

# PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF TEACHING HAUSA LANGUAGE EDUCATION

***Bello Umar Kabakawa***  
***Department of Hausa,***  
***Federal College of Education,***  
***Katsina.***

## **Abstract**

*Education is the key that unlocks door to cultural, social, economic, politica; technological and manpower development of any nation. This paper looks at the current educational issues in Nigeria. In doing this, the paper examines the problems and prospects of motivation, problem of non standard writers et.c and recormends the strategies to promote Hausa language education.*

Ajaegbe and Ibezim (2001) defined education as the training of the mind and character for effective performance which fits a man and woman to perform justly, skillfully and magnanimously in all their affairs both private and public; peace or war.

This definition implies that education is the training a man needs to be an effective and functional member of his community in accordance with its approved norms and values in both peace and war. Nwagwu (1976:2) defined education as the

*"process by which every society attempts to preserve and upgrade the accumulated knowledge, skills and attributes in its cultural setting and heritage in order to foster continuously the well-being of mankind and guarantee its survival against the unpredictable, at times, hostile and destructive elements and forces of man and nature".*

Igwe (1990) asserted that the core of education lies in "the culture which each generation purposely gives to those who are to be its successors in order to qualify them for at least, keeping up and if possible for raising the level of improvement which has been attained".

From the definitions, views and meanings of education above, one can summarize education as a process of developing a person mentally, physically, socially and spiritually so that the person can be useful to himself and others in the community which he lives. It is a means for developing the entire person to enable him live effectively and efficiently in the society. Education involves acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, competencies, ideals and culture.

A well educated person is one who has acquired the above attributes of education. He is a happy person. He is self-confident and self-informed. He is free from unnecessary fears, shame and superstition. He is full of initiatives, he is resourceful and responsible.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) (2004) has recognized the importance of language in education. It is through it that ideas are exchanged; beliefs shared, social

### Academic Scholarship

interaction promoted, national cohesion fostered and cultures preserved. As teachers, we need a rich and stimulating environment to be able to teach language effectively.

Language according to the encyclopedia Britannica is defined as "a system of conventional spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings as members of a social group and participants in its culture communicate". Bloom and Laley (1978) equally see language as "a code whereby ideas about the world are represented through a conventional system of arbitrary signals for communication".

From the above concepts of language, it is importance to note that language is an instrument or a tool through which we communicate our ideas, feelings, philosophies and morals, social, religious, cultural and other values to others. At the same time, through language others can communicate their feelings and views to us. More so, language can be seen as a channel through which people in the same community or society interact with each other in terms of their day to day activities. Language has a great force in human society and indicates how the society is structured.

### **Relevance of Hausa Language**

Hausa belongs to Chadic language, a sub-group of Afro-Asia language family with over fifty million speakers (Furniss 1996). It is the most important language, south of the Sahara, and like Bargery (1954) predicated in his introduction to Hausa-English Dictionary, it has attained lingua franca status in many West Africa communities.

Hausa language enjoys wide researches in all levels and stages of language studies in Nigeria and many overseas universities. It is studied in all primary schools in Hausa land in fulfillment of UNESCO (2005) condition of instructing children in their mother tongue for the first three years of Universal Basic Education (U.B.E.) The National Policy on Education (1999) has also made it a compulsory subject in Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (NECO, WAEC and NABTEB along with two other Nigerian languages (Igbo and Yoruba). So it is a core subject and therefore compulsory. The objectives of teaching Hausa in secondary schools include among others:

- (a) To enable candidates speak, read and write completely in Hausa and communicate effectively with their neighbors.
- (b) To familiarize them with the sound system and grammatical structures of Hausa.
- (c) To expose candidates to their culture, customs and institutions.
- (d) To acquaint them with the necessary tools needed for creative writing and appreciation of Hausa language and literature. The literature aspect consists of Hausa oral literature, customs and institutions as well as in-depth study of textbooks on prose, poetry and drama for the written aspects.

### **Problems and Prospects of Teaching Hausa Language Education**

As pointed out the falling standard of education has always been a disturbing issue at stake. Among the very serious problems of teaching Hausa language education as identifies by many linguists e.g Azikwe U. (1988) are:

- (a) Problem of over population of Hausa language classrooms.

- (b) Problem of non-standard writers.
- (c) Problem of inadequate teaching facilities.
- (d) Problem of inadequate and unqualified staff.
- (e) Poor or lack of motivation.
- (f) Poor teaching methods.

### **Over Population of Hausa Language Classrooms**

It is a common knowledge that the demand for education in the country is very high. The population of students offering Hausa in our secondary schools has been a serious problem with educational system. A Hausa language classroom should contain about 35-40 students or so. Where the number is manageable, the teacher can give his attention to every student effectively. Unfortunately, nowadays we find a situation where classrooms contain students ranging from 100-140 or more. There is no way a Hausa language teacher can control a classroom of this size. The teacher can not give every student his attention. There is also the question of class management. The condition of learning is also not conducive. This kind of atmosphere is seriously militating against quality education and is an impotent factor or leading to/enhancing student failure. Quality can not be compromised with quantity.

### **Problem of Non-Standard Writers**

In order to teach students the art of orthography, a lot of human and material resources are necessary. Teachers are the human resources that are saddled with the responsibilities of training the students all those aspects of orthography and standard Hausa.

A Hausa teacher is therefore required to be competent and proficient in the language He is required to teach. He should know better the orthographical aspects.

However, very many of the Hausa language teachers today are not properly trained. Many of them do not have a good mastery of the subject they teach. A lot of the Hausa teachers in the schools today can not write correctly. The question then is, how can these type of teachers produce good results?. The answer to this question is that the schools will continue to produce students who are half baked and who can not write correctly. Inadequate Teaching Facilities

Teaching facilities are the materials and devices used in learning situation to supplement the written or spoken words in the transmission of knowledge, attitudes, ideas and facts to learners. These include classrooms; seats, chalkboard, chalks textbooks etc.

The provision of these materials will make a Hausa language class lively because students will not be passive but will always be active. Inadequacy of these materials makes teaching to be unsuccessful. Students cannot make association and learning only takes place in abstraction. This factor also plays a role in the failure of the students in examination. Inadequate / Unqualified Staff

There has been shortage of Hausa teachers. This shortage is mainly due to the fact that only very few people study the subject. This attitude is traceable to our colonial

### Academic Scholarship

experiences where we were socialized into believing that Nigerian languages and culture are inferior and unworthy of any serious attention. Very few students go to study Hausa at the tertiary level. Out of the few studying this subject, many do not teach as they are often given employment in better places like Oil Companies etc. Problem of Motivation

Motivation is an aspect of psychology of learning that must guide the teacher if he wants the learners to achieve the desired change in behavior. It is the arousal of tendency to act or behave towards goal which is selected in preference to all other possible goals.

It is the role of the teacher to motivate his students to be interested in what goes on during a Hausa language lesson. The students must see the need to be properly and wholly integrated into the target language and not to see the language as a means towards achieving an aim ambition in life, as seen in the differences between instrumental and integrative motivation of students. Poor motivation is one of the serious obstacles militating against Hausa language learning in the schools. Lack of good motivation gives birth to the formation of a negative attitude towards the Hausa language.

### **Poor Teaching Methodology**

Teaching methodology, as posed by Usman (2010) a psychologist, is another principle of psychology of learning which the Hausa language teacher who wants to arrest the interest of his class should bear in mind. The Hausa language teacher will help significantly in dealing with the individual differences among learners. Teaching method should be varied in a way that students could be involved in manipulation of objects, reading, writing listening, dramatizing etc.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has succinctly taken a look at the current education issues in language education. Hausa language teacher must create free learning atmosphere for learners to see the need for the acquisition of a good mastery of the language. The paper has critically addressed the problems and prospects of teaching and learning of Hausa language. Therefore, it must be held in high esteem with utmost consideration in the schools in order to achieve qualitative education in Nigeria.

### **References**

- Azikwe, U. (1998). *Language Teaching and Learning Onitsha African* - Feb. Publishers Limited.
- Ayodele, I.R. (1996). *Language Education in Nigeria*. Paper Presented at School of Languages seminar, F.C.E. Katsina.
- Awobuluyi, O. (1991c). Language Education in Nigeria; Theory, Policy and Practice in *FaFunwa Internet Journal of Education* (Ppl.7)

***Bello Umar Kabakawa***

---

- Bloom, L. & Laley, M. (1978) *Language Development and Language Disorder*. Chic&: John Wiley and Sons.
- Deckert, G. D. (1980) *The Communication Approach; helping Students Adjust English Teaching Forum*.
- Federal Government Nigeria (2004) *National Policy on Education*, Lagos Nigeria.
- FaFunwa, B. (1996). Language Education in Nigeria. Theory, Policy and Practice. In FaFunwa *Internet Journal of Education*.
- Garba, A. (1994) *An examination of the Trends of Teaching in the Teaching of Hausa. In search of a new Direction In Gobarau Journal No.1, F.C.E. Katsina*.
- Ogunsifi, A. (2001). *Utilitarian Dimension of Language in Nigeria*. Ibadan University Press.
- Obanya, P.A. (1997). *Comprehension Language of Education and Development An inaugural lecture; Zaria, A.B.U. Press*.
- Sani, S.M. (1993). A Philosophical Analysis of Hausa language as a subject and its Ultimate Relevance to the Development of Nigeria" In TAMBARI: *Kano Journal of Education* 1(1).