

**LANGUAGE ATTITUDE AMONG THE ESAN SPEAKING PEOPLE IN
EKPOMA**

BY

EDESE GIFT ENOSA

ART1109916

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the work in this project was carried out by EDESE GIFT ENOSA.

.....

Dr. M.S. Agbo
(Supervisor)

Date.....

.....

Prof. B.A. Okolo
(Head of Department)

Date.....

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God Almighty for his grace and inspiration.

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ABSTRACT

There is a growing trend in the world of languages going into extinction due to the attitude people have toward their language. In Nigeria alone it has already been reported that many languages have gone already into extinction while others have experienced language shift and there are still some which are currently endangered.

This study is aimed at pointing out the attitude of Esan speakers living in Ekpoma toward the Esan language. The Mentalist approach was used taken into consideration the questionnaire method.

It was further gathered that the attitude posed by the Esan speakers in Ekpoma was fairly positive.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Language is defined according to the Longman Dictionary as the opinion and feelings people usually have about something. It is seen as the way of behaviour towards something in a particular situation.

Language according to Lakoff (1945:45) is defined as a system which carries information, skills, thoughts, norms and values which are transmittable from one person to another. In every human society, language play a vital role. It is one of the important properties of mankind because it is the basis of communication and it is parable from human beings. Language is therefore seen as a vehicle of culture, a distinguishing pervasive and blinding traits of a people. The history of a people has roots in their language and it is language that is used to pass down history from generation to generation.

Nigeria is a multi-lingual nation with diverse ethnic groups each with a distinct language. Consequently, there is heterogeneous linguistic situation in some part of Nigeria as seen in state such as Delta, Edo and Rivers. In each of these states, no common language exist. Thus different ethnic groups within the state speak indigenous language to one another. Communication across these ethnic groups becomes an internal problem due to the multi-lingual nature of its states. Thus, a common language usage is designated for government and education, especially when people from other ethnic groups dwell there for economic, political, social and religious reason.

This study is set out to investigate the type of attitude portrayed by the speakers of Ekpoma dialect towards the standard variety as it seems to explore what attitude is and the attitude towards dialect of Esan. Evidence shall be provided to show that Ekpoma dialect is steadily loosing its language to a related erodded language to those that have no orthography or less than a million speaker.

A multi-dialectal language community where each speech community speaks its own distinct dialect peculiar to them. This variation in the Esan language as caused by the multi-dialectal nature brings about partial mutual unintelligibility between the Esan language speakers. Some of these dialects of Esan are considered more prestigious than others.

1.0.1 DEFINITION OF LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

People have attitude, feelings and beliefs about language in general, their language and the language of other people. They may feel that an unwritten language is not a real language. They may feel shame when other people hear their language, they my believe that they can only know one language at a time. They may feel that the natural language is the best language for epressing patriotism, the best way to get a job, the best chance of improving their children's future.

Attitudinal studies aid in identifying how people of one language group view the personal character and social status of speakers of another language. Therefore, the assessment of language attitudes aids in grouping communities on the basis of their inter-group affinities and in combination with either methods, in estimating potential extensibility of material.

Attitudes cannot be observed directly but are demonstrated through actual behaviour, in for example how people treat speakers of other language (avoidance approach), or in their desire (or not) to learn another language. The convergence of one's speech to conform to another's speech. Since attitude cannot be studied directly, the assessment of language attitudes require asking such questions about their opinion of a person whose speech sample they just heard. The responses reveal attitudes about both people and their language.

Some language attitude studies are strictly limited to attitudes towards the language itself. However, most often the concept of language attitude include attitude toward the speaker of a particular language. If the definition is even further broadened, it can allow all kind of behaviour concerning language to be treated, for example attitude toward language maintenance and planning efforts (Fasold 1984:148).

Attitudes are crucial in language growth or decay, restoration or destruction. The status and importance of a language in the society and within individuals is derived largely from adopted or learned attitudes. An attitude is individual but it has origins in collective behaviour. Attitude is something an individual has which defines or promotes certain behaviours. Although an attitude is an hypothetical psychological construct, it touches the reality of language life. Baker stresses the importance of attitude in the discussion of bilingualism to be relatively stable. They have the tendency to persist. However attitude change is an important notion in bilingualism. Attitudes are complex construction, that is there may be both positive and negative feeling attached to a language situation (Baker 1988:112-115).

According to Lambert (1967), attitude consist of three components namely the cognitive, affective and connotative components (Dittmar 1976:181). The cognitive components refers to an individual belief structure, the affective to emotional reactions and the connotative components comprehends the tendency to behave in a certain way towards the attitude (Gardner 1985). The major dimensions along which views about language can vary are social status and group solidarity. The distinction of standard/non-standard reflects the relative social status or power of the group of speakers, and the force held responsible for the vitality of a language. It can be attributed to the solidarity value of another dimension called In-group solidarity or language loyalty which reflects the social pressures to maintain language or language varieties, even one without social prestige (Edwards 1982:20).

Fishman and Agheysi (1970) have suggested that there is a mentalist and behaviourist view point to language attitudes. According to the mentalist view, attitudes are a mental and neutral states of readiness which cannot be observed directly, but must be inferred from the

subjects introspection. Difficulties arising from this viewpoint include the question that from what data can attitudes be derived and in what data are they quantifiable. According to behaviourism, attitudes are a dependent variable that can be statistically determined by observing actual behaviour in social situation. This also causes problems, it can be questioned whether attitude can be defined entirely in terms of the observable data (Dittimer 1976:181).

Fasold (1984:148) suggests that attitude towards a language are often the reflection of attitude towards members of various ethnic groups. People's reactions to language varieties reveals much of their perception of the speaker of these varieties (Edwards 1982:20). Many studies have demonstrated that judgement of the quality and prestige of language varieties depend on a knowledge of the social connotation which they possess. Thus for instance the use of dialects and accents would be expression of social preference which reflects an awareness of the status and prestige according to the speakers of these varieties. A prestige standard form of a language has no inherent aesthetic or linguistic advantage over non-standard varieties. The prestige is usually the product of culture-bound stereotypes passed on from one generation to the other.

Le Payes and Tabouret-Keller (1985), stresses the importance of the nature of intergroup relation in the discussion of language attitude and uses. They vary as the nature of inter-group relation changes. When relations change, status, relationship and therefore perception, attitude and uses change. Speakers select code from a variety of socially marked models. Change takes place when the social value of the model community also changes.

When studying language attitude, the concepts of motives is important. Two basic motives are called instrumental and integrative motives. If the second language acquisition is considered as a passport to prestige and success, the speaker/learner consider the speaking/learning language as functional (Ellis 1991:117). On the other hand, if a learner wishes to identify with the target community to learn the language in order to perhaps be able to become a member of the group, the motivation is called integrative. In general, research has proved more beneficial for the learning of another language (Love Day 1982:17-18). On the other hand Gardner and Lambert for instance have found out that where the second language functions as a second language (that is, it is used widely in the society), instrumental motivation seems to be more effective. Motivation derived from a sense of academic or communicative success is more likely to motivate one to speak a foreign second language (Ellis 1991:118).

1.0.2 STUDIES CONCERNING LANGUAGE ATTITUDE ESPECIALLY TO NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

Language attitude is a personal or collective disposition, feeling and behaviour towards a particular language or a language variety. This attitude may be positive or negative. These psychological attributes (disposition, feeling and behaviour) are regarded as attitudes. So

everybody has attitude towards a certain issue or matter and this attitude maybe positive or negative.

This attitude does not only come like that, there are some factors responsible for it. Highlighted below are the factors that influence language attitude.

- **Historical Factors**

Historical factors is one of the factors that influences attitude towards a language or a language variety. This can either be positive or negative. Critically a man or a woman that his/her only child was killed in kano 5 years ago will have a negative attitude towards Hausa. The same thing applies to a man that got saved in a crisis by an Hausa man; he will have a positive attitude towards Hausa language. This is due to the fact that past events and occurrences influences the present and since attitude towards a language is a reflection of attitude from the speaker to the language towards the language.

- **Socio-Cultural Factors**

A language associated with great cultural value, norms and beliefs will attract positive attitude towards the language from the people. Yoruba for example is an honorific language that gives honour to people who are superior to someone. Because of this rich culture, people seem to love Yoruba. Yoruba use the second person plural “eyin” for an adult individual. Likewise a language that has a great social influence on people, influences posiive attitude. Some Nigerians will say they hate English language just because it does not respect status nor position in its language. This kind of attitude is based on the fact that this people consider English as a language that is not culturally rich.

- **Political Factors**

A language with great political influence and power attracts people. Based on the truth that people love power and politics and some language like French. English, Spanish and German have great political dominance in many countries. Because of this, language positively attracts the people. A lot of people learn language because of politics. For example, former president Chief Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria learnt French under two weeks based on the fact that to hold an Office in the United Nations, someone must speak another international language. From this premise we can conclude that he has a positive attitude toward French language because of the power attached to it.

- **Religion**

A language to a particular religion will attract positive attitude from people. A muslim will always have positive attitude towards Arabic since it is considered as the language of the Holy Quaran and that it is the language that Allah understands. A catholic person will have a positive attitude towards Latin because that is the language of the Roman Catholic Church. The same

religious factor applies to a Sango Worshipper. A Sango worshipper will have positive attitude towards Yoruba because that is the language of the Obakoso (Sango).

- **Economical Factors**

Language that is attached to great economical benefits and goods attract people. Many Nigerians will say “English is a language and when you learn English, you are assured of a good job”. This kind of statement is given birth to because of the economical power and positive attitude towards English

- **Ethnicity**

Attitude towards an Ethnic group influences attitude toward a language towards a language of the ethnic group. For example in Kano state, Hausa as an ethnic group is regarded as a prestigious language because people consider the ethnic group a good one. This attitude influence positive attitude towards Hausa as a language.

- **Language Policy**

Language policy that supports a particular language or a language variety make people to have positive attitude towards the language. The language policy of Nigeria supports and recognises Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. This policy make people have positive attitude toward these Nigerian languages. Another for example can be traced from the Liguistic Policy in Nigeria. People have negative attitude towards some languages because these languages are regarded as minority. The policy that recognises only three languages does not favour other languages.

- **Occupation**

A language attached to a particular occupation or proffession will attract positive attitude from the people. A lawyer or a law student will have positive attitude towards Latin language because Latin is the language attached to the proffession. This positive attitude is because of the person’s proffession.

1.0.3 LANGUAGE ATTITUDE OF NIGERIANS TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Nigerian English has come to stay as long as the official status of English in the Nigerian society is sustained. Many characteristic features of Nigeria dialect of the English language exist at the syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and linguistic levels. Interestingly, these ethnic traits do not simply dissappear just because variation in English reveals more of cultural difference. The language, as it is now has been ‘domesticated’ to reflect the general social context within which it functions.

Attitude toward the English Language, Adebija (1994) quoted Fitch and Hopper as defining language attitude simply as “the evaluative judgement made about language (or its variety) and its speaking, reared towards promoting, maintaining or planting of language or even towards learning and teaching of language”. He described attitudes as complex phenomena “which could be observable or internal, or both simultaneously, temporary or lasting and of surface levels of deep rooted nature”. Nigerians attitude towards the status and use of the English language is ambivalent. This incompactibility in the attitude is due to the close affinity a language shares with the mind and culture.

English apart from the role assigned to play, also become subservient to cultural milieu and its world view. Variables like culture, world view, among others can affect the externalization or codification of thoughts which a language conveys. Also variables like religion, ideology, environment (where perhaps the speakers attend school), tribal chauvinism and its accent, considerably affects the production of sounds, use of expression and choice of words. Nigerians express very strong and positive feelings of loyalty for their indigenous languages because of their relevance to cultural and national identity. So every bit of ethnic manifestation is done sometimes deliberately and with pride. A cursory examination of ambivalent attitude towards the use of English in Nigeria can be simplified further by classifying the society into micro and macro societies. Micro societies include federal institutions and academic environment while macro societies comprises of the larger societies, local or state based gatherings. Precisely of all the three major tribes in Nigeria, Hausa seems to be the least that attaches importance or exerts pressure on itself in speaking British Standard English. This underscores the value attached to the duo factors of ethnicity and religion. The Hausa people do not only regard their language as a *primus inter pares* among the Nigerian languages but also see the English Language as a language of christianity. The language is often seen as a language of the foreigners who have come to subdue our cultural and religious institutions. Moreso, due to the fact that the tribe has featured or produced more political leaders in Nigeria than any other tribe, the speaking of Hausa dialects enjoys more recognition among many Hausa top government officials and some of their academics than other varieties. It is also observed that the natives perceive the standard form as being too formerlistic and totally foreign to Nigerians.

One must equally recognise the influence of the mother tongue which serves the pioneer language through which a child first learns to express his thoughts, feelings and experience. The English language, against this backdrop is then viewed as not having enough expressive resources that can match any of the native language. Since in Nigeria, mostly in macro society and sometimes in the micro society (in the typologies earlier mentioned), speakers in their daily interactions make use of their first language. This practice has turned part and parcel of the native who now consider it tasking to use a foreign expression called standard English. In this regard, the English language is viewed contemptuously as a colonial stigma. Jowitt (1991) observes that most Nigerians often argue against the use of English as being a “language imported into Nigeria from Europe and therefore not the language with which Nigerians express

their innermost thoughts. English is an instrument of imperialism and should be replaced by an African Language”.

Dialectal English is also used to establish a form of informal conversational context. Speakers feel relaxed, original and natural while speaking it than when speaking rule-studded English. One thing is however crystal clear than in spite of all the foregoing sentiment, the English Language remains the only the strong cord that binds Nigeria and Nigerians together irrespective of the country’s multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic difference. English has continued to function against all odds in various domains of life.

1.1 LANGAUGE SITUATION IN NIGERIA

• NIGER-CONGO LANGUAGES

Niger-Congo perdominates in the central, east and southern areas of Nigeria, the main branches represented in Nigeria are Mande, Atlantic, Gum, Kwa, Benue-Congo and Adamawa-Ubangian. Mande is represented by he Busa cluster and Kyenga in the northern west. Fulfulde is the single Atlantic languages of Senegamlan origin but now spoken by cattle pastoralist across the Sahel and largely in the North Eastern state, Adamawa to be precised fulani (sometimes fulbe).

The Ijoid languages are spoken across the Niger Delta and include Ijo (Ijaw), Kalabari and the intriguing remnant language Defaka. The Efik language is spoken across the coastal South Eastern part of Nigeria and includes of the dialects Ibibio, Annary and Efik proper. The single Gur language spoken is Baatonun in the extreme North East.

The Adamawa-Ubanyian language are spoken between Central Nigeria and the Central African Republic. Their westernmost representative in Nigeria are the Rulawaga languages. The Kwa lanaguage is represented by the Gun group in the extreme South West, which is affiliated to the Gbe language in Benin Republic and Togo.

The classification of the other remaining language is controversial. Joseph Greenberg classified these without classws such as Yoruba, Igbo, and Ibibio (Efik, Ibibio and Annang) as Eastern Kwa and those with classes as Benue-Congo. This was reserved in an influentia 1989 publication and reflected on the 1992 map of languages where all these were considered Benue-Congo. There are several small language groupings in the Niger confluence area, notably Ukaan, Akpes, Ayereahan and Oko, whose inclusion in these grouping has never been satisfactory as argued.

Former Eastern Kwa, that is, West Benue-Congo would then include Igboid, that is, Igbo language proper, Ukwuani, Ikwerre, Ekpeye, etc. ; Yoruboid, that is, Yoruba, Itsekiri and Igali, Akokoid (eight small language in Ondo, Edo and Kogi state), Bini in Edo state, Ibibio-Efik, Idomoid (Idoma) and Nupoid (Nupe) and perhaps include the other language.

East Benue-Congo include Kainji, Plateau (46 languages), notably Ganni languages), Jukunoid, Dakoid and Cross River. Apart from these, there are numerous Bantoid languages which are the languages immediately aniestral to Bantu.

The geographical distribution of Nigeria Niger-Congo language is not limited to Middle East and South Central Nigeria as migration allows their spread to the linguisticaal Afro-Asiatic northern regions of Nigeria, as well as throughout West Africa and Abroad. Igbo words such as “unu” for “you people”, “sooso” for “only”, “obia” for “native doctoring” etc. are used in parts of Jamaica and many central American nations. Yoruba is spoken as a ritual language in cults

such as the Santeria in the Caribbean and South-Central America. The Barbic Dutch language in Surinam is based on an Ijoid language.

The Efik, Igbo and Yoruba languages are notable examples of this process. The more historically recent standardization and urbanization of the Igbos have provoked even more controversy due to its dialectal diversity, but the central Igbo dialect has gained the widest acceptance as the standard-bearer. Many scholars such as Chinua Achebe have dismissed standardization as colonial and conservative attempts to simplify a complex mosaic of language. Also worthy of note is the Enuani dialect, a variation of the Igbo that is spoken among parts of Aniomaland. The aniomaland areas are the Aniocha, Ndokwa, Ukwani, Ika and Oshimili of Delta state. Standard Yoruba came into being due to the Anglican church and owes most of its lexicon to the dialect spoken in Oyo and Ibadan.

• THE AFRO-ASIATIC LANGUAGE

The Afro-Asiatic language in Nigeria is divided into Chadic languages. The language is spoken by 24 million people in West Africa and it's the second language of 15 million people more. Hausa has therefore emerged as Lingua-Franca throughout much of West Africa and the Sahel in particular. The language is spoken primarily amongst Muslims and the language is often associated with Islamic culture in Nigeria and West Africa.

Hausa is classified as a West Chadic language of the Chadic grouping, a major sub family of Afro-Asiatic. Culturally, the Hausa people have become closely integrated with the Fulani following the Jihadist establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate by the Fulani Withman Dan Fodio in the 19th century. The Hausa is the official language of a number of states in Northern Nigeria and the most important dialect generally regarded as that spoken in Kano, and Eastern Hausa dialect, which is the standard variety used for official purpose.

Eastern dialect also include some dialect spoken in Zaria, Bauchi while Western Hausa dialect include Sakkwatachi spoken in Sokoto, Katsinanchi in Katsina and Wanchi in both Gobir and Adar, Kebbi and Zamfara. Katsina is transitional between Eastern and Western dialects. Northern Hausa dialects include Arewa and Aruwa while Zaria is a prominent Southern tongue version, Barikanchi is a pidgin formerly used in Militant.

Hausa is a highly typical Chadic language with a reduced tonal system and a phonology influenced by Arabic. Other well-known Chadic language include Nigers Goemai, Mwayhaval, Bule, Ngizim, Bade ad Bachama. In the East of Nigeria and on into Cameroun are the Central Chadic language, such as Bura, the Higi cluster and Marghi. These are highly diverse and remain very poorly described. Many Chadic languages are severely threatened.

Hausa, as well as other Afro-Asiatic language like Bada (another West Chadic language spoken in Yobe state) have historically been written in a modified Arabic script known as Ajami. However the modern official orthography is now a Romanization known as Boko First introduced by the British regime in the 1930s.

1.1.1 NUMBER OF LANGUAGES IN NIGERIA

Nigerian languages are an integral part of the culture. It is common place to find persons in Nigeria who are unable to speak their indigenous dialect aside the central language, thus not being recognised as true sons of the soil. The concept of the Nigerian language is a fascinating topic, usually seen as medium of communication between individuals from varied social class and background, with such spoken language offering the speakers a vivid definition of their origin.

Nigeria is a multi-lingual state that has over five hundred spoken languages ranging from Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Efik, Fulfude, Ibibio, Edo and a host of others. However it is believed that around 7-9 languages that was formerly in use in the country has disappeared. This brings us to the broad classification of the Nigerian language into three distinct linguistic groups, that is, the Afro-Asiatic, Nilo-Saharan, and Niger-Congo.

The Afro-Asiatic linguistic group is much larger and its make up of Margi, Bada and Hausa, among others. The Fulanis and Tivs are thought to be recent immigrants, but if we consider modern linguistic research, it is presumed that the majority of Nigerian language especially those that are of the Kwa sub-group have been spoken in about the same geographic setting about 400 years ago. The languages under the Afro-Asiatic are Hausa, Eastern dialects (also include some dialects spoken in Zaria and Bauchi) and Western Hausa dialects including Sakwatauchi spoken in Sokoto. Others are Arewa and Barikanati.

The former Eastern Kwa consists of Igboid (that is Igbo language proper, Ukwuani, Ikwerre, Ekpeye etc), while the West Benue-Congo includes Yoruboid, (that is, Yoruba, Itsekiri and Igala), Akokoid, Edoid (includes Edo sometimes referred to as Bini in Edo state), Ibibio, Efik, Idomoid (Idoma) and Napoid (Nupe).

East Benue-Congo include Kaingi, Plateau (notably Gama language), Juluoid as well as the Dakoid. There are numerous Bantoid languages, which are the languages ancestral to Bantus. These include mambiloid, Efaoid, Bendi, Beoid and Tivoid languages.

1.1.2 MAJOR LANGUAGES IN NIGERIA

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country and has one of the largest aggregations of ethnic groups in Africa. There are more than 300 Nigerian tribes and among the largest include Hausa,

Fulani, Igbo, Yoruba, Ijaw, Kanuri, Annang, Tiv, Ibibio, Etsako and Efik. Other Nigerian tribes apart from the ones listed constitute a smaller percentage of the total number of people from all the tribes in Nigeria. It is note worthy that Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba make up about 70% of the populaton of Nigeria. These Nigerian tribes have different cultures, carried on by their people thereby contributing to the immerse cultural diversity seen in the country.

- **HAUSA TRIBE**

This happen to be the largest tribe in Nigeria making up about 29% of Nigeria's population. They live in the northern part of Nigeria, Southern part of Niger Republic and western part of Chad Republic. They mostly occupy the towns and villages in northern part of Nigeria including Kano, Kaduna, Biram, Jos, Lafia, Kastina, Abuja, Sokoto, Bauchi, Birnin-Kebbi, Damaturu, Dutse, Gombe, Suleje, Gusau, Jalingo, Jebba, Maiduguri, Makurdi, Yola, Zaria,etc.

No two tribes in Nigeria have exactly the same language but the Hausa language originated and forms part of the Chadic family of languages which is similar but distantly related to Hebrew and Arabic. In recent times, because of the close similarity between the cultures and lifestyle of Hausa and Fulani, they are often regarded as Hausa-Fulani.

- **IGBO TRIBE**

This is one of the major tribes in Nigeria with appreciable number of people owing their origin from the Igbo tribe. Historically, they were from Nri kingdom, which happen to be the oldest kingdom in Nigeria. The Igbos are industrious and made bronze ceremonial vessels as part of their culture and heritage dating back to the stone age. Geographically, the Igboland occupies most of the South Eastern Nigria and some of the major cities include Enugu, Onitsha, Owerri, Asaba, Awka, Abakiliki, Abia, Orlu, etc.

- **YORUBA TRIBE**

They constiutue almost 21% of the population of Nigeria and this translates to about 40 million people. They inhabit the South Western part of Nigeria but also live in other West African counties such as Benin Republic, Ghana, Togo, and surprisingly the Carribbean. They are well involved in Arts and have a long history of poetry. They made impressive bronze sculptures most of which were made to represent the head of gods and rulers. They also made lots of bead works, metal works, weaving and mask making.

1.1.3MINORITY LANGUAGES IN NIGERIA

The common myth is that Nigeria has 250 ethnic groups. The simple fact is that nobody knows the real real figure and estimates vary widely, depending on the criteria used. Some ehnic

minorities, such as the Lufum and Paati in Taraba state (Mustapha 2000:104) are not included in the Otite's list. Otite also rules that Hoffman suggests that there are 94 ethnic groups in Nigeria while Wenthe-Lukes provides an entry with between 550 and 619 groups (Otite 1990:pp35-36). This confusion over number has as much to do with problems of classification and data gathering as with the tendency for ethnic segments to coalesce or differentiate in the face of economic or political developments. Some classification such as Hoffman's have issues such as nations of common descent and a shared socio-ecological space. The linguistic criteria is also complicated by multilingualism, particularly amongst the small group who have had to use more than one language for everyday interactions and the political driven dialect question among other groups.

Some ethnic minority groups are found in more than one state or zone. Despite the multiplicity of ethnic minority groups in the northern zone, there is some linguistic unity in the prevalence of Hausa as a regional Lingua Franca (Agheyisi 1984). The 39 minority groups listed for south south seems to be a serious undercount for that zone which is noted for ethnic and linguistic fragmentation. Given that ethnic minorities are largely concentrated in the North-Central, North-East, South-South and the southern fringes of the North-West, it is not surprising that these are also the zones of the most acute ethnic minority, political and religious agitations take place.

The number of states multiplied over the years as follows; 12 in 1967, 19 in 1987, 21 in 1976, 30 in 1991 and 36 in 1996. At the third tier of governance, that of the local government area (LGA), there was an equal inflation of numbers from 30 LGAs in 1976 to 775 LGA in 1996. As noted earlier, many ethnic minority groups came to control their own states or local government, thereby unleashing intra-minority competition and the fragmentation of the genetic 'minority' identities built up in the previous era.

1.1.4 MAJOR AND MINOR LANGUAGES IN NIGERIA

A larger portion of Nigerians speak English quite fluently, although so many do with varied accents, with Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba remaining the most spoken languages. Other minorities in the country communicate with their kinsmen in their language while employing English language as a means of communicating and doing business with fellow countrymen in other parts of Nigeria.

The major and minor languages spoken in each state are as follows:

- **ABIA STATE**

Igbo is the only first language spoken in Abia state and all its local government areas.

- **ADAMAWA STATE**

There are 58 languages spoken as first languages in Adamawa state. The major ones include Bacama/Bata (Bwative), Bura, Phabir, Fulfulde, Huba (Kilba), Honguda, Mumuye, and Samba Daka. Most other languages in Adamawa state are extremely small and endangered minority language due to the influence of Hausa and Fulfulde. Holima is reported to be dying out.

- **ANAMBRA STATE**

There are three languages which are spoken as first languages in Anambra state. They are the Igala and Igbo which are the major languages while Aduye is the small minority. However the Igbo dominates greatly.

- **AKWA-IBOM STATE**

There are 20 languages spoken as first language in Akwa-ibom state. The major languages include Anaaji, Ibibio, and Igbo. The other languages such as Anacy, Ebughu, Efar, Ekit, Ibuoro, etc. are the minority languages.

- **BAUCHI STATE**

There are 60 languages spoken as first language in Bauchi state. Major languages spoken in Bauchi are Bole, Fulfulde and Hausa. Most others are very small and extremely endangered language. They are the minority minority languages due to the strong influence of Hausa. Ajawa, Gami-Ninji, Kubi and mawa are extinct while Cele, Shau, and Ziriya are newly extinct. Many others follow.

- **BAYELSA STATE**

There are 10 languages spoken as first language in Bayelsa state. Most of these languages belong to the Ijo cluster. There are the Biseni, Ekpeye, Engenn, Epie, Ijo, Izon, Kugbo, Ogbia, Okodia, Orume.

- **BENUE STATE**

There are 14 languages spoken as first languages in Benue state. The major languages are Idoma, Igade and Tiv while the others are minority.

- **BORNO STATE**

There are 28 languages spoken as first languages in Borno state. Many of the languages are endangered due to the influence of Hausa and Kanuri and they are of the minority languages. Major language of Borno state are Shuwa Arabic, Kanuri and Merghi. Some languages are spoken across the border in neighboring Chad and Cameroun.

- **CROSS RIVER**

There are 50 languages spoken as first language in Cross River state. The major languages of Cross River are Efik, Bokayi, Ejagham, Igede and Yalaand they are also fairly large. The other languages are minority languages.

- **DELTA STATE**

There are 11 languages spoken as first language in Delta state. The major languages are Igbo, Igala, Itsekiri, Izon and Urhobo. The other languages are minority languages.

- **EBONYI STATE**

There are five languages spoken as first language in Ebonyi state and this includes Izi, Ezza, Ikwomgbo, kukele, legbo and Mbembe. These languages are affiliated to Igbo.

- **EDO STATE**

There are 17 languages spoken as first language in Edo state. The major languages are Epira, Edo, Esan, Etsako and Okpamberi.

- **EKITI STATE**

Yoruba and Izon are spoken as first language in Ekiti state.

- **ENUGU STATE**

Igbo is spoken as first language in Enugu state.

- **GOMBE STATE**

There are 21 languages spoken as first languages in Gombe state. Most of them are endangered due to the strong influence of of Hausa Fulfulde. Major languages include Fulfulde, Hausa, Rangale and Wayew.

- **IMO STATE**

Igbo is the major language.

- **JIGAWA STATE**

Four languages spoken as first language in Jigawa state are Bade, Hausa, Kanuri and Warji. Two languages Auyokuwa and Tesheniwa in the minority were spoken in this region before but are now extinct.

- **KADUNA STATE**

There are 52 languages spoken as first languages in Kaduna state. Gbari and Hausa are the major languages. Most other languages spoken are small and endangered minority languages due to the influence of Hausa. Shemi is almost extinct.

- **KANO STATE**

There are four languages spoken as first languages in Kano state. Fulfulde and Hausa are the major languages while Duwai and Kaduna are small minority languages.

- **KATSINA STATE**

Only two languages, Fulfulde and Hausa are spoken as first languages in Katsina state.

1.1.5 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN NIGERIA

The official language of Nigeria, English, the former colonial language was chosen to facilitate the cultural and linguistic unity of the country. Communication in the English language is much more popular in the country in the urban communities than it is in the rural areas which comprises of about three-quarter of the country's population.

The other major languages are Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Ibibio, Edo, Fulfulde, and Kanuri. Nigerian linguistic diversity is a microcosm of Africa as a whole, encompassing three major African language families which are Afroasiatic, Wilo-Saharan and Niger-Congo. Nigeriaa also has several as yet unclassified languages, such as Centuum which may represent a greater diversity prior to the spread of the current language families.

1.1.6 FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN NIGERIA

The inability of the majority of Nigeria to speak foreign language such as French and Arabic has been resulting in occupational loss to them. It is causing and it is likely to cost many Nigerians inter-regional as well as international Jobs including those that are stationarily allocated to Nigerians, in the future. Moreover, Nigeria risks loosing such plum offices to other nations in the future unless something is urgently done to correct the apathy of Nigerians towards the learning of foreign languages, especially Arabia and french, both of which are pervasive on the African continent.

- **ARABIC LANGUAGE**

This assumes an important position. It is a language spoken in a broad belt extending from the Arabian peninsula on the Atlantic Ocean. It is the official and home language of over 200 million people in some non-Arab countries. On the African continent, Arabic is natively spoken and officially spoken in ten countries namely Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, Somalia, Djibouti and Chad. As the home language Arabic is spoken in Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria (Shuwa Arabs), Niger, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. Besides, the language is the sole language utilized by twenty-four non-Arab Muslim countries with a population of about one billion people as a vital spiritual component of daily life. Interestingly, the consequential, indispensable roles of this language in continental and international politics, economic and financial activities have made it one of the official tongues of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the United Nations Organization (UNO). Based on this utterance, Nigeria's status in contemporary continental and international political and economic orientations, call for the adoption of Arabic together with European languages such as English and French, which the country relies on for contacts, with African and Middle Eastern Arabic speaking states.

Therefore if national interest and security are the parameters for which international relations are fostered and foreign policies are shaped, then the Nigeria policy makers should take into account the improvement that language accrues to diplomatic and economic relations. Without any doubt, Nigeria is not ready to dispense relationships with 22 Arabic speaking countries in the world. Hence in order to employ appropriate political principles, Nigerian leaders should give a deep consideration to the success inherent in diplomacy enhanced by language.

- **FRENCH LANGUAGE**

On the African continent, there are eighteen (18) countries where French is the official language, one where it is one of two official languages and then there are the three of the Maghreb where for strong political reasons, Arabic is the official language, but where French has a powerful presence. French is directly and indirectly the communication tool key to a quarter of a billion people in an enormous expanse of this great continent.

Geographically, Nigeria is surrounded by French speaking countries, a situation that makes it imperative for other citizens to take French as a second official language. Also with increasing globalization, which has reduced the world to a global village, nothing stops Nigeria from having a working knowledge of a third or fourth international language. With democratization, Nigerians are looking forward to an influx of foreign investment. This means that Nigerian national business will be interacting more with international businessmen from all over the world. There is therefore the need for them to be able to work effectively in the international business community. Such a progress will not be fully materialized unless a

confidence nurturing mechanism embodied in having a shared common language, which has been attested to by experts as a key factor in promoting the place of mutual understanding among trade associates, is firmly established.

1.2 NIGERIAN PIDGIN

1.2.1 THE HISTORY OF NIGERIAN PIDGIN

Decamp (1987:175) describes Pidgin as an “incidental communicative language of nobody”. Its vocabulary according to Decamp is denoted by the socio-politically dominant language “in the original situation”, most especially with the European imperialists. Pidgin is therefore an amalgam of the main language. Stock Well (2001:18) observes that because of the overwhelming colonial expansion of the British Imperial power “around a quarter of all Pidgin and creoles have English as element”.

Unlike creole, pidgin is used to replace the native language in a micro-speech community. This implies that Pidgin are restricted to a practical issue or in events. Holmes also agrees that Pidgin is spoken more for an effective than referential purpose. At the early stage of Pidgin, it is observed that Pidgins initially are exclusively used for referential and not effective function. They evolved “to serve a narrow range of function in a very restricted set of domains.

Obiechina (1984), Elugbe (1995) and Egbokhare (2001) are unanimous in their opinion that the Nigerian pidgin English came into Nigeria through the coast. Different Pidgin variants have been noticed in Nigeria. Pidgin English in its varying form is a lingua-franca, a simplified bridge language evolving through necessity, after extended contact between groups without a single common language formed from numerous languages and influence. Pidgin is a wide term covering a range of regional hybrids, which evolve through historical events such as the spread of empires, settlement, migration and international trade. Nigerias’ Pigin english is a wide spread lingua-franca in Nigeria where more than 300 languages are spoken.

The origins of Nigeria Pidgin English lies historically in trade between the British and local people in the 17th century. It is part of a continuum of English Pidgins and creoles spoken in other west African countries. In recent years, Nigerian Pidgin English development has been particularly evident in the big cities and parts in the southern part of Nigeria. Where it is used among people belonging to different ethnic groups, the use of Nigerian Pidgin is strictly linked to the urbanization process.

1.2.2 FEATURES OF NIGERIAN PIDGIN

Pidgin is a somewhat perogative label used by native speakers of English to describe the often historical violations of the basic rules of standard English syntax by non-native speakers of the language. Two other popular names for Pidgin English are “halting English” and “faltering English” .

Pidgin is a technical term in linguistics, that refers to a “contact” or “trade” language that emerged from the fusion of foreign (usually European) language. In this linguistic fusion, the European language provides most of the vocabulary and the indigenous languages provides the

structure of the language. Nigerian Pidgin English sentence for example “wetin dey hapun now?”. The informal standard English equivalent of the expression would be “whats up?”. Now, ‘wetin’ is a distortion of “what is” while hapun is the corruption of “happen” but “nau” is derived from the Igbo word “na” or “nna”. In the above sentence of the vocabulary, it is mostly English but the structure of the sentence is decidedly African.

The base forms Nigerian Pidgin are often modified in a number of ways including blending, borrowing, affixation, clipping, extension and reduplication. These are discussed below.

1. Borrowing

The Nigerian Pidgin has been greatly criticized of borrowing largely from the standard English, however, this does not mean that its borrowings can only be traced to the Standard English. Other languages such as Portuguese and indigenous languages in Nigeria are also involved in the word formation processes of the Nigeria Pidgin. Since Nigeria Pidgin is a product of contact, it tends to borrow from all the languages that came into contact before it was formed.

2. Compounding

The uniqueness of Nigerian Pidgin as a language for advertising purpose has been observed at the level of compounding. Following the views of Quirk (1972), a compound word can be seen as a unit of word which consists of two or more bases. The two base words or free forms of a word which form a compound word may be strung together, hyphenated or even separated. Compounding is also basically found in content words. Hence, nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are the major word classes often used in compounding. However, we have few instances of the other word classes.

3. Blending

Blending, which involves the merging together of two or more words such that at least one of them loses at least a part of its original form, is not uncommonly found in Nigerian Pidgin. Nigerian Pidgin blends two English words together by removing some sounds of either or both words.

Unlike English which duplicates words with the doubling of a given syllable, Nigerian Pidgin duplicates by doubling the given word and at times syllables. In other words, it repeats a particular word twice either together or separated by hyphen. As noted in compounding, Nigerian Pidgin is highly characterized by reduplication, and for advertising purpose, it tends towards emphasis.

4. Clipping, Extension and Conversion

These are also part of the ways in which the words in different languages are formed. With clipping one or more syllables are deleted from either the initial or final part of a word. However no example of this is found in our data. With extension, the meanings of words are expanded beyond their original or initial meaning. In particular, more words in English have had their meanings extended.

1.2.3 FUNCTION OF NIGERIAN PIDGIN

Nigeria is made up of so many ethnic groups and languages. It has been discovered that Nigeria Pidgin English is used by Nigerians even when they travel out of the country, especially if they want to prevent another English speaker from understanding what they are talking about. The users of the Pidgin English at the particular time may not be natives of the three major tribes in Nigeria. So they use the Pidgin for a private communication which is different from the Pidgin of all other English speaking countries.

Nigeria Pidgin English when used by Nigerians tend to bring about an informal bond in the society today. When someone goes to some places and the person needs something from an individual or a group of people and the formal English is used to communicate, the person may not get exactly what he wants or he may be ignored outrightly. In such a case, using the Nigerian Pidgin English is the best because it brings that mutual communication even if the person is a stranger. Nigerians outside the shores of the country also use the Pidgin English as a brotherly language of communication, though they may not be having an issue that should be said privately.

Nigerian Pidgin English is also used like a sign language. For instance a foreigner once noticed that when Nigerians meet, they always greet themselves with the phrase “Old boy how far na”. So he approached a foreigner and asked if the greeting was an occultic sign. Well as a Nigerian of course, that’s a normal greeting language in the pidgin English but it was perceived as otherwise by the foreigner. The point here is that one can perceive that the Nigerian pidgin English used by Nigerians especially in diaspora is a sign language. Some of these functions are explained below:

1. It is used in Broadcasting News

Almost all the radio and television stations in Nigeria today make time to cast news in the pidgin English languages. This is because in majority of the rural areas, the standard formal English is not understood. Thus the pidgin is used to pass the information. However, it is observed most of the time that the news cast in pidgin English is degraded compared to thoriginal information.

2. It is used in all forms of Adverts

In Nigeria today, pidgin is used in all forms of advertisements to include radio, television, telecommunication, newspaper, billboards, etc. majority of the audience or consumers of the products are part of the uninformed Nigerians who will need pidgin English to understand the message conveyed to them by marketers.

3. It is used in the Entertainment Industry

In Nigerian today, the entertainment industry which include the movie industry, the music industry as well as the comedy industry, utilizes the pidgin English in most of the cases to thrill their fans. Comedians, actors and musicians have this a great and exciting tool.

4. It is the lingual-franca of every Nigeria market

In any market you visit in Nigeria, the use of pidgin English cannot be over emphasized. In a nation where many uneducated persons end up selling retail and wholesale goods in the market, it is the pidgin English that is mostly understood and best for negotiating the prices of goods.

5. It is used Churches

Some churches in Nigeria like the Deeper Christian Life Ministry, Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry, The Redeemed Christian Church of Nigeria, etc, have a pidgin English department that specializes in conveying the messages of the preacher in pidgin to the rather uneducated mass in the congregation. This happens especially in a location that has a great variety of languages; where no major language is dominant. Thus, the pidgin English which is popular among Nigerians is utilized.

6. It aids in early Development of the Nigerian Child

In most multi-lingual locations like Lagos and the entire South-South, the Nigerian child develop better and communicates more fluently with his peers in the Pidgin English. This eventually leads to faster and better understanding of the formal English language. Moreover, parents also whose language is most times endangered, on realising the inability to pass their mother tongue on to their children, uses the Pidgin English to communicate with them.

1.3 THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN NIGERIA

1.3.1 HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN NIGERIA

The christian missionaries who came from Great Britain introduced formal Western education to Nigeria just before the 19th century. Prior to them, education was done informally as children were taught tradition, culture, history and the likes by their parents who were in turn taught by their own parents. After the introduction and acceptance of the formal system of education, the entirety of it was left in the hands of the missionaries and they taught teachers, children and adults who cared to learn English language.

The invasion of the European colonial master and slave trade activities along the west coast of African in the 18th century is believed to have paved the way for their tradition, languages and culture, some of which is obvious till today. The earlier kinds of English language which were spoken were “Coaster English” and “Patuu English” (pidgin or broken English) which was a more adaptable English Variant as a quick and easy means of communication. The entry of the British who were English speaking people in 1841, to the Southern and South-Western part of Nigerians inevitably raised the question of a language to adopt for communication between the indigenous population and the guest, more so the european guests felt the “native languages were too extensive” and not of high quality and never likely to become of any practical use of civilization.

In 1882, the English language which was already well spoken in Nigeria by the elites and children of the elites was accepted and implemented as the main channel of instruction and was the generalized approved communication language in corporative environment such as schools, post offices, airports, corporate organizations, airport, federal and state parastatal, etc.,. Consequently, the education ordinance and code of 1882, 1896, 1918 and 1926 were enacted for English language to be as the official language.

1.3.2 FUNCTION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN NIGERIA

English language is the inter connecting language amongst Nigerians from different geopolitical zones and different ethnicities. English language is a world wide language and it's the means of communication in over 30% of all countries in the world. The inability to communicate in English language would definitely make interaction trade impossible. Without a pass in English language, students can't move from secondary level of education to tertiary institutions and this is to ensure that the student can at least communicate and express themselves in multi-ethnic communities.

The role of English language in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized as it is an important (but under-rated) tool for national development. The English language plays a very prominent role in Nigeria. It points out the difference in tribe and tongue. Ethnic division in Nigeria are often along linguistic lines. Its assumed that many tribes basically antagonizes nationalities,

trying to form Nation. On the other hand, each of the majority language asset is superior over the others. The implication in adopting any Nigerian language as a national language is quite political. A resource is then made to the use of the English language to meet our national communication needs more, because of its naturalness in the country. The teaching of English language in Nigeria is not done unjustifiably. The nascent desire for the acquisition of this metropolitan language by every Nigerian, is ignited by the fact that the language has occupied an enviable and prominent position in the nation's imperialistic colonial heritage and implication notwithstanding.

1.3.3 THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTIONAL IN EDUCATION

The quality of education is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classroom. It is a fact that the academic qualification, knowledge of the subject matter, competence and skills of teaching and the commitment of the teacher have effective impact on the teaching and learning process (National Education Policy 1998-2010). Quality improvement in education depends upon proper training of teachers.

English has acquired the status of a global language (Crystal 1997). Keeping in view the growing need and importance of English language in every area of life's endeavours, English is made a compulsory subject in Nigeria from the very beginning of the academic career. This increasingly necessitates good quality for initial preparation for the non-native speakers and teachers in the school system (Cullen 1994). English is taught as a compulsory subject and also the whole teaching and learning process is carried out in English language. English is also the medium of instruction in Nigerian schools. This enables the students of these schools to learn English in an environment where most of the interaction between the teacher and the student is in English (Fuller and Clark 1994). As a result the students of these schools are more proficient in English and perform well in the external examination.

In some schools however, the teaching of English is done differently and the proficiency in the language is inadequate. The traditional grammar translation method is favourite with the teachers and there is hardly any exposure to English language inside or outside the class. Most of the activities in the class are done in Pidgin English or the mother-tongue (Almutawa and Kailani 1989).

English as a language plays a number of roles in the socio-economic, political and cultural development of Nigeria's society. The continued slide in the performance of students in the English language in external examinations calls for great concern, not only for teachers but also for all stakeholders. In the business of education, this is more worrisome when one considers the fact that English doubles as the medium of instruction in Nigeria's schools as well as her lingua-franca.

The central roles of English cannot therefore be done away with. The pattern of failure has however shown that the incident appears to be higher in some schools than it is with other schools. A number of factors have been linked to the causes, but more relevant is the issue of the

qualification of the teachers. Teachers can offer only what they have because one cannot offer what he/she don't have. The qualification of the teachers invovled has great roles in the performace of students.

1.4 ESAN LANGUAGE

Esan is one of such languages spoken in Edo State, formerly a part of Bendel State, it now counts well over 300,000 speakers, 100,000 in excess of SIL's 1973 estimates. In the 1963 national census, it was not even mentioned as a language, irrespective of the fact that a significant number spoke it then as a first language. It spans the local government areas formerly called Agbazilo, Okpebho, parts of Owan and Etsako. It is often categorized as a member of the Niger-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Edoid, North-Central, and Edo-Esan-Ora families. Thanks to renewed individual efforts, it is now described as a regionally important language (SIL, 1996, Brann 1993, Elugbe 1994).

Contrary to contentions by distant commentators, it is not actually widely used in initial primary education due to the absence of its sustained linguistic description. It is commonplace to see highly educated speakers of Esan interspersing their speech with English, or with one or more of the majority languages. Within this multilingual communication, and given the natural diffusion processes within the Nigerian population and language systems, a real danger lurks in the form of a shift. For a sampling of public sentiments on this issue, we again refer to the editorial of the *Guardian* of November 2 1999 in which Pat Utomi authored the following: "If the truth be told, Nigeria is a country of minorities. Put together, the so-called minorities of Nigeria constitute a bigger bloc than the so-called majority groups put together". In the same vein, Eskor Toyo in the *Guardian* of September 1999 argued that ethnic and religious minorities have too often been neglected and frequently exploited and persecuted in spite of all the legislative and political machinery in place to forestall such a situation.

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research will enable us to know the level or nature of attitude among the Esan speaking people of Ekpoma in the course of their conversation/communication when in contact with themselves and non-speaking residents; and to see the reason why they developed such attitude towards their language. This research will also be centered on the similarities and difference that abounds between the Binis, Esan and the English speaking people in order to ascertain the degree or level of relatedness.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research questions are as follows:

1. What is the attitude of the Ekpoma people to the Esan language?
2. What percentage of Ekpoma patronizes the Esan language?
3. How does the use of the Esan language compare to the use of the English Language, Pidgin English, Yoruba, Hausa and the Igbo language?
4. Which age grade best patronizes the Esan language in Ekpoma?
5. What should be done to improve the attitude towards Esan language in Ekpoma?

1.7 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

This work focuses on the type of language attitude in Esan on the case study in Ekpoma. The purpose of this work is to investigate and analyse the attitude of Esan in Ekpoma, what stems out those attitudes, the effect of their attitude in Ekpoma linguistic community. It is also believed that the significance of the study will bring out the speakers attitude pertaining to language use in Ekpoma community and also serve as a guide to correcting the negative attitude of Esan.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Generally, language is a tool or resource of communication, an expression of personality or a signal of identity. Dominguez (1998) shared codes as it relates to language and channels of communication linking people is an absolute necessity for the creation of information and knowledge so inexorably values for socio-economic, political and industrial development.

Johnson and Sager said that knowledge and information can only be transmitted by physical communication and the primary medium of communication is language. Further argument is manifested as a sequence of discrete segments. Then the number of elements in the lexicon of a given language must be denumerable in contrast to the structure of postulated concepts which is essentially continuous for any language to meet the requirement for effective communication and professional use. Such a language must be well developed and standardized.

Seen from a professional point of view, language according to Selandar (1980) affords its user a system of components describing thoughts, ideas and facts in the most adequate way. The accompanying vocabulary as Selander (1980) further stressed is a key to the conceptual development of the discipline where the associated lexicology provides the most adequate way. The accompanying vocabulary as Selander (1980) further stressed is a key to conceptual development of the discipline where the associated lexicology provides the most fundamental methods of altering the concepts already established. Felber (1980) however observed that the improvement of professional communication could be achieved only by developing an adequate instruments, that is, terminology which in a sense will not only assist creativity and innovating but will aid effective and clear management of information and knowledge in either tacit or explicit forms for the benefits of all. Terminology as used here refers to the theory of terms and science of the proper use of terms.

The question of developing Indigenous Nigeria languages for teaching and scientific communication has been a daunting and protracted one to some Nigerians. It is a futile initiative and a misplacements of priority at best of the thought of committing hard earned resources to the course of developing indigenous Nigerian languages each for effective communication and professional use. Since there are well over 250 of them, excluding dialects, Hoffman (1974), Hansford (1976) and Blench and Dendo (2003) all in Omo-Ogogo (2004) put the numbers of language in Nigeria at 396, 395 and 550 respectively. Although no one would wish any of the indigenous languages go into atrophy, the discouraging position held by some of the Nigerian elites whose culture largely subsists and propagated by English language as a predominant medium (Adekunle 1995) predate post-modernism.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The study of language attitude in Africa which is a multi-lingual continent, until recently was not of interest to scholars. In Nigeria, studies in language attitude are minimal as very few work have been done on it.

The study of language attitude has been of great interest to many language scholars such as Fasold, Ryan, Giles, Harstone, Lambert, Shuy, Cooper and TAYLOR. However the studies carried out by these persons have been limited to the western world.

In this chapter, previous work on language attitude, the pattern of language attitude in the country shall be reviewed. The review is divided into three namely the conceptual review, previous study and the concern of the present study will be discussed. Also the nature of language attitude, the pattern of language attitude in Nigeria and other parts of the world, the cause or the determining factors of language attitude, its effect and types shall be looked into.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

2.2.1 LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

Attitude towards language varies within communities. Language attitude has to do with the loyalty of the speakers of the language, choice made by individuals on the language concerned (Romaine 1944:50, Ward Haugh 1987:2). That language also change in their attractiveness to speakers, they change in the uses to which speakers put them. They sometimes retrench losing speakers either entirely (and of course die) or only for certain functions. Most of the factors that bring about change retrenchment or expansion are unconscious ones.

Speakers of these languages are not only reluctant to the development of their own language but they are not also keen on passing it on to the younger generation. A language becomes endangered when the speakers do not care about the survival of the language. Most times they do not know the impact of their unconsciousness and this more powerful and dominant language takes over theirs.

An attitude is a general and enduring positive or negative feeling about an object or an issue. Attitude manifest in people's behaviour and utterance. Apart from attitude being negative or positive, people could also develop indifferent, dismissive, lakadasical or ambivalent attitude towards a phenomena. Any of these attitude could be adopted by a speech community toward a language or language spoken in their environment.

According to Lambert in Obiegbu (2013), it was explained that the behaviourist and the mentalist approach are two popular approaches used by theorists in analysing the concept 'attitude'. The mentalist view is the mostrepresented one and has three components namely;

1. **The cognitive** – deals with individual belief system, knowledge and perception;
2. **Affective** – deals with emotional reaction and feeling;
3. **Conative** – deals with behavioural intension and interest.

This approach is covert in nature and can not easily be noticed. The behaviourist on the other hand argue that attitude are to be found simply in the response people make to social situation which implies overt behaviour. This kind of behaviourist approaches contribute to total formation of attitude towards issues. It starts as a covert perception and later manifest itself overtly in an individual behaviour reaction. The formation of an attitude towards a language adopts the aforementioned approach.

Language attitude usually arises when there are conflicting languages spoken in an environment. In such a situation the user of the language might develop conflicting attitude toward the language but when there is one homogenous language in a speech community, there will be no need for any kind of conflicting language attitude.

Another wrong attitude is the belief that one's language is not capable of fulfilling all the roles and communication needs of the community. Linguistics are in general agreement that all languages are equally serviceable for all purposes and that no language is inherently better or worse than any other language. They would argue that whether or not a particular language is in the final stages of dying, this language ceases to be an available medium, but these stages are reached for reasons that are not linguistic (Ward Haugh 1987:1).

In Nigeria for instance, English Language has stayed for more than three centuries. Now that it has become acculturated and as such enjoys a prime place in the Nigerian linguistic setting, it is well received among the Nigerian people and it is the most widely spoken in Metropolitan and Cosmopolitan cities in Nigeria. Ogu (1992:5) argues that the exact advent of the English Language in Nigeria is not recorded neither do we know the first Nigerian to speak the English Language. Adegbite and Akindele (2000:46) however came up with the idea that there is no gain to say the fact that English has become a Nigerian Language. Thus the attitude towards English in Nigerian is positive and favourable because it is used in most situations, homes, offices, market and for all type of communication whether formal or informal cardinal and so on (Adeyemi 2001).

Language are born and language die and experience period of doctrine as well as growth. While some people are concerned with spreading a particular language at the expense of other languages, others are concerned with the preserving the threatened language from the dominating one (Ward Haugh 1987:1). This therefore shows the people's attitude towards the language spoken in their environment. Attitudes are very crucial to the growth or decay of a language and it is therefore being determined by the type of attitude shown toward it.

Certain factors contribute to the type of attitude formed by an individual or group of individuals that use a particular language. This could be the historical background of the language, its role in the society, the population of the people of that speak the language and people's general perception of the language. The aforementioned factors could have stabilizing and destabilizing influence on the language in question. Obiegbo (2013) is of the opinion that some people show negative attitude to the use of a language mainly because they want to show identity, protect their culture or because of their incompetence in its reading, writing and learning. Some show positive attitude to the use of language maybe as a result of the penalty involved on the instrumental force attached.

2.2.1.1 FACTORS THAT AFFECT LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

Attitude to language are determined by various factors that tend to cause or bring about unfavourable or negative attitude to language.

1. **Instrumental** : When a language attitude is based on the need or necessity of knowing the particular language in question, such attitude is caused by instrumental motivation. Even if one dislikes a language, he does not dislike what the language represents or the

importance of the language. The knowledge of the language is considered as a ticket to prestige and success.

2. **Integration:** Attitude to language is said to be integrative when an individual or speaker's attitude is based on the desire to be part of another group. One is accepted as a member of a particular group when he learns the language and culture of such people.

2.2.1.2 TYPES OF LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

It is important to know that the two major types of language attitude are positive and negative attitude. These two types of language attitude vary from individual to individual and depends on the nature of the particular society. These attitudes are subject to change as they are not natural to man.

- **Positive Attitude**

Language attitude is said to be positive when that language grows and flourishes. This is only possible when positive feelings are attached to the language. The speaker of such language will do everything possible to promote the language, ensuring its growth and sustenance.

Igboanusi (2001) also states that a language can attract positive attitude from its speakers if it has a large number of speakers, perform many functions and has a codified form. In this way its vitality can be sustained and cannot be observed and even Nigerian Pidgin has attracted positive and favourable attention from its speakers.

- **Negative Attitude**

Igboanusi (2001) notes that a negative feeling is portrayed toward a language if that language has no institutional support, performs few functions, associated only with neutrality and its not relevant to the socio-economic needs of the people. In this case, if appropriate measures are not taken to revive the language, such language may eventually die.

Negative attitude as opposed to positive attitude arises when there are no favourable feelings towards the use of the language. The speaker of the language shy away from the language and most times do not care about what happens to the language neither will they want to associate with the language.

It is pertinent to note that one may also have what we may term an indifferent attitude to a language. This arises where there are mixed feelings towards the language, improve in usage or remain static. For them any language can be used at any time or situation. So language is prestigious and can help them to improve their lot. This may be due to the fact that people do not want to remain static (Adegbiga 1994).

2.2.1.3 EFFECTS OF LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

Language grows and flourish when the attitude portrayed towards a language is positive. The attitude portrayed toward a language is seen from what happens to the language.

2.2.2 LANGUAGE PRODUCTION AND DOMAIN LOSS

Language production is the production of creative and original language material which is necessary for the stability of language development, vitality of language use, modernization and national development as well as the growth of human knowledge and science(Dua 1989:137). According to Dua, the diversity , quantity and quality of language material is shown in the vitality and functional statues of a language. It provides a list with different functional types of language material to define language production.

The existence of a literary tradition alone neither leads to the dvelopment of language structure nor adequately fulfills the need of a modern speech community.

The production of scientific and technical literature is necessary for the development of abstract vocabulary and precise and logical thinking.

The production of both kinds of writings in the same language meets the conditions for setting up of functional types of language. Otherwise the function of the language will definitely change and leadto the development of a different status of language use for different purposes.

This is true of many multi-lingual societies, such as in Africa and Asia where the indigenous languages are lacking in high standard scientific and technical work whereas English has been legitimised as the language of science and technology. In less scientific areas, English has also been institutionalised through literature, newspaper, journals, radio and Television (Nargesh 2006:96). In India for example English has the status of an Indian language. At a meeting with the Central Advisory Board of Education in August 2004, the inclusion of English in the list of morden Indian languages was discussed (The Times of India, August 12 2004 pg 2 In Gargesh 2006:94).

Haberland (2005:228),notes that langauge production and domain loss are closely inter-related, but what is a domain loss? It is defined as a field/area of knowledge with the necessary means of proffessional communication in a certain language. Domain loss is the symbolic connection between content and expression of a field of knowledge.

Note that domain loss includes the social dimension. A domain is also at the same time a social area of use of a language. In the 1990s, at first in the Scandinavia discussion about the domain loss in relation to a powerful international language like English (Haberland 2005:221), started among Politicians, Linguist, National Language Commisions and the media. In the

beginning, the concept of domain loss was only used as a political buzzword without proper definition. A decade later, research in Denmark confirms that domain loss is actually taking place. As a matter of fact domain loss is defined as a loss of ability to communicate in the national language at all levels of an area of knowledge because of deficiency in the further development of the necessary means of professional communication involved.

2.2.3 LANGUAGE CHOICE

The choice of a language may be influenced by factors relating the individual speakers to the particular language and their associations or to their aspect of the social situation. It seems likely that a particular choice may be influenced by a number of variables, possibly of differing weights (Bentatila 1983:50). Any speaker of any language has at his disposition a range of language varieties. Gumperz (1964) use the term 'linguistic repertoire' to describe the full range of styles which an individual needs to fulfill all his communicative needs in the most appropriate way. The speakers ability to choose the appropriate variety for any particular purpose is part of his communicative competence. The choice is not random but has been shown to be determined by aspects of the social organization of the community and the social situation where the discourse take place. In this, the bilingualist is not strikingly different from the monolingualist.

According to (Fasold 1987 :pp180-181), there are three kinds of language choice.

1. **Whole Language:** As the choice between two languages in a conversation that is, code switching.
2. **Code Mixing:** Where the pieces of one's language are used while a speaker is basically using another language. These pieces can be a single word or a short phrase.
3. **Variation Within The Same Language:** This is the kind of language choice that often becomes the focus of attitude studies. In these cases, a speaker must choose which set of variants to use within a single language in any given situation.

2.2.4 LANGUAGE SHIFT

Language shift simply means that a community has given up a language completely in favour of another language (Fasold 1987:21). The members of the community, when the shift has taken place, have collectively chosen a new language where an old one used to be used.

When a language is undergoing shift, its structural aspects do not remain. In fact even though this holds true for normal language change. A language can be replaced gradually by another (Appes and Muysken 1987 pp32-33). Such a process of language shift seems to be going on in many bilingual communities. More and more speakers use the majority language in domains where they formerly spoke the minority tongue. They adopt the majority language because they regularly use it as a vehicle of communication often mainly because they expect that speaking that language gives better chance for upward social mobility and economic success. Sometimes it seems that language shift can be equated with shift towards the majority or

prestigious language, but in fact shift is a neutral concept which also be used as a shift towards the extended use of the majority language. There is often a tendency to reverse the process, because some people come to realise that the minority language is disappearing and they try to promote its use. These defenders of the minority language are often young active members of cultural and political organization that stand up for the socio economic and cultural interest of the minority group.

When a language is reduced in its function, which happens in the case of shift towards the majority language, generally speakers will become less proficient in it, that is, language loss is taking place. Language shift linked up with loss will finally result in language death. Language shift may come about slowly and go on for several generations, but especially in changing social situation, it may be a rather fast process. This is often the case for immigrant groups. Tosi (1984) studied bilingualism and language shift among Italian immigrants in Bedford (Great Britain). The first generation immigrants generally used a local Italian dialect as the principal medium of communication within the family. Until school age, their children mostly speak this dialect only occasionally switching to English among themselves. But English really gained influence when the children go to school and become more proficient in it. English will eventually be brought into the household, initially for use mainly with other siblings, but later also in interaction with the parents. A younger person will gradually learn to understand that the two languages are associated with two different value systems and these systems often collide with each other. This results in personal emotional conflicts.

The general pattern for language shift in immigrant groups is as follows:

1. The first generation (born in the country of origin) is bilingual but the majority language is clearly dominant.
2. The second generation is bilingual and either of the two languages might be the strongest.
3. The third generation is bilingual with the majority language dominating.
4. The fourth generation only has command of the majority language.

This is only a general pattern and the picture for a specific immigrant group is different (Baker 1996:42). The fate of language is often related to the manipulated politics and power bases of different groups in society. Language shift (in terms of number of speakers and users) occurs through deliberate decisions that directly or indirectly affect language and reflect economic, political, cultural, social and technological change. It is therefore possible to analyse and determine what causes language shift rather than simply believing language occurs by accident. Thus, those who support an evolutionary perspective on language may be supporting the spread of majority languages and the replacement of minority languages. Evolutionists who argue for an economic cost-benefit approach to language with the domination of a few majority languages for international communication hold a myopic view of the function of language. Languages are not purely for economic communication. They are also concerned with human

culture, human heritage which is to say, a garden full of different colours of flower rather than the one variety.

Generally language shift is seen or refers to a downwards language movement, that is, there is a lessing of the number of speakers of a language, a decreasing saturation of language speakers in the population, a loss in language proficiency or a decreasing case of that language in different domains.

2.2.5 LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT

According to the linguist (David Crystal 2000), only 600 of the 6000 languages in the world are safe from the threat of extinction. According to one count, 670 separate languages were spoken in the world in 1996; of these 1000 were spoken in America, 2011 in Africa, 1225 in Europe, 2165 in Asia and 120 in the pacific including Australia. These numbers should not be taken as face values because our information about many languages are lacking or outdated and very often it is hard to distinguish between languages and dialects. However most linguists agree that there are well over 500 languages in the world. A century from now, however, many of these languages may be extinct.

Some linguists believe the number may decrease by half while others say, the total could fall to mere hundreds as the majority of the world's languages most spoken by a few thousand people or less give way to languages like English, Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin, Chinese, Russian, Indonesia, Arabia, swahili and Hindi. By some estimates, 90% of the world's languages may vanish within the next century.

2.2.5.1 INDICATORS OF LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT

Three main criteria are used as guidelines for considering a language endangerment.

1. The number of speakers currently living.
2. The mean age of native and/or fluent speakers.
3. The percentage of the younger generation acquiring fluency with the language in question.

Thus as a rule of thumb, a language is endangered when the children in a community are being spoken to in a language other than that of their parents. The children may understand their parent's language but will be unable to speak it fluently. They are passive bilinguals. The language is then lost to their children as they will not be able to speak or understand it at all. This

can lead to the situation where grand parents and grand children speak totally different language and sometimes cannot effectively communicate with each other.

The scale of endangerment is not a very sophisticated one. There are many factors which are involved in the endangerment of language, not just the three “rule of thumb” mentioned above. A more complete scale would look something like that proposed by Lewis (2005) which includes seven parameters of endangerment. These includes:

1. Age
2. Demographics
3. Language Use
4. Language Cultivation, Development, Literacy and Education.
5. Status and Recognition.
6. Language Attitude.
7. Amount and Quality of Documentation.

Depending on how many of the above parameters are met, a language can be described as “safe” or “unsafe”. It is worth mentioning at this point as well that not everyone sees the decline in the use of a language in the same way, least of all, the speakers themselves, of an endangered language.

2.2.5.2 FACTORS THAT ENDANGERS LANGUAGES

- **Inter-Marriage**

According to David and Nambiar (2003), marriage or partnership where one’s parents speaks a minority language and the other only the majority language, can have a negative influence in the retention of the minority tongue by the children. For example Fulfulde is under majority because of inter marriage with speakers of other languages in the state of Gombe.

- **Market Forces**

Ridler and Pons-Ridler (1984) suggests that the choice of language reflects the workings of the market people. They choose a language that will benefit them in the long run. In addition Schiffman (1998) states that language shift (that is where people stop using one language and adopts another more prestigious language) in the minority group is inevitable when the language of the minority is seen as a language which does not help the speakers to improve their socio-economy and social mobility. The minority group will shift to the dominant mobility.

- **Migration**

Grimes (2001) notes that socio-linguist agree that migration either voluntary or forced, is a cause of language shift. When members of a language community migrates, the remaining community decreases in size and they may be unable to maintain their language.

- **Assimilation**

Another possible cause of language shift in the family and community is when there is very little difference in terms of lifestyle, custom and culture between the majority and minority language community.

- **National Education Policies**

According to Grimes (2001), nation-state building through the schools (by educating pupils in the national language) has contributed to language shift in several countries although it does not cause universal shift of the language. This is because sub-ethnic languages are not given attention in all education policies drawn up by the government.

- **Modernization**

Grimes (2001) notes that modernization among other things is a factor which accompanies language shift. When industrialization comes to areas where minority languages are spoken, it is the majority language which is used to train employees in the new plants and factories. Also it is the majority language that is often used as a lingua franca.

- **Attitudes**

Another factor that might lead to language becoming endangered is the view held by parents. Parents today encourage their children to learn languages of wider communications instead of the language of their heritage due to the globalization of the world. Nowadays it is more likely for children to succeed if they are able to speak the popular language of the world in order to obtain better jobs and prospects.

2.3 PREVIOUS STUDY

The scientific study of a language may be divided on the simplest analysis into two parts: first the collection of words to form a vocabulary or a dictionary and secondly the investigation of the ways in which words are shaped, transformed and grouped to indicate particular thoughts, to form a grammar of the language.

Before the 1960s, attitudes about language were not seen as important; the behaviourist approach to language study, saw language as behaviour, not as cognitive or mental activity and anything psychological was denounced as mentalism. Or, study of attitude (especially toward non-standard language) was seen as, dignifying stereotypes and popularising unscientific ideas about language such that people paid no attention (ignore it and it'll go away). Some would still advocate ignoring racist and sexist attitudes, especially the social differences associated with racism and sexism.

In the 1960s in French-Canada's "Beginning of a Change", the study of bilingualism emerged in schools. St. Lambert experiment led to an interest in attitude change, that is, to see whether changing schooling patterns (bilingual schooling) led to a change in outlook among dominant sectors of society toward minority sectors (that is, French-Canadians). The Lambert and Peal studies focussed strongly on attitude change.

Early work on a language generally terminated in the production of a dictionary and a grammar. But the earliest students of Nigerian languages faced a preliminary problem before they could begin any study. They had to discover what languages existed and how extensive geographically and important socially, each language was.

According to Fafunwa Foundation Internet Journal of Education, citing the journal, 'Language Education in Nigeria', it was revealed that formal western type education was introduced into the country by christian missionaries just before the middle of the 19th century. According to them, the nature and main thrust of language education in the country were completely left to the missionaries for about four decades (Taiwo 1980:10-11; Fafunwa 1974:42). Also given the well known belief of most such missionaries, firstly, that the Africa child was best taught in his native language (Hair 1976:6), and secondly that the interest of christianity would best be served actually propagating that religion in indigenous languages. It is not at all surprising that the teaching and learning of indigenous languages receive much genuine attention in those early days of Western type education in the country.

In 1985, a book was published by Fafunwa, Sokoya and Macauley which carried a full description of the report on Mother-Tongue education and language Development in Nigeria. The project was tagged Six-Year Primary Project (SYPP) which involved using mother tongue as a medium of instruction throughout the six years of primary school and record not just the attitude but also the impact it had on the pupil's general learning ability.

This was a challenge to the existing language policy of Government that primary school students should be taught in the medium of their mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment in the first three years and in English in the last years. Evaluation showed that children taught in their mother tongue for the six years did not suffer in any deficiency in learning in English in the later years at secondary school. In addition, the project children made definite effective gains in terms of adjustment and attitude to schooling.

Another notable work done in Nigeria towards language development in Nigeria was by Jeffrey Grumber, a linguist, who made a lot of contributions in Nigeria Botswana. He made contributions to the translation of Bahai writings into indigenous languages, especially those of interior Southern Africa. His work has been influential since the 1965 publication of his doctoral dissertation, according to the Departmental of Linguistics and philosophy of Massachusetts.

Jeffrey came to Nigeria when he accepted a professorship at the University of Ife and later at the University of Ife and later at a university in Benin City. In 1987 he was part of a delegation visiting traditional rulers in Bendel state to familiarise them with the teachings of Bahauallah amid an ongoing teaching project in the area.

In 2014, Mustapha, A.S, published a study on Linguistic Hegemony of the English language in Nigeria. In his work, he re-assessed some of the proposed resistance mechanism of English language. The author believes that some views about the linguistic hegemony of the English language might have been exaggerated thereby influencing some suggested resistance mechanisms. He however proposed a context- sensitive and pragmatic resistance mechanism that might place the hegemony of English in the right perspective and thus preserve local languages in a multi-lingual society like that in Nigeria.

2.4 PRESENT STUDY

One can decide to ask the place of Esan in the emerging global village. Currently there is virtually no computer in any part of Nigeria that speaks any of the indigenous language including Esan and as such, no breakthrough is in sight and none can be contemplated without adequate language that can be adoptable. It is against this background that this paper will focus on the effort already made or could be made to facilitate the development of indigenous language in Nigeria with particular reference to Esan language.

This present study will be investigating and analysing the attitude of Esan in Ekpoma towards their language, the effect of interacting with their language among themselves (to know if the language is harsh or friendly), and the level or nature of communicating with non-speakers, to see the reason why they developed such attitude towards their language.

This will also study the Ekpoma speaker of Esan dialect to show if the Ekpoma dialect is steady or losing it to related eroding language, to those that have no orthography. It will also be seen if they have a positive or negative effect in the language and how to strengthen the language when it is going down in the wrong direction. It will also look at the type of attitude portrayed by the speakers of Ekpoma dialect towards the standard Esan language.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study identifies and examines factors which influence language attitude and use of Esan language within the Ekpoma community. Ekpoma was chosen because it is known as an academic location due to the presence of the Ambrose Ali University. It represents a good site for investigation due to the fact that every year students with different origin and background as well as language flock in and out of the town. Thus the study have been carried out to find out this impart of students along with other factors which may have had a hand in the attitude of people living in Ekpoma (indigenes and non-indigenes) towards the Esan language.

The sample size is 100 people purposively selected. The purposive sampling method was used which meant that sample elements were chosen because they filled certain desired criteria for investigation. In purposive sampling, one or more communities or groups may be selected, for example, for intensive study because they are either considered typical or (less often) outstanding examples of the variables with which a particular research is concerned (Salami, 1986). This is simply to say that we knew what we were looking for and went straight to find them. This method is good particularly for small samples.

The questionnaire was administered directly by the researcher in order to take care of those with low level of formal education or total lack of formal education.

The conceptual framework employed for the study was informed by two considerations. Firstly, it was informed by the findings in respect of the issues of the literature review. Secondly, it was guided by the outcomes of the preliminary observations of the sample population. The conceptual framework served to inform the research design, methodology and instruments that were used in the research process. A conceptual framework is often seen as a set of broad ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of enquiry and used to structure a subsequent presentation (Reichel & Ramey, 1987). A conceptual framework has potential usefulness as a tool to scaffold research and, therefore, to assist a researcher to make meaning of subsequent findings. Such a framework should be intended as a starting point for reflection about the research and its context. The framework is a research tool intended to assist a researcher to develop awareness and understanding of the situation under scrutiny. As with all investigation in the social world, the framework itself forms part of the agenda for negotiation to be scrutinised and tested, reviewed and reformed as a result of investigation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

3.1 THE FIELDWORK: STAGES OF DATA COLLECTION

This section describes how data for the study is collected and analyzed. The discovery process can be divided into two main stages which are data collection and data processing. The data collection process were divided as follows:

i. Gaining Access to the Target Group

The target group generally were both indigenes and non-indigenes alike in the Ekpoma town which have basic knowledge of the fact that Esan is the language widely spoken by the region. A total of three (3) weeks were spent in the location because people had to be convinced that their informations were used for either political or dubious purposes. While some persons voluntarily asked for the questionnaires others had to be compelled to take a look at them before making up their minds to fill answer the questions or not. There are those who weretoo busy to even take a look at them. The confidentiality of data had to be assured before taking data.

ii. Designing and Distributing the Questionnaire

The researcher had to design her questionnaire having gone through similar works and getting the approval of the project supervisor on her design. One had to wait to get instantaneous responses from the sample population as leaving the questionnaire to them would have increased the risk of not getting them back. This would mean responses were almost instanteneous and not much time to deliberate on answers given by respondents.

iii. Making Observations

Observation as a technique was used to validate or corroborate the data obtained in the questionnaires. One had to be careful with the data as most persons practically were not really interested, so close attention was paid to ensure the given data was that which was required.

3.2 ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

The mentalist view of language attitude studies have been adopted in this work. The mentalist view consider attitude as an internal state which may give rise to certain form of behaviour. It can be defined as an intervening variable between a stimulus affecting a person and that person's response. In the mentalist approach, two methods known as the matche-guise (mg) technique and questionnaire technique are the most commonly used for investigating language attitude (Appel and Musysken 1987:16).

The technique used is that of the questionnaire containing various types of question on language and language use. The methodological procedure for this research therefore will be the mentalist approach adopting the questionnaire technique. This technique is adopted because people or speaker's attitude can only be investigated and inferred from the self reported data especially with the aid of questionnaire.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaires were used to collect the data. Each group of sample population was requested to answer all the questions present in the questionnaire. For few persons who were unable to read and write, the questions were read to them, explained and their answers obtained. A total of one hundred questionnaire papers were presented to the sample population and all were well answered. The questionnaire gathered information on the following set of variables:

a. Part One - Personal Information

From the part one, the knowledge of the personality who filled the questionnaire was known. This included sex, mother tongue, marital status, religion, age and level of education attained by respondent.

b. Part Two – Attitude Towards Speaking Esan

Meanwhile answering the questions in the part two would help ascertain the attitude portrayed by the sample population towards the language. Also from this part, the manner in which others apart from the interviewee views the language is known. The issue of language endangerment, language shift and language choice can also be estimated from responses gotten from this section.

c. Part Three – Attitude Towards Learning Esan

The part three of the questionnaire gives an idea on how learning the Esan language has been effective or ineffective especially in the primary school setting. It also brings out the challenges encountered in the course of learning the language which reflects the attitude both the learner and the teacher shows towards the language.

3.4 SAMPLE POPULATION

Four groups of person provided the sample population for this study.

- a) Indigenes of Ekpoma community who speak Esan fluently.
- b) Indigenes of Ekpoma community who could not speak Esan fluently.
- c) Strangers in Ekpoma community who speak other Nigerian languages such as Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa as well as the Pidgin English and Formal English language.
- d) Strangers in Ekpoma community from other part of the country which can neither speak their language or Ekpoma but communicate with either the Pidgin English or Formal English language

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

Data for this study had to be analysed and interpreted in a few different ways. Firstly, the data had to go through a process of classification. The questionnaire had to have its responses coded and tabulated before they could be interpreted. The interpretation comes based on grouping each section of respondents in percentage numbers and finding the mean average.

First of all, the personal information of the populace which constituted 67% of male and 33% of female was tabulated. The informations here which were coalated were the sex, age group, mother tongue, education, religion and marital status were known. This is very necessary to be able to verify the collected informations as sufficient. These personal informations constituted the part one of the analysis. However the informations of religion and marital status were not used as a basis in analysing results.

The second section tabulates the results from questions relating to speaking Esan while the third section dealt with results tabulated from questions related to learning Esan.

At the end of the tabulations, the results from each table were all analysed.

4.2 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

PART ONE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE: PERSONAL INFORMATION

TABLE 1: Personal Information

SEX	AGE	MOTHER TONGUE	EDUCATION	RELIGION	MARITAL STATUS
MALE= 67%	Under 20=46%	Igbo = 2%	Tertiary=26%	Christian =90%	Single=50%
FEMALE= 33%	31-40 = 36%	Yoruba = 3%	Secondary=53%	Islam=4%	Married=45%
	41-50 = 11%	Esan = 88%	Primary= 13%	Others=6%	Divorced=5%
	Above 50 = 8%	Pidgin = 6 %	Others=8%		
		Others = 1%			

PART TWO OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE: SPEAKING ESAN

TABLE 2: Do you speak Esan language?

Yes	No	Mean Average	P<
78.4%	21.6%	45%	0.001

TABLE 3: If answer to the above is yes, how often?

Frequently	Sometimes	Occasionally	Rarely	Mean Average	P<
43%	32%	7%	8%	36%	n.s

TABLE 4: What is your attitude toward the Esan language spoken in your community?

Good	Fair	Poor	Mean average
87%	1%	12%	69%

TABLE 5: What are some of the challenges you encounter in the course of speaking Esan?

Lack of interest	Influence of English and Pidgin	Negative attitude of parents	Younger generation don't understand	No challenges
54%	23%	17%	5%	1%
M.A.=50%	M.A=13%	M.A=3%	M.A=11%	M.A=23%
P< 0.001	P<0.001	P<0.01	P<0.001	P<0.01

TABLE 6: What are the two languages you hear people speak more frequently in your community?

Language	Percentage	M.A.	P<
English	13%	M.A. =12%	P<0.01
Pidgin	68%	M.A=45%	P<0.001
Esan	17%	M.A.=6%	P<0.01
Yoruba	0%	M.A.=0%	P<0.01
Igbo	2%	M.A.=1%	P0.001

TABLE 7: Where do you speak or hear Esan more often?

Location	Percentage	M.A.	P<
Market	59%	57%	0.001
Home	34%	17%	0.001
School	5%	3%	0.001
Hospital	2%	4%	0.001
Office	Blank		
Other	Blank		

TABLE 8: In your own view, what percentage of Ekpoma speak or understand the Esan language?

Percentage	Percentage	M.A.	P<
Below 10%	2%	1%	0.01

20%	4%	3%	0.001
30%	8%	6%	0.001
40%	60%	56%	0.001
50%	23%	34%	0.001
60%	3%	2%	0.01

TABLE 9: What do you think should be done to improve Esan?

	Percentage	M.A.	P<
Compulsorily teach it in primary and secondary schools	89%	67%	0.001
Make it a criteria for employment	11%	23%	0.001

TABLE 10: How well is Esan used in community meetings, festivals and social gatherings in Ekpoma?

	Percentage	Mean Average
Very well	87%	78%
Moderately	7%	4%
Fairly	6%	3%
Not used	blank	0%

PART THREE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE: LEARNING ESAN

TABLE 11: At what level were you taught Esan?

	Percentage	Mean Average	P<
Family	90%	79%	0.001
Primary	9%	2%	0.001
Secondary	1%	1%	0.01
Tertiary	Blank	0%	n.s

TABLE 12: Are you aware of any school where Esan is taught?

	Percentage	M.A.	P<
Yes	80%	M.A. =89%	P<0.01
No	20%	M.A. 34%	P<0.001
Little bit	Blank	n.s	n.s.

TABLE 13: If answer to the above is yes, then at what level is it taught?

	Percentage	M.A.	P<
Primary	78%	69%	0.001
Secondary	13%	24%	0.001
Tertiary	Blank	1%	0.001
Adult education	7%	8%	0.001
Vocational training	2%	2%	0.001

TABLE 14: Do you think that the teaching of Esan will adversely affect proficiency in English?

	Percentage	Mean Average	P<
Yes	57%	45%	0.001
No	35%	43%	0.001
Little bit	8%	8%	0.001

TABLE 15: What do you think are some of the challenges affecting the teaching of Esan in your school?

	Percentage	Mean Average	P<
Lack of interest on the part of the teacher	Blank	3%	0.001
Lack of adequate motivation	4%	5%	0.001
Teachers don't know the language	Blank	3%	0.001
No teaching aid and textbooks	71%	65%	0.001
Lack of support from parents	2%	23%	0.001
Lack of interest from students	23%	34%	0.001

4.3 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

PART ONE: Personal Information

TABLE 1

- **Sex**

Out of the 100 persons who responded 67% were male and 33% were female.

- **Age Group**

46% of respondents were under the age of 20, 36% between the age of 31 and 40, 11% between the age of 41 and 50 while only 8% were over 50 years of age.

- **Mother Tongue**

88% of respondents taken from the Ekpoma community actually speak Esan as a mother tongue. However 3% speak Yoruba, 2% Igbo, 6% pidgin while 1% speak a language we never considered.

- **Education**

53% of respondents have attained Secondary education, 26% Tertiary education while 13% had attained Primary Education. A further 8% of the respondents never had any form of education.

PART TWO: Attitude Towards Speaking Esan Language

TABLE 2

It can be inferred that 78.4% of respondents actively speak the Esan language to other members of their community. This is despite the fact that 88% of respondents presented Esan as their mother tongue. It is therefore clear that 9.6% of the 88% of Esan respondents which represents 10.9% of total Esan speakers interviewed don't even use the Esan language despite the fact it is their mother tongue. Thus it can be seen that only a few minority show a negative attitude towards Esan, the rest show a positive attitude.

TABLE 3

43% of the respondents agree to speaking Esan frequently while 32% occasionally use it whereas 8% rarely use it at all. The attitude here can still be said to be positive putting in mind that more than half the number of respondents who actively speak Esan frequently use the language. However the issue of language endangerment should be taken as a threat because if the trend continues, more and more persons will continue to avoid using the language occasionally.

TABLE 4

87% of Esan speakers in Ekpoma admitted to showing a good attitude towards the language whether being spoken to them or by them. However 12% admitted to having a negative and very poor attitude towards the language while 1% was just fair or let's say undecided.

TABLE 5

From the sample population, 54% of correspondence suggested people lack of interest is a major challenge in the speaking of Esan language. Another 23% believe the influence of Pidgin English and English languages in the course of speaking Esan language is actually the major challenge as

this has affected the vocabulary of Esan itself and leads especially younger generation to show a negative attitude towards Esan. 17% of the correspondence prefers to put the blame the parents who don't show enough signs that they want to pass on the language to their children the same way they received it. 5% however believe that the challenge in speaking Esan is due to the fact that the younger generation don't like to interact with the language even when they can speak it just because they feel it brings down their reputation.

TABLE 6

The sample population agrees that the Pidgin English and the Esan language are the most frequently used languages as observed. 68% of respondents agree Pidgin English is the most spoken followed by the traditional Esan which 17% affirmed. Another 13% rather affirmed it was the official English Language that have been used more often while 2% says it's the Igbo language that they observe is more often used.

As can be seen, it is understandable why the Pidgin is more widely used because of its wide acceptability that can bridge the illiterate Nigerians to the learned ones. Also the elderly ones would rather intentionally try to preserve the traditional language so they would patronise the Esan language. The 13% English language use can be traced to the fact that Ekpoma is a university community and its use can be traced mainly to the influence of staff and students of Ambrose Ali University Ekpoma. The 2% of Igbo speakers can be traceable to the fact that in every place in Nigeria, there seems to be an Igbo speaking personlity who has gone to exploit a business opportunity.

TABLE 7

From our sample population, 59% of respondents agree that people speak Esan more in the market while 34% would prefer to say it is more heard in the homes. Esan is however barely spoken in the schools and hospitals as only 5% and 2% respectively can affirm that fact.

TABLE 8

60%of respondents believe about 40% of persons in Ekpoma can speak or hear the Esan language while 23% believe it is about 50% of these persons that can speak or hear Esan language. 2% believes below 10% of persons in Ekpoma can speak Esan while 4% thinks about 20% of the population can speak or hear Esan. There still remains a few 8% who believe it is about 30% who can speak or hear the Esan language.

TABLE 9

From table 9, 89% of correspondence believes in compulsorily teaching Esan in primary and secondary schools would improve every aspect of the Esan language while 11% believe by making it a criteria for employment will improve its usability and adaptabiliy.

TABLE 10

Esan is used in social gatherings and town hall meetingsaccording to 87% of respondents very well, while 7% think it is used moderately and another 6% believe it is only used fairly.

PART THREE: Learning Esan

TABLE 11

90% of respondents agreed that they learnt Esan from the family while 9% think it was from their primary education they got the knowledge and skill in speaking Esan. Moreso 1% think it was in the secondary education process that he/she learnt the Esan language.

TABLE 12

80% of respondents admitted to being aware of schools where the Esan language is been taught while only 20% acknowledged they were never aware. This is to show the high level of awareness the teaching of Esan has in Ekpoma.

TABLE 13

Out of the 80 persons who admitted to being aware of the availability of schools which teaches Esan, 78% revealed it is in the Primary Education that it is taught while 13% think know of such teachings happening in the Secondary Education. A further 7% have seen such teachings in Adult Education while 2% have seen it in vocational trainings. This is to show that there are indeed efforts which have been put in place to ensure the language is taught especially in the Primary Education settings.

TABLE 14

57% of respondents think the learning and teaching of Esan especially in schools will adversely affect the proficiency in English language. This explains why many of the youthful group would rather improve in their use of the English language rather than trying same for the Esan language. However 35% thinks it wont affect the proficiency of English language while 8% don't think it will affect the language much, just a little bit.

TABLE 15

71% of respondents thinks the lack of instructional materials and textbooks on Esan is a major challenge on the teaching of Esan language. However 23% thinks the main challenge is the lack of interest from teachers. 4% think lack of motivation is a challenge (seeing students don't see its relevant in the society) while another 2% thinks the problem is from the parents attitude towards learning the language.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The findings in this work have all been tabulated in chapter four and explained and a summary of the findings will be made in this section. This chapter talks about the relevance of the population that was chosen and the efficacy of their data provided. The summary consists of the various language ingredients such as language endangerment, language shift and language production and their impact on the Esan language.

From the data collected, it was proven that though majority of respondents were below 20 years, the quality of information cannot be over-emphasized. It was also gathered that a fair number of indigenes actually speak the Esan language and have a positive attitude towards the language. Moreover, the reaction to learning the Esan language was not very much encouraging as a considerable number of persons denied knowledge of any institution that actually teaches the Esan language.

5.1 PERSONAL INFORMATION

This portion of the questionnaire was meant to at least reveal the identity of the persons who responded to the questions in the questionnaire. From the research it was evident that 67% of respondents were male while 33% were female. This cannot be said to represent the true picture of the Ekpoma people because in every where in the world including Ekpoma it is generally accepted that 65% of the population is always female. This was also vindicated with the last census that was conducted in Nigeria in year 2006.

46% of respondents were under the age of 20, 36% between the age of 31 and 40, 11% between the age of 41 and 50 while only 8% were over 50 years of age. Again it can still be said not to represent the true picture of Ekpoma community because it is a student environment which was meant to have more students whose age range generally is from 21 to 30 years. This was so because the period which the data was collected was a holiday period. Another school of thought would argue that most youths have travelled to the city for greener pastures thus leaving the community to be filled with only the elderly and the under 20 years teenagers.

88% of respondents taken from the Ekpoma community actually speak Esan as a mother tongue. However 3% speak Yoruba, 2% Igbo, 6% pidgin while 1% speak a language we never considered. This is a true picture of the community because Esan is and ought to be the dominant language that is spoken. So in terms of the language itself, the respondents considered is good enough to give the adequate result required.

53% of respondents have attained Secondary education, 26% Tertiary education while 13% had attained Primary Education. A further 8% of the respondents never had any form of education. This is an adequate information needed for the analysis because it shows that over 70% of the respondents were had actually obtained minimum education needed to give a valid response.

5.2 ATTITUDE TOWARDS SPEAKING ESAN LANGUAGE

This is the fundamental portion, if not the most important part of this research. From the response derived from this section, we can infer therefore that the attitude posed by Esan speakers to their language is positive.

In a community where 78.4% of its residents speak the dominant language to one another is a big boost to the survival of the language. To further add to it, 43% of this populace still admitted to using the language frequently which is a good sign though this ought to be improved upon. Out of all the persons who responded 87% admitted they felt comfortable either hearing or speaking the Esan language. That represents a good sign which is commendable considering the state of things in this country where English is beginning to dominate and people don't value or appraise the use of their own local language.

It was further agreed that at least 40% of Ekpoma indigenes speak their language. This was evident as 60% of the respondents believed that over 40% of Ekpoma indigenes can hear or speak the Ekpoma language. Ordinarily this would not represent a good attitude but putting into consideration that this is a university community, it can be said the result is fair enough.

Further more 87% of respondents agree that the language is being used in social gatherings. It can thus be agreed that the language is not having a risk of Endagerment or Shift, thus the people are positive toward the language choice they intend to use anytime. That's a good sign too. It was also concluded that the Ekpoma is spoken more in the market and in the home than in any other place. It would thus be nice to introduce the study of Esan in the University to improve its useability especially in public places and offices and hospitals.

5.3 LEARNING ESAN

90% of respondents who could speak the Esan language agreed that they learnt Esan language at home perhaps from their parents and relatives. This is a huge applause for parents in the family which means they are interested in preserving the language they themselves inherited.

Also worthy of note is the fact that at least 9% said they learnt the language from their primary education system. This could have been due to the fact that hearing their peers speaking it in school encouraged them to indicate interest in learning or maybe it was just thought in school. The later reason is better taken into consideration because from the research about 80% of respondents agree to being aware of the availability of such schools which taught the Esan language.

5.4 CONCLUSION

We can therefore conclude that the attitude of Esan speakers in Ekpoma is fairly positive and encouraging. Though considering the findings much more need to be done to improve the useability of the language.

Language shift means that a community has given up a language completely in favour of another language. Though the Esan people have a positive attitude towards their language, their reaction to language shift can be said to be negative. This is because they have not made any effort or employed any means by which the shift of Esan language can be combated. If the present situations are maintained, the Esan language would experience language shift in no distant future. Language endangerment is another issue at hand that needs to be tackled. Language endangerment is said to have taken eminence when children in a community are spoken to in another language other than their mother tongue. This could be due to different reasons ranging from the presence of a tertiary institution to the presence of continual development. The Esan language is in a state of danger, only that few parents would bother to teach their children the language.

Language production is the production of creative and original language material which is necessary for the stability of language development, vitality of language use, modernization and national development as well as the growth of human knowledge and science. The Esan speakers tend to undergo language production as there have been works in recent times to promote the use of the language.

The Esan people in Ekpoma have a positive attitude towards their language despite the fact an educational sector is found in the environment. The community was still not affected.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the attitude to be more effective, it should be taught in schools starting from the Primary to Secondary and it should be made compulsory for the students and if possible it should be the second language for all students.

Government should help the educational sector by providing books on Esan language and the teachers who teach the students should be equipped with teaching aids and adequate facilities in Esan.

Teachers and parents should motivate and support the students when speaking Esan. It should not be used for fun.

Parents should also learn to give their children native names while the youths should also learn how to interact with themselves in Esan, having a positive attitude towards it even if it causes them to speak it outside their environment. They should also consciously pass it to the younger generation who look up to them.

In view of the research findings and results of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Esan community in its entirety should join hands in the promotion of Esan studies in schools knowing fully well that Esan language is theirs. They should desist from castigating Esan language and the crusaders of Esan language.
2. School authorities should desist from collecting fines or punishing students who speak Esan language during school hours. The students should rather be made to understand the need for one to guard one's property jealously. Infact this has been one of the means by which the three major languages in Nigeria (Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba) have been sustained over the years. However minority languages have been void of such understanding yet.
3. The government of Edo state should encourage the promotion of indigenous languages especially the Esan language by equipping the schools with the needed instructional materials.
4. Teachers of Esan language should be encouraged morally and financially by the parents, the school authorities and the society for the promotion of the Esan language and culture.
5. A credit pass in Esan language in senior secondary school certificate examination should be made compulsory as a requirement for entry into any tertiary institution in Nigeria for all Esan speaking people.
6. Parents should endeavour to speak Esan language to their children fluently no matter where they find themselves.

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Interviews

Mrs. Omadeli Uwagboe, Benin movie actress, producer, and presenter of Benin language programmes such as Uyi-Edo and Ugieomo on NTA, Benin, interviewed on 29 October, 2012 at Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.

Mr. Ozin Oziengbe, Benin movie actor, director, producer and Managing Director, Ozin Oziengbe Cultural Troupe, interviewed on 1 November, 2009 at Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.