

Looming Prospect of Yoruba Language Endangerment: Implications for Afrocentrism and African Agenda

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Abstract

This study examines the looming prospect of Yoruba language endangerment and its implications for Afrocentrism and African agenda. The descriptive survey mode was used for the study. Random sampling technique was used to select 20 public primary schools from Akoko North East and Akoko South West Local Government Areas, Ondo State, Nigeria. From each of the 20 schools, 15 pupils, 10 teachers of lower primary school level and 10 literate parents were selected. The participants were 640 (297 pupils, 175 teachers, and 168 parents). Three instruments were used for data collection: questionnaire on the medium of instruction for teachers teaching at the lower primary school; questionnaire for educated parents' attitude towards mother tongue instruction; and questionnaire seeking information from pupils on the medium of instruction. The validated instruments had reliability co-efficient of 0.74, 0.78, and 0.81 respectively. The descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. Findings revealed among others that resources for mother tongue instruction were grossly inadequate (cluster mean= 2.40 while standard deviation=0.86). Also, the language used at home and pupils' variables influenced teachers' choice of language of instruction (mean= 2.59, while standard deviation= 0.95236). Consequent upon the findings, the implications were discussed and the study concluded that Yoruba language may be endangered and this will erode Afrocentrism and stall the realisation of African agenda. Recommendations were made to relevant stakeholders.

Key words: Yoruba Language, Endangerment, Afrocentrism, African Agenda.

Introduction

Language is an invaluable tool for communication, shaping identity and cultural heritage. It influences human thought, as we think in our own language. Hence, losing one's language have grave consequences. As Krauss (2007) predicts that 90% of the world's languages will be endangered by 2100, while Crystal (2000) estimates 50% will face the same fate. Fabunmi and Salawu (2005) warn that indigenous Nigerian languages, particularly Yoruba, may go extinct in 25 years. Language loss threatens cultural heritage and development, as language and culture are intertwined. Without a language, a nation cannot exist; For example, in Yoruba, Nigeria means 'Orile Ede'—a nation with a language.

To preserve indigenous languages like Yoruba language, a shift from Eurocentrism to Afrocentrism is essential. Africans must embrace their culture, history and values emphasizing their global significance.

Afrocentrism, championed by Asante Molefi and others, seek to replace

European thinking African-centred perspectives (Mazama, 2001). Advocates stress that African languages are vital for identity and progress. African Agenda 2063 aims for inclusive, sustainable development, and a strong cultural identity. Its goals—prosperity, shared values, and people-driven growth rely on lang preservation (Mazama, 2001). Languages is crucial for meaningful development, as Ogba cited in Aongo (2021) asserts. Thus, the loss of African languages, particularly Yoruba threatens Afrocentrism and Africa's future.

Statement of the Problem

Observation and research findings show decline of Yoruba language use in critical domains such as the home, and school, which are vital for language transmission and sustainability. Given the significant role of language in shaping identity, preserving cultural

heritage, and driving sustainable development, the potential endangerment of Yoruba poses a threat, not only to linguistic diversity but also to Afrocentrism and African agenda 2063.

Despite the importance of this issue, there is a notable dearth of literature examining Yoruba endangerment in public primary schools in Akoko South West LGA of Ondo state. This gap in research underscores the need for an empirical study on the implementation of Yoruba language policy as a medium of instruction in early education and its broader implications. Therefore, the limited literature on Yoruba language endangerment in this locale provides the rationale for this study. Additionally, this study considers the unique linguistic landscape in Akoko land, where Yoruba dialect co-exists with Edoid and Njokoid languages (Olumuywa, 2010). Specifically, the study focused on Yoruba spoken in Akoko South West.

Literature Review

Linguistic landscape studies have not ascertained the precise number of indigenous languages in Nigeria. Blench and Rogers (2014) revealed that Nigeria has 525 indigenous living languages while English, the official language and Nigerian pidgin is spoken by 60 million people. However, the three major languages are Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba. Regarding the general status of the languages in the world, there is the concern on the different levels of endangerment that world languages will experience. Krauss notes that (2007) 90% of the world's languages, including Yoruba language would be terribly endangered by 2100. Concerns are that endangerment of African indigenous languages in particular could have overriding consequences on Afrocentrism and Africa agenda.

The Yoruba Language is the native language of the Yoruba people who are located in South Western parts of Nigeria—Ogun, Ondo, Ogun, Lagos, Kogi, Edo, and some parts of Kwara State. The language is spoken by about 30 million people (Eberhard, D. M. et.al., (eds.), 2024). The reports further shows that an estimate

of 47 million people speak Yoruba (the standard Yoruba) as a second language and the variants of the language (dialects) which include Awori, Ila, Ijesha, Ilaje, Ekiti, Owo, and Akoko. The varieties of the language are spoken African countries like Togo, Republic of Benin, Sierra-Leone Côte D'Ivoire and the Gambia while it is also spoken in Brazil, Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago.

The Yoruba language ranks as the most widely learnt second language in Europe and the Americas out of the over two thousand African languages and the result, as Ojo (2006) observes is that 'there has been increased programming for non-natives in Yoruba language and culture' (p. 116). Also, Bamigbose (2011) observes that the fact that the Yoruba language is a language spoken by large numbers of speakers, makes it almost invariably associated with higher status and perhaps political and economic power, just like major languages such as Hausa, Swahili, and Zulu. All of these are some pointers to the prestige enjoyed by the Yoruba language. Despite its obviously prestigious status in Africa and in some other nations of the world, Yoruba language is listed among the seriously endangered languages (e.g. Afolabi and Igboanusi, 2024; and **Ogunlade, Dada and Agbeleoba, 2024**). As Ogunlade et.al (2024), maintain, language 'death is always a slow, unannounced and unnoticed phenomenon' (p.392).

Scholars like (e.g. Olaoye, 2013, Lawal, 2006, and Anyawu, Okecha and Omo-Ojugo, 2013) maintain that the contact of English with the indigenous language is a scourge rather than a blessing because of the hegemony of English on the indigenous languages. For instance, while capturing the wide spread and hegemonic agenda of English language in the linguistic landscape in Nigeria, Lawal (2006) describes English as 'the most adventurous and adulterous of all the languages of the world...it behaves...as a rapist, raping some Nigerian languages to death...' (p.26). The scholar laments that homogenisation and hegemonisation are the goals of English language expansionism. Indeed, the preference

for English to Yoruba and other indigenous languages in Nigeria by both the elites and even people with non-formal education is believed to be a significant factor that fosters Lawal's submission and constitute a threat for the development of Nigerian languages, including Yoruba.

According to UNESCO (2003) 'a language is endangered when it is on the path to extinction...when its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and ceases to pass it on from one generation to the next. That is, there are no new speakers, either adults or children' (p.2). This implies that when the last person who speaks the language dies, then the language dies with them. Wurm cited in Fabunmi and Salawu (2005) classified language status into 5 levels namely: potentially endangered, endangered, seriously endangered, moribund, and extinct. In Wurm's study in 1998, Yoruba is categorized as an endangered language, while seven years after—2005, Fabunmi and Salawu (2005) proposed that the language should be categorised as seriously endangered. It is now twenty years after Fabunmi and Salawu's study yet, the Yoruba language has not fared any better in terms of attitudinal changes, government policies, or efforts towards its revitalisation. As Fabunmi and Salawu (2005) maintain, when a language crosses the lines of either being potentially endangered or endangered, it is already passed into the limbo of time. Even if such a language is in written form, without any fluent speakers, it will ultimately die. Thus, one can safely agree with Brenzinger (1998) that Yoruba with 30 million speakers, has been called 'deprived' because of its domination by English in education. The hegemony of English over Yoruba language manifests in different levels of education, particularly at the lower level of education in Southwest Nigeria where the Yoruba language is spoken. Although Anyawu, et.al. (2013) opine that a language can resist death or extinction if it is able to move from the status of oracy to written status, we assume that if a written language, particularly, Yoruba is not

actively used in domains like school and the home, its doom looms around the corner.

Some of the critical factors that endanger a language include domains which refers to places where languages are often used and these include homes, schools, offices, playgrounds, and relaxation centers (Akinlade and Oshodi, 2013). They maintain that a language that is not used in these domains stand the risk of endangerment. This study focuses on domains such as the homes and schools and the factor of domination of Yoruba language by a more powerful language, in this case, English language.

Observation and research show that most educated Yoruba parents are not proud of their language while the elites exhibit love-hate attitude and language ambivalence towards the use of English language in Nigeria's socio-political and education landscape (Adegbite, 2010, Bamigbose, 2011, and Alebiosu, 2017). As Adegbite (2010), observes, many Nigerian parents, including both the educated and those with non-formal education, living in the southwestern Nigeria, 'forbid their children from speaking the native language at home, even when both parents speak the language to each other' (p. 37). They would do anything to ensure their children are proficient in the use of English and send them to private schools where the medium of instructional delivery is the English language. Also, the study of Ayoola and Soneye (2016) resonate with Adegbite's. The consequence of all these as Adegbite (2010) observes, is the 'overuse' of English and 'underuse' of the mother tongue in the linguistic repertoire of Nigerians.

Also, the study of Alebiosu's (2017) focuses on the patterns of language preferences of educated Nigerians with a focus on Yoruba-English Bilinguals. One of his major findings was that majority (75%) of Yoruba-English bilinguals prefer English to Yoruba especially in formal setting. Thus, most children raised up in such homes where English is a preferred means of interaction can hardly know the different forms of greetings in Yoruba language, be

literate in the language (basic literacy of reading, writing and numeracy) let alone speak their dialect. Thus, Yoruba culture is 'foreign' to many the children of many elite families. This negative attitude is what Jhn (2018) terms linguistic jingoism—the feelings of giving prestige symbol to a nation; symbol of civilization, symbol of progress to a particular language and the feelings of giving low prestige to an endangered language'. Of course, this attitudinal factor portends danger for the viability and survival of Yoruba language and in agreement with Mufwene (2002), the loss is a gain for English language, which undoubtedly, is a parasite. As the scholar maintains, 'languages are parasitic species whose vitality depends on the communicative behaviour of their speakers.....(p. 23).

Furthermore, Oyetade (2004) examined the patterns of interaction between Yoruba and Akoko languages in Ondo State, Nigeria. One of his major findings was that majority of speakers of Akoko language (a variant of the standard Yoruba language) are more proficient in the standard Yoruba language which is seen as a symbol of larger ethnic identity than the various Akoko dialects. Oyetade expressed the concern on the absence of intergenerational transmission of the dialect and that the peoples' shift to the standard Yoruba language could lead to the eventual death of Akoko dialects which he regards as the crucial link with the ancestors.

Furthermore, the Nigeria government language policies account for one of the reasons for Yoruba language endangerment. It is no news that the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2014) stipulates that mother tongue or the language of immediate environment should be the medium of instruction from the pre-primary to primary 3 and from primary 4 to 6, a progressive transition to English. The Phelps Stroke Commission to Africa (1920-21) cited in Crystal (2000) frowned at the practice of using any European languages to teach African children, stating that it is pedagogically wrong as the children will not profit much from instruction. The commission submits that the 'native tongue is immensely more vital in that it

is one of the chief means of preserving what is good in native customs, ideas, and ideals and thereby preserving what is more important than all these, namely, native self-respect'(p.83). Other studies have proved the benefits of mother tongue instruction. Akinkuotu, Ologunde, and Famakinwa (2022) examined the effects of the use of Yoruba language as a medium of instruction on pupils' performance in Science and Mathematics Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. They revealed that Yoruba as a medium of instruction had a significant effect on pupils' performance in Science and Mathematics.

However, it is worrisome that despite the proven tremendous benefits of mother tongue instruction, the language policy has not implemented. The study of Adeyemi and Ajibade (2014) examined the degree of implementation of the use of mother tongue for instruction in some public primary schools in Southwest, Nigeria. One of their findings show that only a total of 10.3% the teacher respondents implemented the language policy while a total of 94% of the teachers themselves acknowledged that the implementation was low while in most schools, Yoruba language was introduced as a subject rather than a medium of instruction. Also, OlaOlorun, Ikonta, & Adeosun (2013) revealed that mother tongue instruction is not implemented by most private schools in Southwest Nigeria neither is it enforced in the senior secondary schools (Ezeokoli and Ugwu (2019).

The study of Abidogun, Phatudi, Joubert and Hartell (2014) revealed that dearth of qualified Yoruba teachers and material resources constitute a major challenge to effective teaching of Yoruba language in Lagos state, stating that teacher-student ratio was 3:72 in primary 3 class. This negates the policy recommendation of ratio 1:25 of teacher to learners. As Fabunmi and Salawu (2005) maintain, course materials and language development activities are germane to initial literacy and early primary school education in mother tongue and the life of Yoruba language is embedded in its use' and fluency is pivotal to proving either the livingness or deadness of a

language, including Yoruba.

Furthermore, the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recommends that 'the business of the National assembly as well as the state House of Assembly shall be conducted in English and in the three recognised indigenous languages when adequate arrangements have been made therefore' (FGN, 2014, 1999, section 51). Viewed critically, one may also come to the conclusion that the constitution seems to be a vehicle for the endangerment of the indigenous languages as the recommendation clearly places priority on the English language over the indigenous language, in this case, the Yoruba language.

Theoretical Framework

1. Cummin's (2000) Theory of Bilingualism

This study is anchored on Cummins' theory which emphasises linguistic interdependence and threshold hypothesis in bilingualism. Cummins (2000) cited in Phaahla (2014, p. 35) argues that bilingual competence influences cognitive development, with balanced bilingualism yielding cognitive benefits. As low proficiency in both languages leads to negative effects, he advocates for additive bilingualism where both languages are developed rather than subtractive bilingualism, where one language is replaced by another. Thus, competence in Yoruba language will enhance their learners' performance in English language.

2. Theory of Language Ecology (Einar Haugen 1972, expanded by Hornberger 2002).

This theory views language as a system interacting with their social and environmental contexts (Creese and Martin cited in Hornberger, 2002). The pioneer, Einar Haugen 1972, stresses linguistic diversity and sustainability, while Hornberger (2002) expanded on this theory stressing the role of multilingualism, language policy and education in maintaining linguistic ecosystems, stressing issues of language endangerment dominance of global language (s) that threaten the survival of

minority languages.

However, the literature review shows the potential of multilingualism and ecological approach have not been adequately applied by in Nigeria linguistic ecosystem. Most schools in Southwest Nigeria hardly implement mother tongue education. This and other factors continue to threaten the survival of Yoruba language.

Method

Akoko North East and Akoko South West Local Government Areas were two of the 18 LGAs in Ondo State, Nigeria, created in 1996 with their Headquarters in Ikare and Oka respectively. Akoko North East LGA is about 106 kilometres to Akure the state capital. The population is 249,984 going by the National Population Census Report of 2006 (NPCCR, 2009). The major towns in the LGA include Ikare, Ugbe, Iboropa, Ise, Auga, Akunnu, and Ikakumo. On the other hand, Akoko South West LGA is about 102 kilometres to Akure. The population of the inhabitants is put at 228,383 in year 2006 population censor report (NPCCR, 2009). The major towns in the LGA include Oka, Iwaro, Oba, Supare, and Akungba-Akoko which houses the state university, Adekunle Ajasin University.

This study used the descriptive survey mode. The random sampling technique was used to select 10 public primary schools from each of the LGAs. From each of the 20 schools, 15 pupils and 10 teachers who teach at the lower primary schools and 10 literate parents were randomly selected. The teachers (who served the dual roles in the research efforts—acting as teachers and parents) responded to the questionnaire prepared by the research so as to get the data on attitudinal and other variables of the study. However, there were instances where the desired number of teachers in the lower primary schools were not enough. In such cases, and for convenience, all those available were used for the study. The sum of all the participants for the study was 643 (300 pupils, 175 teachers, and 168 parents). The three instruments for data collection were: Questionnaire on the medium

of instruction for teachers teaching at the lower primary school (QOMI); questionnaire for educated parents' attitude towards the use of mother tongue for instruction (QOEPAMI); questionnaire seeking information from the pupils on the medium of instruction used by their teachers (QOTMI).

Each of the three instruments has two sections: Section A for demographic information and Section B which has some items on a Likert scale for teachers and parents. Interview schedule was used for the pupils and they were made to respond either yes or no to the items on the questionnaire. The validated instruments had reliability co-efficient of 0.74, 0.78, and 0.81 for QOMI, QOEPAMI, and QOTMI respectively. The data gathered were analysed using descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Purpose of the Study

1. To find out the language of instruction at the pre-primary to primary 3.

2. To find out availability of resources to support mother tongue instruction.
3. To find out the attitude of parents towards the use of mother tongue for instruction.
4. Find out the language that is usually spoken by the pupils at home.

Research Questions

1. What language of instruction do teachers use at the pre-primary to primary 3 level of education in Nigeria?
2. Are the resources for mother tongue instruction available?
3. What is the attitude of educated parents towards the use of mother tongue instruction?
4. What is the language usually spoken at home by the pupils?

Results

Research Question 1: What language of instruction does teachers use at the pre-primary to primary 3 level of education in Nigeria?

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis based on type of language instruction that teachers use at the pre-primary to primary 3 level of education in Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	MEAN	SD	Decision
1.	I use Yoruba to teach the pupils all the subjects	11 (6.3%)	17 (9.7%)	76 (43.4%)	71 (40.6%)	1.8182	0.8491	Rejected
2.	I use English to teach the pupils all the subjects	34 (19.4%)	66 (37.7%)	39 (22.3%)	36 (20.6%)	2.5682	1.0286	Accepted
3.	Yoruba is taught as a subject from pre -primary to primary 3	39 (22.3%)	74 (42.3%)	27 (15.4%)	35 (20.0%)	2.6704	1.0334	Accepted
4.	I use both English and Yoruba teach the pupils	74 (42.3%)	39 (22.3%)	35 (20.0%)	27 (15.4%)	2.6704	1.0334	Accepted
5.	Learners perform better when there is closeness between what they learn at home and school.	77 (44.0%)	68 (38.9%)	24 (13.7%)	6 (3.4%)	3.2272	0.8173	Accepted
Total Frequency		175						
Total percentage		100.00%						
MEAN		2.59088						
STANDARD DEVIATION		0.95236						

Table 1 shows the outcome of the research question one. From the results of the distribution in which the mean stood at 2.59088 and standard deviation is 0.95236, the home and school environment factors influence teachers' choice of language of instruction at the lower primary school level. This result agrees with the findings of Bamgbose (2005) and Adeyemi and Ajibade (2014) that teachers use both English and

Yoruba because of their pupils' limitation in the foreign language. They revealed that the mother tongue instruction advocated in the language policy is not adhered to by teachers. They opine that products from such settings will neither be competent in Yoruba or English.

Research Question 2: Are the resources for mother tongue instruction available?

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis based on available resources for mother tongue instruction.

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	MEAN	SD	Decision
1.	There are enough Yoruba teachers to teach mother tongue in my school	12 (6.3%)	40 (22.9%)	73 (41.7%)	50 (28.6%)	2.0795	0.9661	Rejected
2.	There are enough textbooks to teach Yoruba language in my school	22 (12.6%)	22 (12.6%)	80 (45.7%)	51 (29.1%)	2.0966	0.7560	Rejected
3.	Are the language policy document available to you in your school to get familiar with?	66 (37.5%)	82 (46.6%)	28 (15.9%)	-	3.2159	0.7001	accepted
4.	The environment in the school is conducive for teaching and learning	22 (12.6%)	21 (12.0%)	52 (29.7%)	80 (45.7%)	1.9148	1.0357	Rejected
Total Frequency		175						
Total Percentage		100.00%						
MEAN		2.3267						
STANDARD DEVIATION		0.8644						

The data on table 2 above shows respondents' responses on the availability of resources for mother tongue instruction. The data indicates that all the items except items 3 above were rejected by the respondents meaning that there are no available resources for mother tongue instruction at the primary level of education in Nigeria. Responses in item 3 show that the majority of teachers have access to language policy document on mother tongue but due to lack of resources it is difficult to make use of

mother tongue instruction for the pupils. Since the mean =2.3267 and standard deviation= 0.8644 which is below 2.50 , one can therefore submit that there are no available resources for mother tongue instruction. This finding corroborates that of Abidogun, et al. (2014). Thus, this is apparently one of the major challenges of learning of Yoruba language.

Research question 3: What is the attitude of educated parents towards the use of mother tongue in instruction?

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis based on attitude of educated parents towards the use of mother tongue in instruction

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	MEAN	SD	Decision
1.	Student who can read and write in their mother tongue will more easily learn English Language than those who cannot	47 (28.0%)	76 (45.2%)	20 (11.9%)	25 (14.9%)	2.8631	0.9905	Accepted
2	Students would do better in school if they are taught in their mother tongue	51 (30.4%)	89 (53.0%)	21 (20.5%)	7 (4.2%)	3.0952	0.7679	Accepted
3	Students are more confident when allowed to ask questions in their mother tongue.	69 (41.1%)	59 (35.4%)	28 (16.7%)	12 (7.1%)	3.1012	0.92626	Accepted
4	Using mother tongue for instruction will enable students to interpret information obtained more adequately	37 (22.0%)	93 (55.4%)	26 (50.5%)	12 (7.1%)	2.9226	0.86051	Accepted
5	It is very important for students to be literate in their mother tongue.	56 (33.3%)	85 (50.6%)	13 (7.7%)	14 (8.3%)	3.0893	0.86051	Accepted
6	Classroom participation will be enhanced if students are allowed to use their mother tongue.	48 (26.6%)	59 (35.1%)	48 (26.6%)	13 (7.7%)	2.8452	0.92851	Accepted
7	Teaching in the mother tongue will allow students to develop practical skills easily.	56 (33.3%)	71 (42.3%)	27 (16.1%)	14 (8.3%)	3.0060	0.91230	Accepted
8	Students will learn concepts better when taught in the mother tongue than in English.	31 (18.5%)	79 (47.0%)	51 (30.4%)	7 (4.2%)	2.7976	0.78580	Accepted
Total Frequency		168						
Total percentage		100.00%						
MEAN		2.9650						
STANDARD DEVIATION		0.8790						

The result on table 3 above shows respondents' responses on educated parents towards the use of mother tongue instruction. The result indicate that all the items gained the approval of the respondents (mean=2.9650 and standard deviation=0.8790). Since this is above 2.50 bench mark, it can be therefore concluded that the attitude of educated parents towards the use of mother tongue in instruction is positive. This

finding is in contrary to the findings of Balogun (2011) which revealed that parents have negative attitude towards the use of mother tongue instruction because they want their children to speak and learn English for social acceptability and economic advancement.

Research question 4: What is the language usually spoken at home by the pupils?

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis based on the language usually spoken at home by the pupil?

S/N	NAME	YES (%)	NO (%)	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	My parents speak English to me at home	65 (21.9%)	231 (78.1%)	1.2189	0.41717	Rejected
2	My parents speak Yoruba to me at home	102 (34.3%)	195 (65.7%)	1.3434	0.47566	Rejected
3	I speak English very well	55 (18.5%)	242 (81.5%)	1.1852	0.38910	Rejected
4	I speak Yoruba very well	127 (42.8%)	170 (57.2%)	1.4276	0.49557	Rejected
5	My parents speak to me in our dialect	193 (65.0%)	104 (35.0%)	1.6498	0.47783	Accepted
Total Frequency		297				
Total Percentage		100.00%				
MEAN		1.36498				
STANDARD DEVIATION		0.450466				

Table 4 above shows the responses on the language usually spoken at home by the pupils. The Mean stood at 1.36498 while the Standard Deviation is 0.450466. The data on items 1 to 4 were rejected meaning that majority of the pupils did not speak English or Yoruba while the last item gained the approval of the majority of the respondents. Based on their view, their parents speak to them in their dialect. It is thus implied that pupils did not normally speak English or Yoruba due to the influence of their indigenous dialect. This result of is contrary to the finding of Oyetade (2001), which revealed that the majority of speakers of Akoko language (a variant of the standard Yoruba language) are more proficient in the standard Yoruba language than the various Akoko dialects. This study shows there is intergenerational transmission of Akoko dialect. However, the pupils examined in this study are still very young and they are from rural areas where there is high illiteracy level among the rural populace. The result may have agreed with Oyetade's if the respondents had

been taken from upper levels of education and if they are resident in cities where the influence of the standard Yoruba language is dominant.

Implications of Yoruba language Endangerment on Afrocentrism and African Agenda.

Language death has social and psychological consequences for former (Eberhard, et al., 2024). Yoruba language endangerment threatens Afrocentrism and African identity, as Language is a central to cultural heritage.

UNESCO (2012) highlights language's role in sustainable development and its loss weakens the 2063 agenda. Yoruba language loss also disrupts identity formation, leading to the erosion of Yoruba people and the African diaspora (Adegbite, 2009). Furthermore, language endangerment diminishes linguistic diversity, affecting both social and environments and academic research on human language (Eberhard, et al., 2024).

According to Eberhard, et al. (2024) language endangerment could have far-reaching implications on the loss of linguistic diversity both for the linguistic and social environment generally and for the academic community which is devoted to the study of language as a human phenomenon.

Conclusion and Recommendations for revitalising Yoruba language.

Findings from this study shows that Yoruba language is not widely used at home or in schools, threatening its survival and contradicting Afrocentrism and African agenda 2063. To address this, the study recommends:

1. Use of the language of immediate environment (LIE) in primary education with legal backing and adequate materials.
2. Official transactions in Southwest states should be conducted in LIE.
3. Legislation should define the use of LIE in social and public life in Southwest states.
4. Examinations should be conducted in Yoruba with examination bodies proposing this to the federal government.
5. Translation bodies should translate educational and literary materials into Yoruba.
6. In line with the suggestion of Ndhlovu (2008), African studies programmes should integrate African languages and literature to enhance cultural understanding and sustainable development.

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