysis is focused on the underlying philosophical assumptions about information, learning, communication, cultural identity, values and ideology that drive the policy. Language policy can be broadly regarded as a set of statutory or regulatory measures created to regulate and govern language use in a society (Hall et al., 2017). According to Junaidu (2010), it is the sum total of the official utterances, pronouncements, resolutions, rules and statutes of a state which provide official guidance for language issues. These policies are often the product of deliberate language planning initiatives. However, language planning responsibilities is not exclusive to governmental agencies at different levels. For example, Brann (2010) distinguishes between government or official agencies and non-governmental or unofficial agencies of language planning. These actors can engage in corpus planning, status planning or acquisition planning and so contribute to different forms of language-policy orientation including assimilation, non-intervention, distinct legal status, valorisation and bilingual or trilingual policies (Junaidu, 2010). It is, therefore, important to understand these characteristics so as to evaluate the philosophical bases and practical implications of Nigeria's current language-education program.

Language policy consists of three interrelated components: (i) the language practices in which speakers engage; (ii) the language ideologies that shape the evaluation of practices as desirable, proper, standard, etc.; and (iii) the language management efforts of individuals or groups to modify the practices of targeted speakers (Wee, 2018). Language policy is shaped by language use, demographics, economic change, globalisation, social movements, technical changes, environmental considerations, etc. (Pennycook, 2021). Some language policies are also directed to promote the assimilation of linguistic minorities into the dominant language, while others are directed to defend the rights of speakers of all languages and foster linguistic plurality (Cavallaro, 2024). Language policies as products of applied linguistic activities exist to solve language problems provided that they remain true to the goals of fostering linguistic

understanding and access; engage local populations who constitute the most important stakeholders; and are humble in their understanding that language dynamics are very powerful and thus sometimes beyond their capacity of influence and change. Language policy and planning are the underpinnings of language corpus development, dissemination, preservation, use and status in a country. However, deliberate concerted language planning and the presence of a suitable language strategy do not necessarily guarantee that the policy would be executed. The execution of language policy is very much dependent on the political will and attitude of the stakeholders. Thus, if the people in a community do not accept the spread of a language in their midst, its chances of thriving inside the community are dependent on the motivation and effective techniques of language policy enforcement (Crystal, 2014; Wright, 2016).

Epistemology, as a branch of philosophy, concerns the nature, sources, acquisition, and validation of knowledge. Epistemology of language is the philosophical study of the knowledge of language. It is primarily concerned with how linguistic knowledge is possible, how language users acquire, recognize and use linguistic units and structures – phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences (phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic awareness) – to convey meaning reliably, as well as the nature and limits of linguistic knowledge in respect of the possibility of language distorting or limiting knowledge (Ahearn, 2021). In a situation like this, the emphasis is on how language users come to possess and use linguistic knowledge to communicate, express, and reason. Thus, studying language policy epistemologically means investigating how language influences what is considered valid knowledge, how knowledge is transmitted in society, and whose linguistic knowledge is legitimized within state institutions (Nefdt et al., 2020).

On the other hand, axiology is the branch of philosophy that studies values, including those that are moral, cultural, social, and aesthetic. The axiology of language is the philosophical study of the values, ethics, and purposes inherent in language and its uses. It not only explores the significance that language holds in human life but also investigates how language embodies moral, cultural, and aesthetic values, how it shapes human relationships, and how it should be used responsibly to promote truth, beauty, respect, and harmony – peaceful communication – in society. The axiology of Nigeria's national language policy therefore, concerns the values that inform the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of the policy (Raud, 2025). These values include national unity, cultural identity, linguistic equality, educational accessibility, modernization, and social integration. An axiological analysis helps to reveal whether the policy truly promotes these ideals or whether contradictions exist between policy statements and actual practice.

Review of Related Literature

According to UNESCO Ad Hoc (2003), in many educational settings, the languages of the classroom are used for the education of children from ethnolinguistic minority groups, and these languages are often the dominant local or national ones. This could lead to the use of minority and endangered languages in formal education being restricted, at the expense of such practices. De Varennes (2012), however, highlighting the education clause of the United Nations Declaration, puts the focus on the right to education of indigenous peoples and particularly on their right to receive public education in their indigenous language or commonly used indigenous language at all levels and in various forms of education. The provision suggests that the educational rights of indigenous communities cannot be decided just by the number of indigenous languages. Instead, indigenous peoples should be given the chance to learn their language in school, and to decide how much of their language they wish to use as a medium of instruction, as part of their basic rights and preferences.

Ifelunni et al (2024) used descriptive survey research design to explore the challenges of effective implementation of language policy in early childhood education centers in Nsukka Education Area. They found some challenges to implementation as follows: the multilingual nature of urban communities in Nigeria, lack of government monitoring and overwhelming instructional materials written in English. These difficulties were of special importance in the context of the policy goal of promoting the mother tongue at the early childhood level. The present study is different from the study by Ifelunni et al. That was empirical in nature and examined language provisions in the 2013 National Policy on Education among the Nsukka Education Zone. It uses the two perspectives of epistemic and axiological to conduct a content analysis of the language-education provisions of the 2022 NLP and relies on the insights that emerge from focus group discussions to evaluate the philosophical underpinnings, feasibility and impact of policy provisions for Nigeria.

Owojecho (2020) conducted a study on the implementation challenges of national language policy in Nigeria with particular emphasis on the roles of the indigenous languages. The results showed that most of the sampled population in all the groups are comfortable with the poly-dimensional role of the English language. The findings of the study indicate that even though most of the respondents are aware of the language provisions in the national policy on education, they are not inclined to their implementation. The study by Owojecho (2020) is on the feasibility of implementing the language provisions in the 2013 National Policy on Education. However, this study utilizes epistemic and axiological frameworks to conduct content analysis and analyze the findings of focus group discussion sessions to establish the feasibility of the language education provisions of the proscribed 2022 National Policy for Nigeria.

Onugha and Peter (2021) conducted a study on language policy implementation in schools. The study was aimed at identifying what happens in school during the implementation of language policy in two rural primary schools: one in Nkoro in Opobo/Nkoro Local Government Area and the other in Etche Local Government Area, Rivers State, Nigeria. Interview schedules were administered to teachers and pupils in Basic 1 to 6. The study found that lack of capacity, resources, incentives, control, and coordination, goals in implementation, insufficient support from stakeholders, among other things, serve as impediments to policy implementation. While the study by Onugha and Peter used interviews to collect data on the implementation of the language provisions in the 2013 National Policy on Education, this study utilizes epistemic and axiological frameworks to do content analysis and analyze the findings of focus group discussion sessions to establish the feasibility of language education provisions of the proscribed 2022 National Policy for Nigeria.

Ikwuemesim (2021) looked at educators' experiences in the implementation of language policy on foreign nationals in South Africa. The study aimed to deepen the understanding of the experience and response of the educators to language-policy requirements for foreign learners. A qualitative phenomenological method was used and data collected from semi-structured interviews with 12 participants from four schools in the Johannesburg East and Ekurhuleni North Districts. Participants included two teachers and one principal from each of the school. The results showed that schools with English as a family language tended not to accept foreign students with no background in English. Foreign learners who came to school despite language challenges, however, were supported via a variety of interventions, such as school-based language assistance, translation services, provision of extra lessons, parental involvement, and adaptations and strategies that allowed for the foreign learner to function and be successful in the school setting. On the other hand, those who continued to find it difficult to understand the language, despite the above, were eventually taken out of the schools. While Ikwuemesim's study focused on the implementation of language policy in relation to foreign nationals in South Africa, it was conducted qualitatively through interviews, the present study has a different focus as well as analytical framework. It uses epistemic and axiological lens for content analysis of language-education provisions and adopts the outcome of focus group discussions to evaluate the feasibility of the language provisions in the National Language Policy in Nigeria, 2022.

Obiakor 2024 studied the Nigeria language of instruction (LOI) policy and how it relates to literacy achievement in Nigeria's multilingual educational environment. The study examined the level of compliance with the instruction in the learner's mother tongue in primary schools. The data of Round 6 of Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS6) was used to explore the differences in policy implementation by

school type, geographic location, and region, using multivariate regression analysis. The results showed that the implementation in private schools was relatively low compared to public schools. The same was true for urban schools in comparison to rural schools, and the southern compared to the northern region of the country. The results here offer proof of the challenges of applying a uniform language-of-instruction policy in a very heterolingual national context. Interestingly, the study also indicated that students who were in English curriculum had better literacy results than students in their mother tongue. While Obiakor focused on interlingual differences in the implementation of LOI-policy and its related primary school literacy levels in Nigeria, the present study is mostly interested in the epistemic and axiological underpinning of the language-education provisions in the 2022 National Language Policy and interpretation of the evidence obtained from focus group discussions.

Ngcobo (2025) conducted a study on how South African higher education has implemented the language policy, focusing on the successes and challenges that have been faced and continue to be faced over the past 30 years. The study substantiates the continued challenges that South African higher education institutions face in establishing and enacting effective, inclusive language policies which integrate indigenous African languages into a university setting, and that have been in existence for a long time since the end of apartheid. Ngcobo's work thus offers a post-enactment evaluation of the development and problems faced with inclusive language policy in South African higher education. However, the present study takes a different approach to the context in Nigeria. Unlike the conventional approach of assessing an existing policy mainly based on its implementation experiences, it utilizes a set of epistemic and axiological frameworks to analyze the assumptions and focus group evidence to assess the feasibility of provisions in Nigeria's National Language Policy for 2022 for language education.

Ali and Musa (2025) discussed the social context of implementation of language policy in Nigeria and whether the social aspects of implementation have been given adequate attention. The perspective on language planning and language-policies adopted by Spolsky and Fishman was used as a basis for researching the impact of language selection on communication in multilingual communities in three areas of society: education, government, and media. The approach in the study was qualitative and the observations were conducted across various areas, especially with focus on the interaction between indigenous languages and English in everyday communication. Their content-based analysis uncovered a significant gap between the language policies that are formally expressed and those that are implemented. While English is still predominant in official contexts, native languages are still used in crucial contexts for social interaction, education, and informal communication. The

authors therefore argued for the adoption of a more inclusive Nigerian language policy that takes cognizance of the indigenous languages contribution to social cohesion, cultural preservation and effective communication. The present study, however, widens the scope of the discussion by using the epistemic and axiological approaches in analyzing and interpreting the language-education aspect of the 2022 National Language Policy and the outcome of focus group discussions in the evaluation of the philosophical underpinning and practical feasibility of the language education provisions.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This study used focus group discussions and reviewed the contents of the 2022 National Language Policy for data collection. Focus group discussions are flexible interview schedules carried out for selected participants with the research objectives serving as a guide (Sun, 2026). On the other hand, content analysis is a qualitative and/or quantitative description of the manifest contents of communication based on objective and systematic principles (Selvi, 2020). Sixty (60) participants, five (5) in each group, were engaged in focus group discussion sessions to establish their position on the feasibility of implementing the proscribed 2022 National Language Policy. The researcher followed up responses to the questions using the principles of epistemology and axiology of language and linguistic research.

The researcher used Critical Language Policy Theory (CLPT) (Tollefson, 2006), grounded in political philosophy (particularly John Rawls' theory of justice [Rawls, 1971]) and postcolonial philosophy (Akter & Iyengar, 2025; Makoni & Pennycook, 2025; Schmitz, 2017). CLPT is relevant to this study because it reveals how the policy favours the Arabic language and dominant Nigerian languages in a way that could lead to ethnic dominance and marginalization of "minority" and endangered languages. Rawlsian justice theory is also relevant because the target beneficiaries could be made to adopt the policy based on "veil of ignorance" that could jeopardize their right to linguistic choice, international citizenship and ethnic/linguistic identity. Postcolonial philosophy is also relevant because it asks questions about "which English?" and whether the need to migrate to English language at a later stage will not amount to epistemic and axiological violence and the readiness of stakeholders to support the empowerment of "minority" indigenous languages.

Findings

The 2022 National Language Policy shows that the philosophical stance of the policy is very closely related to the national philosophy of Nigeria at large. It is built on the principles of national unity, peaceful coexistence and Nigeria

is a united and sovereign democratic state that uphold the values of freedom, equality and justice (Federal Republic of Nigeria 2022). As part of this general philosophy, the policy is mindful of language being part and parcel of the culture of the people of Nigeria and underscores the fact that languages are symbolic of identity and repository of the traditions, norms and values of the people of Nigeria. The policy also recognizes that all languages can facilitate effective, equitable and quality education and provide opportunities that can make positive contributions to education outcomes and even international competitiveness (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2022). Hence the major aims of the policy include the preservation and promotion of Nigeria's languages as part of the national heritage to be passed on to the future generations and the use of the Language of the Immediate Community or Mother Tongue as a medium of instruction in certain levels of education. Based on these goals, the subsequent parts of Section 4 of the policy are explored in the next sections of this study.

18: To ensure effective delivery of instructions and attendant positive learning outcomes, Mother Tongue (MT) or Language of the Immediate Community (LIC) shall be used as the medium of instruction from Early Childhood Care and Development Education to the six years of primary education. However, Arabic shall be the medium of instruction for Islamic schools. During this period, English shall be taught as a school subject.

19: English language shall be used as the language of instruction at the junior secondary school level. However, a combined use of the English language or the mother tongue or language of immediate community shall be encouraged accordingly.

20: In addition to the study of the English language and the Mother Tongue, a child shall be allowed to study, as an optional subject, the Nigerian language of the community, if it is different from the mother tongue.

24: While French shall be taught as a compulsory school subject from primary four, Arabic shall be an optional subject from primary one. However, Arabic language shall be compulsory for learners offering Islamic Studies.

33: In addition to the study of the English language, students shall be made to study one Nigerian language, as a compulsory subject, at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level.

It should be noted that section 4(31) stipulates that Arabic language shall be the medium of instruction at Islamic schools at the post basic education level. In addition, section 4(36) stipulates that French and Arabic shall be optional at Senior Secondary School (SSS) level. However, Arabic language shall be compulsory for students offering Islamic Studies at Senior Secondary School (SSS) level.

The key findings from the focus group discussion sessions are:

- i. Majority of the respondents agreed that the use of indigenous languages as language of education and/or languages in education will not only ensure every language's right to linguistic survival but also ease the cognitive development of the learners as well as preserve cultural identities and values;
- ii. Majority of the respondents agreed that language of the immediate community or the mother tongue should be used as medium of instruction from Early Childhood Care and Development Education to the first three years of primary education for those in Islamic and non-Islamic schools;
- iii. Majority of the respondents expressed lack of preference for significant items in the language education provisions of the proscribed 2022 National Language Policy; and
- iv. Majority of the participants opined that most of the items in language education provisions of the proscribed 2022 National Language Policy are not implementable based on existing realities.

Discussion

An epistemic analysis of the proscribed 2022 Nigeria's National language policy reveals that it agrees that knowledge is best acquired in the learner's first language during early education. This is in consonance with constructivist theories of learning which argue that individuals learn more effectively through familiar linguistic and cultural frameworks (Gardner, 2010). While many Nigerians have indigenous languages as their respective first language, existing realities indicate that some have English language and Nigerian Pidgin respectively as their first language. Indigenous languages carry indigenous philosophies, oral traditions, cosmologies, and systems of social organization. Nigerian indigenous languages encode unique ways of understanding reality. This implies that indigenous languages facilitate cognitive development because the use of a home language as a medium of instruction enhances comprehension given that cultural knowledge is embedded within language (King & Benson, 2008). English language also has a place in the policy as a language in education from Early Childhood Care and Development Education to the end of education and one of the media of instruction from junior secondary school level. From an epistemic perspective, English serves as a gatekeeper to formal knowledge and socioeconomic advancement. Access to quality education and international professional opportunities often depends on English proficiency. The provisions in the policy reveal that while cognitive development in "Western" education at the early stage is best achieved via indigenous languages, they did not tend to believe that the same is possible for Islamic schools. This is given the fact that Arabic language is the only

medium of instruction recognized by the policy in the Islamic school system. This implies that the proscribed 2022 Nigeria's language policy reflects a hybrid system combining indigenous, Arab and Western epistemological traditions.

The axiology of the proscribed 2022 Nigeria's national language policy is hinged on values like national unity, cultural identity, linguistic equality, educational accessibility, modernization, and social integration. The major objectives of the language policy include promoting national unity and integration, preserving indigenous languages and cultures, enhancing effective teaching and learning, encouraging multilingualism, and facilitating participation in global communication through English.

One of the central values underlying Nigeria's language policy is national unity. Because Nigeria consists of numerous ethnic and linguistic groups, language is viewed as a potential instrument for fostering cohesion. The introduction of English as a school subject from early childhood care and development and as a medium of instruction at junior secondary school is informed by the desire to avoid ethnic domination by any indigenous language group. English serves as a neutral medium for governance, education, law, commerce, and interethnic communication. From an axiological perspective, the policy values political stability and national integration over linguistic nationalism. The policy assumes that a common official language can reduce ethnic tension and create equal participation among diverse groups. In addition, by encouraging the study and use of indigenous languages, the policy recognizes that Nigerian languages carry traditional knowledge, oral literature, customs, and communal values.

An axiological examination of the policy also involves the issue of linguistic equality. Ideally, all languages should receive recognition and respect because language is tied to human dignity and identity. Nigeria's policy attempts to recognize multilingualism, but the elevation of Arabic language above Nigerian languages at Islamic schools and Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba above minority languages has raised concerns about inequality. From the perspective of social justice, a truly inclusive language policy would provide greater support for minority language development, literacy, and documentation. Therefore, the axiology of the policy reveals tensions between national practicality and equitable linguistic representation.

The goals of the policy in respect of the epistemic and axiological value of indigenous language in the attainment of high learning outcomes agree with the findings from the responses of majority of the participants in the focus group discussion sessions. They agree that the use of indigenous languages as language of education and/or languages in education will not only ensure every language's right to linguistic survival but also ease the cognitive development of the learners as well as preserve cultural identities and values.

Majority of the respondents agree that language of the immediate community or the mother tongue should be used as medium of instruction from Early Childhood Care and Development Education to the first three years of primary education for those in Islamic and non-Islamic schools. This is in tandem with the language provisions in the 2013 National Policy on Education.

Majority of the respondents expressed lack of preference for significant items in the language education provisions of the proscribed 2022 National Language Policy. Precisely, they do not agree that the medium of instruction should be the language of the immediate community or the mother tongue until the learners enter junior secondary school. Their position agrees with the findings of Ali and Musa (2025), Obiakor's (2024) and Owojecho (2020). Majority of the participants opine that the proscribed policy has relegated the place of English language in Nigeria thus jeopardizing the chances of Nigerian learners to inclusive higher education in English and international citizenship. The delayed English medium adopted in the proscribed policy has some negative implications in an English as a second language setting like Nigeria. By the time the learners complete the junior and senior secondary school levels that support the combination of indigenous languages and English language as media of instruction and move to tertiary institutions that use English as medium of instruction (EMI), they may be semi-lingual in English language and demonstrate insecurity regarding their knowledge of the language thus affecting learning outcomes (Peterson, 2020).

From the focus group discussion, the preference and practical dominance of English reveal a contradictory epistemic orientation because while indigenous languages are symbolically valued, the respondents assert that it should be noted that English remains the primary language of intellectual legitimacy and socioeconomic mobility. Thus, in the Nigerian context, this has created a linguistic hierarchy in which English becomes associated with intelligence, modernization, academic success, political power etc. On the other hand, indigenous languages became associated with localism, traditionalism, limited socioeconomic opportunities etc.

Like the globe becomes ever more globalised and networked, communities that were formerly divided by geographical and political borders are interacting like never before. This increased contact between peoples and cultures has led to new forms of communication and linguistic interchange, particularly through the borrowing and adaption of words across languages (Ahn et al., 2023).

The rising interconnection that is a feature of globalisation has played an important part in the formation and dissemination of English as a global language. English in its present international stature is a very recent development, since historically it arose from a group of dialects spoken mainly by monolingual communities on a fairly small island.

But its continuing domination is not to be taken for granted for all time. Gil (2022) notes that a number of factors may compromise the global status of English: declining incentives to learn the language, replacement of English by other languages in second- and foreign-language teaching, advances in translation technologies, lack of resources for English teaching and learning, opposition to English, and the possibility of English's splitting into separate languages. Thus, the future of English as a global language will depend in part on how well these rising difficulties are addressed.

English is now spoken all across the world and has brought with it a number of disadvantages as well as advantages for international communication. Gil (2022) highlights linguistic complacency, injustice and discrimination, and the endangerment of other languages as key issues related to the dominance of English. English is more useful internationally than other languages hence native speakers might not learn other languages. This can lead to linguistic complacency. These views can lead to linguistic exclusion and to the strengthening of unequal relations between languages. This can marginalise speakers of less globally dominant languages and contribute to the weakening or endangerment of indigenous and minority languages.

Majority of the participants opine that most of the items in language education provisions of the proscribed 2022 National Language Policy are not implementable based on existing realities. Although the policy supports indigenous languages, English dominates educational practice. Other factors include inadequate language development, many indigenous languages lack standardized orthographies, lack of technical vocabularies for many indigenous languages, and insufficient educational resources. This position agrees with the findings of Ifelunni et al. (2024) and Onugha and Peter (2021).

This study opposes the position of the Federal Ministry of Education which argues for the use of English as a medium of instruction from Early Childhood Care and Development Education level, as it argues that the language provisions in the 2013 National Policy on Education should be fully implemented. The provisions, as they are written, provide language rights for all languages. Mother language instruction in early education has been well recognised as beneficial for understanding, cognitive development and learning results. The 2013 National Policy on Education supports the use of the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community as the medium of instruction in pre-primary and lower primary education, and English as the medium of instruction to be introduced later. The technique is designed to link home and school, promote cultural identity and strengthen literacy basics.

In the light of the language provisions of the 2013 National Policy on Education, no indigenous Nigerian language should be allowed to suffer from language shift. Those extinct should be revived and those endangered should be revitalized.

But having made this assertion, conscious of the empirical fact that every normal human being has the potentialities of acquiring and using more than one language, opportunity should be provided to all Nigerians to learn English language in schools. This becomes necessary realizing the global prowess of English language in all domains and its efficacy in Nigeria. Any attempt to relegate making English language accessible to Nigerians would lead to mortgaging the economic development of the country and the rights of Nigerians of becoming international citizens. Although Nigeria occupies a different habitat in the world of English language education, it is part of the same interrelated ecosystem with other members of the inner, outer and expanding circle of the English language (Breen, 2024). But then, this study reiterates that indigenous Nigerian languages also need to be adequately promoted. This could be done via bilingual and multilingual education.

The philosophy of the variation of English to be employed should not be based solely on the standards of the accuracy of inner circle Englishes at the expense of the norms of indigenised varieties in outer circle nations (Schmitz, 2017). However, it is important to point out that one-size-fits-all English language diversity institutional training is not sufficiently educating students internationally for the ways they need to utilise English within their particular contexts. Therefore, teachers need to think about bringing World Englishes into their classrooms, which will help students to articulate themselves intelligibly (Hendrix, 2022). This will mean the decolonisation of English linguistics. Decolonial linguistics is the process of eliminating the Western bias and hegemony in the analysis of languages of the global South and the (socio) linguistic practices of their speakers and writers (Makoni & Pennycook, 2025). Activist applied linguistics can facilitate this. Activist Applied Linguistics (AAL) is about performing applied linguistics with communities to ensure good social change (Cowal & Leung, 2021). This is because linguistic labour throughout the colonial period was purposely extractive and exploitative, yet, given the conviction in the superiority of European knowledge systems, it was presented as a means of aiding indigenous populations (Montoya, 2024). Therefore, this linguistic effort in this respect should consider translanguaging. Translanguaging developed as a philosophy that challenges the idea that languages are separate, distinct, or compartmentalised systems; instead, it advocates for the blurring of borders between “standard,” designated languages. Translanguaging also denotes that language or language variety use by speakers comprises the use of different features from their linguistic repertoire (Bogdan, 2023).

Conclusion

Nigeria is a heterolingual society. For this reason, its language policy should be guided by the aim of managing the country's linguistic diversity while promoting unity and

educational advancement. Even though the language education provisions in the policy emphasize that knowledge is best acquired in the learner's first language during early education and underscore values like national unity, cultural identity, linguistic equality, educational accessibility, modernization, and social integration. However, the proscribed policy appears to relegate the place of English language and exclude many indigenous languages. In addition, the policy was released at a time when existing realities indicate that it is not implementable. As such, this study recommends that the language provisions in the 2013 National Policy of Education should be implemented to the utmost. The position of the Federal Ministry of Education that calls for the use of English as a medium of instruction from Early Childhood Care and Development Education level should be jettisoned. It is envisioned that when the language provisions in the 2013 National Policy of Education implemented to the letter, guarantee linguistic rights to all languages.

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