

International Journal of the **Humanities**



School of Languages

Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama

ISSN: 1462 4021

VOLUME 2 NO 1

ADVISORY BOARD

Prof. Roger Blench USA	McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research,
Prof. Denis Ekpo	
Prof. Ozo-Mekuri Ndimcle	University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Prof. Diri I. Teilanyo	Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria
Prof. Ihaba S. Ibaba	Federal University, Otuokc. Nigeria
Dr. Odin Gowe M. Kwokwo	Niger Delta University, Nigeria
Dr. Abraye Sunday	Niger Delta University, Nigeria
Dr. James Ante	Niger Delta University, Nigeria
Dr. Odingwei Kwokwo	Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria
Mr. Dufua Sharp Akosubo	Niger Delta University, Nigeria
	University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

EDITORIAL BOARD

Eneware Enieketin C	Chairman
Dr. Dennis Egberibin	Editor
Dr. Diryai Nuwa	Member
Musaka Mitchell	Member
Worufah, Ebini-Ipiri Raphael	Member
Fakrogha Enegbe	Member
Laura Ajoko	Member
Egba Ayebaekiprcye	Member
Kaliai, Numonyo Olali	Secretary

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Eneware Enieketin C.	Isaac Jasper Boro college of Education, Sagbaina
----------------------	--

ISSUE EDITOR

Dr. Dennis Egberibin	Isaac Jasper Boro college of Education
----------------------	--

EDITORIAL POLICY

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE HUMANITIES, a publication of the School of Languages, Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama, is published once a year in October-November. Each issue is a collection of original research papers on all aspects of the Humanities, such as Language, Culture, Linguistics, Literature, History, Politics, Institutions, as well as Pedagogy, including modern European and African thoughts. The Journal is aimed at encouraging scholarship that inspires debate, controversy, new understanding and academic reflections in all richness and diversity. The Journal is recognized as a publication of international standards. **The copyright for reproduction of articles published in the International Journal of the Humanities, belongs to the School of Languages, Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. However, the responsibility for obtaining copyright permission for the fair use of any published material is that of the individual author, as the School accepts no liability whatsoever for any failure to do this.** Interested scholars across the globe are invited to submit original and well-researched articles prepared strictly in accordance with the following guidelines:

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles should be written in English or French, typed in 1.5 spaced, using font size of 12 point and the Times New Roman font type on A4 paper and should be between 13-15 pages. The APA style of documentation should be used. The contributor's name and institutional affiliation should appear on a separate sheet of paper.

Original works of authors not undergoing review elsewhere should be submitted. All manuscripts received are normally subjected to peer-review, and only those recommended by established scholars in the field are eventually published. A short abstract of not more than 300 words is required. Also, 5 key words relating to crux of the research is required. Contributors of recommended articles shall be required to pay a token fee of ten thousand naira (£412, 000) only towards production cost. Authors of published articles shall be entitled to one free copy of the Journal.

We appeal to all contributors to return the corrected copies of their works as soon as possible. Note that any delay may cause a replacement of article.

All correspondence and contributions should be addressed to:

Issue Editor,

International Journal of the Humanities,

School of Languages,

Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama

Bayelsa State, Nigeria

ijhschooloflanguages@gmail.com

[www.facebook.com/International Journal of the Humanities](http://www.facebook.com/International%20Journal%20of%20the%20Humanities)

EDITORIAL NOTE

Fundamentally, the beauty and relevance of the academia basically lies in the invigoration of the intellect by those who consciously engage in the propagation of their ideas in books, journals and other forms of storing knowledge from time to time. Journals, to be specific, just like books, whether local or international, are repositories of knowledge as noted earlier. Against this background therefore, the existence of one in any higher institution of learning is of enormous significance.

The 2nd Edition of the *International Journal of the Humanities*, School of Languages, Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama did not emanate from papers presented from conferences; rather, it is product of research works collated from academics within the College, as well as from those outside it. The articles contained in this volume are robust and engaging in their intellectual content. Students and fellow academics going through them will surely never be disappointed in doing so.

Although the target audience of this journal is mainly those of humanities, hence the preponderance of articles in the areas of linguistics and literature (English and French). Articles from the non-traditional areas of education and management, are included and published in this volume because we believe that knowledge is better when shared. We have done this, believing that academics and students both within and outside our college would certainly gain substantially from the articles so published herein.

As a board, we encourage the reading public to avail themselves a copy of this volume.

Dr. Egberibin Lawrence Dennis
(Issue Editor)

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

EGBERIBIN LAWRENCE DENNIS (Ph.D)

Department of English
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education,Segbama
Bayelsa State, Nigeria

LINDA COIN

Department of French
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education Sagbama
Bayelsa state, Nigeria

EBINT-PTRT RAPHAEL WORUFAH

Department of English
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Saghama
Bayelsa State, Nigeria

ENIEKETTIN CELESTINE ENEWARE

Department of Nigerian Language
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Saghama
Bayelsa state, Nigeria

SAPELE WILFRED

Department of English Language
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Saghama
Bayelsa State, Nigeria

LOKO ONEWUNMI PERELAH

Department of Mathematics
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education. Saghama
Bayelsa State, Nigeria

MAXWELL NELSON

Department of Mathematics
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Saghama
Bayelsa State, Nigeria

ORUPOLI ARTHUR EBIBOLOU

Department of English,
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama
Bayelsa State.

OKEKE NCHEDO PRISCILLA

Department of French
Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsughc
Anambra State, Nigeria

UDEH VANESSA GEORGINA

Department of French
Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe
Anambra State, Nigeria

OKOTORI EBIKILA BETTY

International Institute of Tourism and Hospitality (IITH)
Elebele. Bayelsa State, Nigeria

IKOSOMI CONSTANCE OMO

Bayelsa State International Institute of Tourism and Hospitality,
Elebele. Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

O.MEKWE CHRISTOPHER INIEME

Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama
Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

LORI FAITH

Department of French
School of Languages
College of Education, Warri, Delta State, Nigeria

NLMONYO OLALI KALIAI

Department of French
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education Sagbama
Bayelsa state, Nigeria

EGBA AVIBANENGIYEFA

Department of Nigerian Languages
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama'
Bayelsa State. Nigeria

LAURA AJOKO

Department of Nigerian Languages
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama
Bayelsa State. Nigeria

EGBUSON ENEBRAYE

Department of Nigerian Languages
Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama
Bayelsa State, Nigeria

CONTENTS

Advisory Board	iii
Editorial Board	iii
Editor-In-Chief	iii
Issue Editor	iii
Editorial Policy	
Editorial Note Notes on Contributors	
1. Ezeigbo's Poetry, how relevant ⁰ <i>Waiting for dawn</i> in focus - Egbcribin Lawrence Dennis	1-21
2. Language, Identity and Power: A Portrait of Black Women in 1940 Montreal in Mairuth Sarsfield's <i>No Cyslal Stairs</i> - Linda Goin	22 32
3. The Nigerian National Language Question: Electing to Propose (Iie Nigerian Pidgin (NP) - Ebini-Piri Raphael Wonifah & Enicketin Ccelestine Encware 3')	33
4. Instructional Problems Associated with the Poor Performance in School Certificate English Language Sapclc Wilfred, Loko Onewmimi Perelah & Maxwell Nelson	40 56
5. A linguistic Analysis of Ogbowei G. Ebinyo's "Basket Mouth" - Onipou Arthur Ebibolou	57 61
6. The Attitude of the Young Generation to the I/on Language - Okotori Ebikila Betty	62 71
7. Advancing the Grasping of French Language among Nigerian Youths - Okckc Nchedo Priscilla & I Id eh Vanessa Ceorgina	72 84
8. French Language as a Tool for the Development of Tourism in Nigeria - Lori Faith	85-91
9. Endangered Languages: The New Trends in Historical Linguistics - Ebini-Ipiri R. Wornfah	92 98
10. Comparative Analysis of Students ¹ Performance in WAEC SSCE and NECO SSCE: A Case Study of St. Moses Secondary School Umuckpe Amaro, Abia State, Nigeria - Maxwell Nelson, Loko Onewunmi Perclah & Sapcle Wilfred	99-110

1 1. Oil and violence in Melon Habila's <i>"oil on water"</i> - Orupou Arthur Ebibolou & Numonyo Olali Kaliai	111-124
12. Lexical Relations in Kolokuma: A Dialect of the Izon Language - Okotori Ebikila Betty	125-140
13. Verb Phrase Errors amongst Students of Bayelsa State International Institute of Tourism and Hospitality - Ikosomi Constance Omo & Omekwc Christopher Inime	141-151
14. Oil and the Propensity to Armed Struggle in the Niger Delta: A Study of G'ebinyo Ogbowei's Song of a Dying River and Marsh Boy & Other Poems - Sapele Oghenememo Wilfred, Laura Ajoko & Egba Ayibaneugiyefa	152-162
15. Aggregate and Sectoral Micro financing on Nigerian Economic Growth: Causality Analysis - Ateboh-Briggs, Patricia B., Arikekpar, Obaimaa	163-180
1 6. Figurative Language in Izon Poetry "Poetiri" - Kgbuson, Enebraye	181-195

ADVANCING THE GRASPING OF FRENCH LANGUAGE AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS

Okeke Nchedo Priscilla¹

Department of French

Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe

Anambra State, Nigeria

cheddyprisca@gmail.com

Udeh Vanessa Georgina²

Department of French Nwafor Orizu

College of Education, Nsugbe

Anambra State, Nigeria

russanderl814@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

French is recognized as the second official language of Nigeria. Yet in many sections of the Nigerian society, French language is not given official recognition. Among the youths of the nation it has not gained wide acceptance because there is poor understanding of the importance of French as an international language. This is believed to have kept lots of Nigerian youths from gaining knowledge and good command of the language. These same youths are the target of French government's on-going efforts to widen usage of French internationally. As at present having good grasp of French language is an added advantage to the youth for employability, trade, the economy, and our cultural life. Therefore, this paper projected the relevance of French Language and proposed strategies for advancing the grasping of French Language among Nigerian youths.

KEYWORDS: Language, French, Youths.

INTRODUCTION

Language according to Baiju (2010) is a means through which thought is organized, refined, and expressed. Edward Sapir (2014) states that "Language is not only a vehicle for the expression of thoughts, perceptions, sentiments, and values characteristic of a community; it also represents a fundamental expression of social identity. Evans & Levinson (2009) on the other hand see language as a system of communication that

enables humans to exchange verbal or symbolic utterances. These definitions stress the social functions of language and the fact that humans use language to express themselves and to manipulate objects in their environment. Through language, people are able to impact information, to express feelings and emotions, to influence the activities of others, and to comport themselves with varying degrees of friendliness or hostility towards persons who make use of substantially the same set of symbols.

The primary purpose of language is to facilitate communication, in the sense of transmission of information from one person to another. Gella & Kwaja (2017) opine that the use of language is to facilitate communication, promote understanding between language originator and language recipient and enable useful, appropriate and efficient action to take place. In other words, effective use of language helps us in our interpersonal relationships at home or at work. However, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies have drawn attention to a range of other functions of language. Among these is the use of language to express a national or local identity. Another is to the "ludic" (playful) function of language - such as puns, riddles, and crossword puzzles. Language also performs a range of functions seen in imaginative or symbolic contexts, such as poetry and drama. It is also used in religious expression.

All healthy, normally developing human beings learn to use language. Humans have the ability to learn any language; especially if they grow up in an environment in which language exists and is used by others. Language is therefore dependent on communities of speakers in which children learn language from their elders and peers and themselves transmit language to their own children. People acquire the language or languages used around them: whichever languages they receive sufficient exposure to during childhood. This learning process is referred to as first-language acquisition. Subsequent "second" languages are learned to different degrees of competence under various conditions. Acquisition of second and additional languages can come at any age, through exposure in daily life or courses. Complete mastery of two languages is designated as bilingualism. while the mastery of several different languages is called multilingualism.

In today's era, multilingualism has become more than just important. Knowing two or more foreign languages other than your native language has evolved to be extremely beneficial. Multilingualism has biological, social, cultural, political and economic advantages. The European Union (EU) has made it mandatory for every European to speak 2 languages in addition to their mother tongue. Nigerian government like their European counterpart understands the importance of speaking other languages. Therefore, French language was declared the second official language of Nigeria by the late General

Sani Abacha in December, 1996. After two years of this declaration, the National Policy on Education made French Language a compulsory subject in Nigerian schools: "For smooth interaction with our neighbours, it is desirable for every Nigerian to speak French. Accordingly, French shall be the second official language in Nigeria, and shall be compulsory in Primary and Junior Secondary Schools, but non-vocational Elective at the Senior Secondary School." With this declaration and inclusion of French into Nigerian curriculum since 1996, it is expected that every Nigerian citizen especially the youths ought to be able to express themselves in good French. But that has not been the case. The learning and communication in French decrease every day by day instead of it to be increasing and this has raised concerns among the French teachers and the government of Nigeria.

Among Nigerians, especially the youths, having knowledge and good command of French language is seen as a waste of time (Gella and Kwaja, 2017). This assumption has kept lots of Nigerian youths from putting in any efforts in studying the language. "Youth" is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2013). That's why, as a category, youth is more fluid than other fixed age-groups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because 'youth' is often referred to as a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education, and finding their first job. Based on the definition given in the African Youth Charter, "youth" means "every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years". Youths are perceived in every country as the leaders of tomorrow and they occupy the greater percentage of any country's population. According to (Skapinker, 2018), "seventy per cent of Africans are under 30, and the continent's population growth is explosive...." Yet, among this class of Nigerians, French Language has no deep rooted usage.

In line with the above, this paper makes an overview of French language, the theoretical framework, the relevance of French Language to the Nigerian youths, obstacles that hinder the learning of French language by the Nigerian youths, and strategies for advancing the grasping of French language among Nigerian youths.

OVERVIEW OF FRENCH LANGUAGE

France is often described as a country of Latin language and culture. This is because the French language, civilization and culture, as they stand today, have their roots in Latin and the Roman culture and civilization. Indeed, most peoples of the world today have adopted the languages of their masters, either through conquest or through colonization. The

former was the case of France (Osazuwa, 2007). By 52 AD Caesar had completely overrun Gaul (as France was then called) and established dominion over it. This meant that the Franks, the original inhabitants of Gaul, had to adopt Roman religion, legal system and language, which, of course, was Latin, and this Latin necessarily went with Roman culture, naturally propelled by it. However, the adoption of a language is not usually a clear-cut process. It is not usually observable in the immediate but only after sometime when changes are noticed.

French was a child of necessity which evolved from Latin through a process of simplification and vulgarization of Latin (Osazuwa, 2007). The man on the street found the classical Latin rather difficult, especially the grammar with all its inflections and the word order of the basic structure. Even at the phonetic level vowel clusters and diphthongs were dropped. For example, *aurum* in Latin, meaning "gold", became "or". (French). The initial process of pidginization and simplification lasted some seven centuries before the earliest version of what could be called French was documented in 842 (Osazuwa, 2007).

Today, French is one of the world's major languages. It is a main or official language not just in France, but in parts of Belgium and Switzerland, in Monaco, in parts of Canada - notably but not only in Quebec - as well as being widely spoken in north and west Africa, Lebanon, and parts of south-east Asia, particularly in former French colonies. It is an official or a main second language in 55 countries worldwide, and is reputed to be the foreign language which is most widely used in international communications, after English. Almost 300 million people speak French as their native language or as a second language.

Until the early twentieth century, French was the language of diplomacy, and one of the two main languages of international negotiation; today it is one of the six official languages of the United Nations, and one of the two official languages, with English, of the International Postal Union, of the International Olympic Committee, the International Red Cross, and other organizations. It is also an official language in the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey. The International Organization of Francophonie (an organization for promoting dialogue to develop political and economic solidarity between French-speaking peoples) had 51 member states and governments in 2005 (Shryock, 2006). By 2018 International Organisation of La Francophonie, now counts 75 member States and governments. 212 million speak the language on a day-to-day basis (The Local, 2017). To some it's the first official language, some a second and others use it as their principal international language (Sala and Posner, 2018). As a foreign language it is the second most frequently taught language in the world after English (Alliance Francaise de

Cincinnati, 2018). There are 900,000 French teachers worldwide (The Local, 2017). 300,000 young people in 130 countries enjoy French schooling in French overseas schools. France is the third country in terms of hosting foreign students, and the country whose literature and cinema are most widespread, behind those of the English-speaking countries. French and English are the only two global languages given that they are the only languages spoken on five continents. French is the sixth most spoken language in the world - after Mandarin Chinese, English, Hindi, Spanish and Arabic - and there are now more French speakers outside France than inside it (Wilsher, 2018). It is seen as a language of the future in comparison to the other languages mentioned above. French has a demographic ace up its sleeve as French-speaking populations are growing faster than English- and Mandarin-speaking ones (Palet, 2014). A demographic boom in African states where French is the official language (like Mali in the north, and Guinea, Chad and Democratic Republic of Congo in the sub-Saharan region with increasingly high fertility rates) could bump the world's percentage of French speakers from 3 percent today to 8 percent by 2050 (Palet, 2014).

Also, countries surrounding Nigeria are mostly French speaking. There is Chad in the Northeast, Cameroun in the East, Niger Republic in the North and Benin Republic in the West. Naturally, the Nigerian government has no other option than to choose French as the Nigerian second official language. French has been the second official language in Nigeria for the past 21 years and it has been made compulsory in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools across Nigeria. Sadly, this policy was not fully implemented. But matters are suddenly looking up for the teaching and learning of French language in the country with the Federal Government's plans to make the teaching compulsory at all levels of education in the country. Minister of State for Education, Prof. Anthony Anwuka, while playing host to French Ambassador to Nigeria, Denys Gaver, in his office, explained that Nigerian students at all levels of education, will henceforth study French as a compulsory subject (The Guardian, 2016). He stressed that the government was keen and sufficiently motivated to actualize its dream of making French language the second official language of Nigeria. Just like Americans have recently discovered that they must learn Spanish to be relevant in the affairs of Central and South America and also handle the affairs of millions of Spanish Americans living in the USA. Today, Spanish is the second compulsory language in American schools at all levels from primary to tertiary. The government of Nigeria, according to Prof. Tunde Fatunde, a French professor and the President of University French Teachers Association (UFTAN), have realized that just like the Americans, French language has become strategic language for all Nigerians (The Guardian, 2016).

The French government has not relented in its effort to transform French into a top International language through the vehicles of education, media and art (VOA, 2018). These efforts are directed mainly towards the youth. For the Nigerian youth, there is dire need to facilitate communication in French in the country given the efforts of the French government to encourage the growth of the language around the world. This shows that use of French should be encouraged among Nigerians to enable ease of social, political, economic and international relations with these countries.

RELEVANCE OF FRENCH LANGUAGE TO THE NIGERIAN YOUTHS

There were four principles identified by Bariki (1999) as basis for the prestigious position of French as the most important foreign language in Nigeria. They include principle of geographical neighbourhood, principle of diplomacy, principle of technological advancement and principle of global interdependence. French is the official language of Nigeria's bordering countries (Benin, Chad, Niger and Cameroon). French is a language of diplomacy thereby making it satisfy the second principle. It is the mother tongue and official language of highly technologically advanced nations such as France, Canada and Belgium. Given that it is spoken across the five continents French language satisfies the principle of global interdependence. Based on these principles French is the incontrovertible choice as the most relevant foreign language in Nigeria.

Ogunkeye (2007) in a study of Nigerian youths in their preliminary year on why they take French classes found some say they just like the language, others they like the French people. There are those that would like to study in France after their degree programme. Others would like to work in the External Affairs Ministry, while some would like to travel, so French would come in handy as an international language. Below, consideration is given to the likely benefits Nigerian youths would derive from acquiring knowledge and good command of French language for day to day use.

We must understand that being bilingual has a positive effect on our intellectual growth and enhances our mental development (Omonigho, 2016). According to Nanduti (2009), "being bilingual opens the door to other cultures and helps an individual understand and appreciate people from other countries." Children who study languages are more imaginative, better with abstract ideas, and more flexible in their thinking (Palo, 2018). They have a greater sensitivity to language and a better ear for listening. Studying a foreign language improves a child's understanding of his own native language. It opens the door to other cultures and helps the child understand and appreciate people from other countries. It can help them feel connected to their own heritage.

Ludwing Wittgenstein clearly states that: "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world." This simply means that we are limited to the world of whose language we can speak. Therefore, the more different international languages we learn, the wider our economic and political horizons. Being bilingual can equally .make an individual have more executive control of whatever situation he or she finds herself by the simple ability to switch from one international language or the other.

Learning French provides a youth with a base for learning other languages (Alliance Francaise de Cincinnati, 2018). Given its connection to romance languages, learning French allows a youth to master other romance languages like, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and English.

According to Shryock (2006) French, along with English, is the official working language of the United Nations, UNESCO, NATO, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), International Labor Bureau, International Olympic Committee, 31-member Council of Europe, European Community, Universal Postal Union, International Red Cross and Union of International Associations (UIA). Also, French is the dominant working language at European Court of Justice, European Tribunal of First Instance, European Court of Auditors in Luxembourg and Press Room at the European Commission in Brussels, Belgium. Therefore, it is suggested that when deciding on a foreign language for work or school, consider that French is the language that will give you the most choices later on in your studies or your career.

Speaking French opens up opportunities for higher education at some of France's best-known universities (the Sorbonne, Pierre Marie Curie University, etc.) or elite *Grandes ecoles* (HEC, Polytechnique, ESSEC), often on a very favourable financial terms. Students with a good level of French may be eligible to apply for a French government grant to enroll on a postgraduate course of their choice in France, leading to an internationally recognized postgraduate degree.

The ability to speak both French and English is an advantage for finding a job with the many multinational companies using French as their working language, in a wide range of sectors (retailing, automotive, luxury goods, aeronautics, etc.). Nigerian youths should wake up to this call to multilingualism - Nigerian companies are extending their tentacles to the francophone Africa and our youths are crowding in on the few available vacancies here in Nigeria because of the language barrier preventing them from exploring the vast opportunities in Nigerian companies in francophone Africa. A lot of internationally based companies, like Total, Exxon Mobil, Air France and KLM advertise for workers from time to time with qualifications including an ability to speak either French and English or

English and German. The dearth of these competences poses a great challenge to Nigerian applicants who are limited by their knowledge of only the English language. We strongly believe that Nigerians youths will widen their horizon in the labour world with an additional international language such as French.

OBSTACLES THAT HINDER THE LEARNING OF FRENCH LANGUAGE BY THE NIGERIAN YOUTHS

The domination of English language and our respective mother tongues has created an environment in which practice of French daily would be hard. The purely Anglophone environment makes it difficult to learn the language effectively.

Worne (2013) opines that five or ten phrases will enable most people to navigate many countries at a basic level. 1,000 words can be enough to feel autonomous, confident and secure in another country and brings some cultural understanding. It begins with a few words and phrases - and that small investment can grow into a lifetime of interest, employment and opportunity. Yet, lots of Nigerian youths see French as difficult to learn. At senior secondary level lots of students avoid taking French classes. They make this choice easily considering that French is an elective subject in senior secondary school.

The easiest source for practicing communicating in French for the youths is their teachers in school. Where teachers do not have good command of French it becomes very difficult to discuss with their students beyond the classroom. The extent of fluency French language teachers have at primary school level largely determines the depth of inspiration of young ones to practice the language. *One cannot learn a language properly if you don 't have a good teacher.*

The training of large numbers of French teachers, the provision of adequate instructional materials including language laboratories, require large amounts of money, which may be difficult for government to provide for obvious reasons. Presently, the economic situation in the country is difficult. Besides, education has not been receiving favourable representation in budget provisions by the government. This denies French education sector the requisite facilities to effectively function. The level of input made by the French government towards improving the capacities and professionalism of French teachers in tertiary institutions is not commensurate with the attention given to teachers in lower cadre. Whereas teachers in nursery, primary and secondary schools are the ones that lay the foundation for those that continue till tertiary level.

STRATEGIES FOR ADVANCING THE GRASPING OF FRENCH LANGUAGE AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS

Given that French has been made second the official language in Nigeria, it is necessary that the language be learnt compulsorily from Nursery to Secondary school level. This gives it an equal opportunity with English language to be learnt during the formative days of youths in the country.

In addition, students should be required to pass both languages at credit level in the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) before they can gain admission into universities and other tertiary educational institutions in the country. If the students have to pass both languages at a credit level in this examination, it means that more hurdles have been placed on their way since any of them who fail either of the languages in the examination will not be admitted into any post-secondary institution in the nation. This will compel young people to take French language classes more seriously.

A student exchange programme at secondary school level should be put in place between Nigerian and its francophone neighbours. We should take advantage of our geographical position to link up with schools in neighbouring Francophone countries for the purpose of providing our young ones with opportunity to practice speaking and writing French in a fairly natural atmosphere. One would agree with Adeyanju (1987) that the challenge of teaching a foreign language is to create activities which confront the learner with the native speaker and encourage him to achieve results that matter by use of the language.

There are many qualified French teachers that are not employed by the government. With the growing number of youths in our population and adoption of French as second official language in Nigeria it is necessary that more teachers be employed to teach the subject in both primary and secondary schools. Adequacy of teachers will ensure that the assigned number of hours a student should undertake French classes will be fully utilized.

Incorporating the latest digital technology into traditional language teaching systems opens up a **wealth of multimedia and interactive applications available to bring teaching methods into the 21st century**. Through the agency of the Institut Français, the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs pursues a **proactive policy of developing information and communication technology (ICT) tools** for the teaching and promotion of French. The Federal government through the Ministry of Education can liaise with Institut Français to develop technological platforms that are specific to the peculiarities of Nigeria for fostering interest in French among youths.

As Adeyanju (1987) points out, the mother-tongue of the Nigerian learner of French and his official language, English, answer all his purposes of communication; his parents do not use French at home; employers of labour may not demand it except in special circumstances; and universities or other tertiary institutions do not ask for it as an entrance requirement; besides, none of the country's leaders in government speaks it or makes any serious policy statement about its place in the economy. There is little doubt that the degree to which a learner will strive for mastering a foreign language will be informed by his own goals in life; this is the more so because what an individual will learn and how he will learn it depend on what use he will make of the learning in any given situation. Therefore, present day benefits of learning French should be emphasised to youths.

The print and electronic media should be persuaded to go on air as well as publish in French. Conducting television and radio shows in French will point out to the general public the seriousness of the implementation of French as the second official language in Nigeria. Also, hearing our local issues addressed in French will encourage more persons especially the youth to strive and put the language to use on day to day basis.

Nigeria is mainly an Anglophone linguistic environment. This makes it very difficult for young people to practice their knowledge of French easily. It is necessary that more French language villages be set up across various cities in the country. This will speed up the rate of acculturation of youths. Although, a programme should be put in place (similar to the French Heritage programme in the United States of America) to assuage the fear of parents against their children becoming overly French. The French Heritage Program is an education program of the FACE Foundation (French-American Cultural Exchange). Created in 2005, the main goal of the FHLP is to help francophone immigrants and young Americans with francophone background to maintain their linguistic and cultural heritage. Through our own version of such programme measure will be put in place to foster our culture amid the growth of use of French among our youths.

CONCLUSION

There is little doubt that the degree to which a learner will strive for mastering a foreign language will be informed by his own goals in life; this is because what an individual will learn and how he will learn it depends on what use he will make of the learning in any given situation. The importance of French language across the world today can only be emphasized using advocacy. Effective advocacy for French is essential for sustainable French language study and use our workplace and private lives. On the other hand, in order for youths to learn French they must have the opportunity to develop and maintain their command of the language outside the classroom or the university, and use it to

engage in authentic conversation with other French speakers. Therefore, the Nigerian government as well as individuals must key into this strategic reality of effective development of French language capacity which this country needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the conclusion above it is recommended that:

1. The Federal government should make French a compulsory subject to be learnt from Nursery to Secondary school level.
2. The Federal government should introduce policies that would make learning of French Language attractive to the Nigerian youths.
3. French language classes should be equipped with IT tools, language laboratory and speech therapy facilities to enhance teaching and learning of French Language.
4. The day to day activities of new French villages being set up across the country should be designed to showcase our culture using French as means of communication.
5. Competent teachers should be employed and the remuneration for teachers should be improved.
6. Finally, the youths as well as other Nigerian citizens should take the business of multilingualism seriously.

REFERENCES

la
n
ive

Adeyanju, A. O. (1987). *Factors affecting enrolment and performance in French in senior secondary school in Nigeria*. Retrieved from www.globalacademicgroup.com on October 22, 2018

Alliance Francaise de Cincinnati (2018). *French in the world*. Retrieved from www.afcincinnati.com on October 22, 2018

Baiju, K. N. (2010). *Major Language Theorists influencing Learning of Mathematics*. Retrieved from www.eric.ed.gov October 22, 2018

of

Bariki, O. (1999), « Le francais au Nigeria : historique, statut et importance » in Nnoruka, M (ed) *Cours de langue et de litterature francaise*, pp. 22-32 Ilorin, Department de langues vivantes europeennes.

Edward, S. (2014). *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CB09781139629430.002> (pp 1-23)

-ryof

Evans, N. & Levinson, S. (2009). "The myth of language universals: Language diversity and its importance for cognitive science". *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. 32 (5): 429-92. doi:10.1017/s0140525x0999094x. PMID 19857320.

Gella. S. B. & Kwaja, I. I. (2017). The problems of teaching French language in secondary schools in Adamawa state: problems and prospects. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Public Policy, Social Development and Enterprise Studies*. 2(1); 59-70

Guardian Newspaper (1994). France-Nigeria chamber of commerce history. March 13

Macaro, E. ed. (2010). *Continuum companion to second language acquisition*. London: Continuum, pp. 137-57. ISBN978-1-4411-9922-5.

Ogunkeye, O. (2007). Bilingualism and the teaching of English and French in Nigeria. *Journal of Social and Cultural Studies*, 10(2); 1-11

Omonigho, S. (2016). *French as Nigeria's second official language*. Retrieved from www.guardian.ng on October 22, 2018

Osazuwa, S. E. (2007). The French Language at a Glance: A Socio-Historical Perspective. *J. Soc. Sci.*, 15(1): 95-100

- Owoeye, S. T. (2010). *Optimal Activation of French for Specific Purposes for Human Development in Nigeria*, In Kuupole, d.d. & bariki, i. (eds), applied social dimensions of language use and teaching in West Africa: Festschrift in honour of Prof. Tunde Ajiboye, University of Cape Coast, Ghana: The University Press, 224 - 230.
- Palet, L. (2014). *Is French the language of the /wtare?* Retrieved from www.usatoday.com on October 22, 2018
- Palo (2018). *The benefits of being bilingual*. Retrieved from www.palomagazine.com on October 22, 2018
- The Local (2017). *What's the state of health of the French language in 2017* Retrieved from www.thelocal.fr on October 22, 2018
- Sala, M. & Posner, R. (2018). *French language*. Retrieved from www.britannica.com on October 22, 2018
- Shryock, R. (2006). *French: The most practical foreign language*. Retrieved from www3.uakron.edu on October 22, 2018
- UNESCO (2013). *Definition of Youth*. Fact Sheet prepared by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Retrieved from www.unesco.org on October 22, 2018
- Wilsher, K. (2018). *Emmanuel Macron launches global campaign to promote French speaking*. Retrieved from www.theguardian.com on October 22, 2018
- Worne, J. (2013). *Language for the future*. Retrieved from www.britishcouncil.org on October 22, 2018
- VOA (2018). *Macron outlines plan to promote french language worldwide*. Retrieved from www.voanews.com on October 22, 2018