

## ASYMMETRICAL POWER RELATIONS BETWEEN ENGLISH (E) AND NIGERIAN PIDGIN (NP)

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### ABSTRACT

*There are asymmetrical linguistic relations amongst the prominent languages in Nigeria. This is informed by unchallenged ideologies ascribed to the languages within Nigerian linguistic ecology. This paper employs argumentative approach in applying the assumptions of the common social context theory in association with the ideas of power semantic and the solidarity semantic. The objective is to investigate the interaction between English (E) and Nigerian Pidgin (NP) in association with the ethnic languages e.g., Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Subsequently, it points out that despite the increasing number of NP users and its application in many domains of social actions, the negative ideology of its antecedents, poor arguments coupled with internal language politics and domineering influence of E internally and externally leaves little space for its rise to power. However, the writer maintains optimistically that NP can be valorised through a language policy implementation and positivistic mental attitude. By valorising it, its the speakers are empowered thereby contributing to human capital development.*

**Keywords:** Power semantic, solidarity semantic, *tu-vous* relation, negative ideology and common social context

### INTRODUCTION

NP is one of the languages spoken in Nigeria. It is spoken virtually in all domains of social actions in Nigeria. Despite its versatile applications, it is neither given an official status nor a national status. On the contrary, English is given an official status, while the three major indigenous languages are given national status. There is no language policy in Nigeria as regards the use of NP, unlike the case of English and the other three major indigenous languages. Besides, NP is yet to be standardized unlike E and the three major ethnic languages. NP is relegated to a position where it cannot play a crucial role capable of placing it in the position of power to draw resources to itself. For example, it is not used in schools for formal instruction since it is yet to have a standard orthography.

In consideration of the increasing importance of NP in Nigeria coupled with the fact that it has creolized (and is still creolizing ) in some parts of the country, several detailed studies e.g., Elugbe and Omamor (1991: 284-299); Egbokhare (2003:20-40); Faraclas (1996); Oladejo (1991: 256-257); Awonusi (1990: 113-119) particularly call for the recognition of NP as an official language for Nigeria. Others e.g., Gani-Ikilama (1990: 219-227); Wolf and Igboanusi (2006:333-356) demand that the language be used as a medium of instruction in the initial years of the primary school for Pidgin speaking children. In the same vein, Egbokhare (2003: 21-40), Mann (1998: 458-474) and Ndolo (1989:679-684) argue for the promotion of NP in the media. However, most of the investigations which have advocated NP empowerment through status planning have not discussed issues, which cause the

asymmetrical relations between E and NP. This study is directly oriented towards pinpointing and elucidating the factors which place NP at a disadvantaged position, which if addressed will give NP a face lift and invariably empower its speakers.

### Objective

The objective of this study is to elucidate the asymmetrical relations between E and NP and to argue that the polarized relations can be stemmed; and that NP can be valorised.

### Theoretical Explanation of Pidgin in Association with Power Semantic and Solidarity Semantic

Besides the inconsistency observed in the etymological origin of the word pidgin – ranging from a Chinese mispronunciation of the English word ‘business’ to the Portuguese word ‘ocupacao’ (business), to the Hebrew word pidjom (barter), to a Yayo word ‘pidians’ meaning ‘people’, and further to English ‘pigeon’ – suitable for carrying simple messages, there are conflicting theoretical explications on the development of Pidgin languages in general. These etymological words are indices of the ideology behind the origin of Pidgin languages – it is an adhoc language developed naturally on account of the exigency of the time; it is tailored to suit the necessity that gave birth to it – business. Linguists have noticed that certain features traverse world Pidgin languages and sought to explain the coming into being of the languages theoretically. As a point of fact varieties of Pidgin exist, yet they share characteristic features.

Linguistic theories of grammatical explication of languages are basically of two sorts – those that attempt the analysis of language via syntagmatic associations, for example the Chomskian generativism; in line with this is the bio-programme theory of Bickerton (1981, 1983, 1984). Bickerton’s claim in brief is that we as children have an innate grammar that is available biologically if our language input is insufficient to acquire the language of our community. The theories from nativists’ researches provide a fascinating perspective on the nature of biological limit on language learning. One feature that traverses the theories is the task-specific or the modular nature of human language capacity. Essentially, the nativists’ theories run into a serious difficulty, for how can the vast structural differences in Pidgin languages be accounted for through the innateness theories. The possibility of success of such a venture is quite remote. However, the works of the nativists have profound effects by elucidating the nature of Pidgin languages. For instance, Bickerton (1984: 173) defines Pidgin as an auxiliary language that arises when speakers of several/mutually unintelligible languages are in close contact. Carroll (1994: 332) explains that this occurs when workers from diverse countries are brought in as cheap labour in an agricultural community. Immigrant workers come to speak a simpler form of a dominant language of the area – just enough to get by. Carroll’s explanation of Pidgin brings into the lime light the issues of power semantic, i.e. two unequal groups are involved. Bickerton’s definition of Pidgin language falls in line with the one of so many other linguists, such as Hymes (1971: 13-18); De Camp (1971a); Muehlhaeusler (1974); Hudson (1980: 61) and Yul-Ifode (2001: 194). Now, the other theory employed in the explanation of language, which this write-up subscribes to takes on a paradigmatic association line and sets out to explain Pidgin languages based on functional configurations and that is the common social context theory. The common social context theory adopts a strictly functional perspective: the slave plantation imposed similar communicative requirements on the slaves, newly arrived and without a common language in many cases. The common communicative requirements led to the formation of a series of fairly makeshift communicative system, which then stabilized and became creoles.

From the theory above, it can be deduced, that there were businesses or social relations between two or more mutually unintelligible sociopolitical and linguistic groups (e.g. the Africans and the Europeans); and within the groups existed a sociopolitically dominant linguistic (English, for example) group. The dominant group imposed critical survival conditions upon the weak just like in the power semantic situation tenable in medieval Europe. Generally the nobility said Tu(T), (a non reverential address form) to the common people and received Vos (V) (a reverential address form e.g. Honourable, your Highness, your Excellency, Sir, etc); the master of a household said T to his slave, his servant, his squire and received V. Within the family, of whatever social level, parents gave T to children and were given V. In Italy in the fifteenth century penitents said V to the priests and were given T. In Froissart (late fourteenth century) God said T to his angels and they said V to Him; all celestial beings say T to man and receive V (Brown and Gilman, 1972: 255).

So, the sociopolitically weak had to learn the language of the dominant group. The attempt of the weak to acquire the language (English) of the sociopolitically dominant group resulted in Pidgin, but which served the adhoc purpose it was meant for. To substantiate the claim above, Rodney (2009:12) writes that when two societies of different sorts come into a prolonged and effective contact, the rate and character of change taking place in both is seriously affected to the extent that entirely new patterns are created. He suggests that two general rules can be observed to apply in such cases. Firstly, the weaker of the two societies (i.e., the one with less economic capacity) is bound to be adversely affected and the bigger the gap between the two societies concerned the more detrimental are the consequences with the weaker being virtually exterminated. Arguably, the birth of Pidgin can be seen as one of the consequences of an attempt by the dominant English to exterminate the weak indigenous languages and cultures in the contact situation. Secondly, assuming the weaker society does survive, it can ultimately resume its own independent development only if it proceeds at a level higher than that of the economy which had previously dominated it. Evidently, the indigenous economy was weaker than that of its European counter part. It is clear that African oppression and exploitation by the Europeans have been a function of her technological underdevelopment. In other words, the possibility of the slave trade and colonialism was largely due to underdevelopment of the African technological capacity (Oladipo, 2009: 32-33), which result is a weak economy. One of the consequences of the effective and prolonged contact between the indigenous languages and the language of the colonialists is the birth of NP. The NP was originally seen as a corrupt form of E (Brosnahan 1958). But Brosnahan's view has been seriously refuted. It is considered that Pidgin is a language of its own even though it borrows lexical items form English. For instance, the concept of 'Englishness consists in a common-core or nucleus, which can be termed 'English' (Quirk et al, 1972: 13). NP lacks the common core features of English – English orthography, English grammar, English vocabulary (Quirk, 1962: 99). Essentially, it can be pointed out that NP has a congenital nature – in terms of grammar, tense and aspect formation, it resembles African tone languages (Ifesieh, 2006: 63). Therefore, NP is a language in its own right.

The sociopolitical relationship between the Africans and the Europeans in the contact situation was of the type: Tu – Vos. The Europeans said T to the Africans and expected V from them. This power semantic is transferred subsequently to the languages. While English is seen as a superior language, Pidgin is seen as an inferior language.

However, one might argue, that it is not in all instances that Pidgin arose on account of mutually unintelligible language contact between oppressors and oppressed or on account of a demand for cheap labour. People of mutually unintelligible languages may develop a Pidgin

language to communicate for diverse reasons. Kituba, which is derived from Kikongo, a Bantu language, is a Pidgin language widely used in western Zaire and adjoining areas. And Fanagolo, which is based on Zulu is a Pidgin spoken in South Africa and adjoining countries, particularly in the mines (Malmkjaer, 2002: 93). Nevertheless, the case of NP is different from that of Kituba and Fanagolo.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this write-up the explication of the asymmetrical power relation between NP and E is treated from the perspective of the assumptions of the common social context theory in association with the power semantic and the solidarity semantic ideas: language application is ideological in the sense that the users operate from particular social bases. The language users may pursue similar interests in the case of solidarity semantic or dissimilar interests in the case of power semantic.

There are so many kinds of power, for example physical strength, monetary power, natural resources, military power, social status, authority, social approval, legal power, brain power, man power and fire power. By extension any languages or varieties recognized as associated with more of any of the items mentioned above have more power than those associated with less (Fishman, 2006: 5). In other words languages do not exist outside sociocultural and political settings. It is treated in association with cultures and people and their ways of existence. Invariably the power and importance of a language is treated in association with the political, socioeconomic and technological roles played by the speakers of the language in the nation and in the world in general.

Power resides in force – force that can vary from a blunt imposition to a more democratic debate. Power also involves authority. Under authority, the institutionalization of legitimate power can be recognized and it is also easy to recognize that it logically contains coercion and influence. Invariably power in its most psychologically and sociologically interesting forms involves relationship, particularly ones of inequality. It is upon this unequal relationship that the argument on NP and its asymmetrical relationship with E language is anchored.

### Asymmetrical Power Relations between E and NP

In the Nigerian linguistic repertoire, the power semantic and the solidarity semantic are noticeable. In the power semantic one person or one linguistic group/social group may be said to have power over another in the degree that he is able to control the behaviour of the other. Power is a relationship between at least two persons and it is non reciprocal in the sense that both cannot have power in the same area of behaviour. The power semantic is similarly non-reciprocal (Brown and Gilman, 1972: 255).

NP is associated with low social status, poverty, illiteracy, timidity and non-sophistication in relation to E. E is viewed as a language of upwards social mobility and as a gateway to the international scene. The indigenous languages are seen as custodians of the peoples' cultural heritage, mark of identity and ethnic solidarity (Otite, 2000). Therefore, it is can be noticed that E and the indigenous languages enjoy prestige in different capacities which NP does not.

In order to gain a better understanding of the issue under discourse some crucial questions may be asked and attempts to offer solutions to them will be made. For instance, 1. what capacities do NP/E have?, i.e. what are their intrinsic arguments? 2. What resources do NP/E have?, i.e. what are their extrinsic arguments? and 3. What are their uses?, i.e. what are their

functional arguments? i.e. what do they do?; how are they being used? (cf. Phillipson, 1992: 271).

The point under pursuit is that there are certain qualities which predispose a language and naturally make it more accessible to power. For example English language is described as rich, varied, noble, well adapted for change, interesting, cosmopolitan on account of external conflict (Uwalaka, 2001: 50-54), and these constitute its innate power (Galtung, 1980: 62). Galtung suggests that structural power – the functional argument of a language can lead to resource power and vice versa. One form of power is convertible into another: structural power into accumulation of resources, resource power into sufficient command of structure to get into positions of structural power.

The innate power derives from exceptional qualities which permits the power sender to influence many receivers. It is the nature of English, for instance that predisposes it as a language of world civilization. In the same vein, it is this argument for what E is that adapts it for use as a vehicle for the entire Nigerian tradition, past, present and future. Thus, Strevens (1980: 85) stipulates: English possesses a great range of rules for the formation of new words... English it would seem is well adapted for development and change. One major feature of NP is reduction in lexicon, grammatical, and redundant features. By derivation NP language is an unsophisticated language. By further implication it has no original application in sophisticated domains such as philosophy, science and technology. Consequently, NP as a power sender may not attract many receivers except of course its congenital reductive nature is radically transformed.

As power is relational, the arguments for the innate qualities of English are generally marshalled in discourse which also categorizes the power of the other languages. In the same vein some other languages may equally be well adapted for change and development and may indeed have simpler structures, morphological, syntactic or phonetic which renders them more flexible and productive and arguably easier to learn, as in the case of NP. Nevertheless, NP intrinsic arguments are not accorded much prominence, and that demonstrates that the underlying linguisticism of innateness is still very much alive and kicking. The power wielded by the E in the socioeconomic, -cultural and -political settings of the nation underpins to a larger level the intrinsic argument of E in relation to the one of NP. This is indicative of an asymmetrical power relation between E and NP.

A proper investigation of E indicates that its resource power base is incredibly strong. Material resources (books, capital) are often deployed along with immaterial resources (knowledge, skill). Material resources, for instance wealth can be converted into immaterial resources such as formal knowledge and skill. E has both material resources (trained teachers, teachers trainers, teaching materials, literatures, dictionaries, multinational publishers, computers and soft ware's, radio and television programmes etc., and immaterial resources (knowledge, skills, know-how via experts, etc.). The point being pursued here is that a language with such enormous resources tends to embark on aggressive expansion policies thereby assuming functions, in other words powers which other languages ought to exercise. In the Nigerian linguistic situation, for instance E has assumed functions in virtually all domains of the sociopolitical and cultural life of the polity. NP does not have much in terms of extrinsic arguments. Jubril (1995: 234) indicates that Nigerian attitudes to the NP range from adoration to disdain. Similarly, Omamor (1982; 1990) tries to delineate what NP is and distances it from broken English and Pseudo Pidgin. Faraclas (1996: 2) claims that the name NP is to some extent misleading, since the NP speaking community includes people who speak the language as a pidginized speech form (acrolect). One of the deductions one

can make out of the comments of these linguists is that there are still arguments raging on as regards what NP is or is not. However, it can be mentioned that there are vestiges indicating efforts towards its standardization irrespective of the arguments. Essentially, in terms of extrinsic arguments, there is again, asymmetrical power relation between E and NP.

The next area looked into is the functional argument relations between the E and the NP. A language such as English is described as gateway to a better understanding (Makerere Report, 1961: 47). The use of E in a wide variety of activities ties into power. The importance and power of any language lies in its use, besides the intrinsic and extrinsic arguments. Concomitant with its use is the users and for what intention and purpose. In a multilingual society such as Nigeria there has been tendencies to think that there is a need for a national language for the purpose of ethnic and group integration and that such a national language can function maximally internationally to enable the citizenry have dealings at a larger global community. Consequent upon this idea was the constitutional adoption of English language as Nigeria's official language and the language of Education from upper primary school, while the three major regional languages – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba were recognized as the national languages. Pidgin English has no place in Nigeria's language policy. The legitimization of English did unite the nation, but subtly and latently engraved divisiveness and alienation; the language is not accessible to all, but predominantly to the elites. In a multilingual society like Nigeria, the competition for power often leads to unhealthy intervention in the normal course of change of linguistic tradition patterns through language planning and policies. Once a people occupy a dominant position, they strive hard to maintain their prominence. They use this same position of advantage to continue to resist change and perpetuate elitism which the use of favoured languages entails (Bamgbose, 2000: 1). Also, even though English language is marketed as neutral, official, non-ethnic and national, it is said to lack root in Nigeria. However, one can claim that over five century stay of English in Nigeria has rooted and nativized it in Nigeria and it is still hybridizing in the Nigerian sociopolitical and cultural environments (Igboanusi, 2002; Awonusi, 2004: 67; Wolf and Igboanusi, 2006). What more, E is used in every official domain – government offices, legislature and judiciary, schools, in commerce and industry, banking, insurance firms, businesses, religious bodies and social gathering, news broadcast, advertising, literature, science and technology.

In Nigeria, the English language is used by the elites and the ruling class. By the educated in Nigerian current understanding is meant those who have tertiary education. People who have primary and secondary school education can be said to be literates. The speakers of E are those in position of political power and influence. This has serious implication on the polity's linguistic choices. One consequence is that any language not favoured by the elites will be suppressed; NP is typical example of such a language.

Although Egbokhare (2001: 100-119) tries to negate Agheyisi's (1971: 30) claim that NP is generally spoken by unskilled labourers in government projects or agencies, such as public works department; petty traders; store keepers; market women; taxi and lorry drivers etc, by saying that with its increasing domains of application, such as from jokes, humour, cartoons etc. to literature, news dissemination, public enlightenment, propaganda etc. By implication, NP is currently being used by the elites, too, but he fails to answer a pertinent question – to what target audience? And for what purpose is it applied?

The elites and educated employ NP to reach out to the sociopolitically less privileged and the illiterates for the purpose of social solidarity action and familiarity which results in the elites occupying the positions of power and influence, for instance, during electoral campaigns and elections. The elites address the sociopolitically less privileged and the illiterates with little or

no regard (i.e. T) and expect to be addressed with a lot of regard (i.e. V). The capitalists also employ NP to advertise their products in order to have maximal patronage. This is because NP is very easy to learn or acquire and understand. A great preponderance of Nigerians not only understands it, but also speaks it. When the elites use NP among themselves, it is for social solidarity or familiarity; it can equally be used for regional identity but not for ethnic group identity. Different ethnic groups have behavioural differences and value systems that transcend the use of NP. Nevertheless, in order to avert divisiveness and alienation, which is a major cause of suspicion and misunderstanding in the polity caused by the use of E; NP can be valorised and be adopted as a national language.

### **Can Pidgin Rise to Power in Nigeria?**

In a recent research, Igboanusi (2008) explored the possibility of empowering NP (and its speakers) by raising the value of the language through status planning especially in the educational system. It was found out that there is no consensus as regards empowering the language educationally, and that a large majority of NP speakers do not favour its use in the educational system, even though it is the language with the highest population of users in the country. The attitude towards the empowerment of NP is negative. According to Hall (1972: 144), Pidgins and Creoles are used in general only by groups on the lowest socioeconomic level; questions of social prestige have normally not arisen in their case. This assertion underpins the situation in Nigeria. The attitude towards NP is a negative mentalist type. A typical mentalist definition of attitude is: an internal state aroused by stimulation of some type and which may mediate the organism's subsequent response.

The negative mental attitude of Nigerians towards NP takes its rise from the social context in which it (Pidgin) developed. The social context in which NP developed was typically one of asymmetrical power relations, colonialism and the memory of these circumstances still influences speakers, planners and professionals alike. The ideology of servitude is rigidly engraved in NP development. Despite an important role NP plays in maintaining diversity in Nigerian complex linguistic ecology, there has been a long tradition in the linguistic mainstream and the linguistic discourse is inclined to underrate the importance of the contact-induced language (cf. Ehrhart et al, 2006: 129-132). The speakers of the language view it as an impure or adulterated form of English, though it is not. This is an unchallenged ideology, which has become a common sense in Nigerian sociocultural and political society (cf. Fairclough, 1995: 36-45). Linguists characterize it as a language with limited vocabulary and grammatical elements. The speakers of the major languages capitalize on these views and suppress suggestions to valorise the language. However, it must be mentioned that the characterization of Pidgin by linguists is factual and not intended to relegate the language.

The unassailable position of English in Nigeria is one of the fundamental road blocks that stands in the way of the intellectualization of the NP, too. Partly because the pre-literate character of Nigerian society at the time of European colonial conquest and the consequent disproportionate impact of the literacy practices of the Nigerian society at the time of European colonial conquest and the consequent disproportionate impact of the literacy practices of the Christian missionaries, the manner in which the language of the oppressors captured and shaped, in fact subjugated, the minds of the colonized subjects is almost impossible to be imagined by a later generation which has become accustomed to the dominance of the language – English.

Fishman (1972) agrees with Garvin (1959) and asserts that there must be some felt need for reading and writing, some actual or implied gain as a result of the acquisition of literacy and

not infrequently, an absence of major status loss to those who have hitherto been the status and power elites of the society. Unfortunately, in the case of NP there is virtually no felt need for reading or writing it. On the contrary people see it as having a negative transfer effects on the learners of English (Mowarin, 2007: 55; 2008: 71-85). At a stakeholders meeting for education, held on 28 October 2006, one of the participants asked President Olusegun Obasanjo if the Federal Government was considering granting NP official recognition similar to that enjoyed by the three major languages, since it is a major means of identification for the linguistic minority groups in the Niger Delta area. He responded that the language should be left the way it has been, namely as an informal means of communication. Perhaps President Obasanjo's response can be seen as representing the view of the Federal Government on the issue. Sociopolitical and economic factors inform a people's linguistic traditions and what language they will speak. Take for instance, people shift to the language that will afford them the greatest amount of opportunity for upward sociopolitical mobility and in essence this ties into power structures (Ifesieh et al, 2006: 56). Nigerian Pidgin is spoken predominantly by the minority reactionary groups in the Niger Delta. Originally people see it as a language of trade and commerce, but with its increasing creolization in the Niger Delta region and its use by the Niger Delta militants, it is assuming a new identity-- the language of militancy (in the Niger Delta). The Federal Government may not readily accent to its empowerment lest the reactionary groups would become linguistically empowered and subsequently unleash unprecedented reactionary actions in the country. The languages of status in the country still retain their status, too. Alexander (2006: 242) views African language speakers as suffering from static maintenance syndrome. This means that most of the speakers are willing to maintain their languages in the primary domains of family and of the community and also in religious contexts. They do not believe that these languages have the capacity to develop into languages of power. This is also true of the speakers of NP who have been schooled and nurtured to believe that their linguistic heritage is some form of dislocated and malformed language (Egbokhare, 2001: 111).

Lastly, the power elites of the Nigerian society speak English which is gathering more and more clouds internationally via globalization. Globalization is a very powerful thrust in the current world politics, and it is an important factor in determining whether or not a language thrives. Globalization more or less reduces diversity and suggests homogenization. Invariably, it also suggests speaking the same kind of language everywhere, just as it suggests using more or less the same kinds of products everywhere for the same kinds of things or producing things more or less the same way (Fishman, 2001: 1-18). The point being pursued here is simple; the Federal Government language policy is a unitary one. The policy is in accord with the globalization ideology. One language is given a special impetus and that is English, which is the vehicle with which the globalization is propelled: The business of the National Assembly shall be conducted in English and in Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba when adequate arrangements have been made therefore (*1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*). The clause in Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba when adequate arrangements have been made therefore is undefined in the constitution. By analogy, it is time indefinite when any of the three languages can be used in serious sociopolitical domains of the nation. NP is totally out of the question, for it is viewed as the language of the proletariat and currently as a language of the reactionary groups, and people of low sociopolitical and economic status. Those who have a good command of the E are the honourables while the NP speakers are the proletariats. In other words a kind of Tu-Vous relationship in the power semantic exists between NP and E, and it is extended to their speakers. However, the three major ethnic languages are seen as custodians of the ethno-cultural heritages, but they are being endangered by E already (Crystal, 2000: 21; Igboanus, 2006: 447). The power elites at both



upper and lower federal houses may not concur with the idea to officialize NP. Otherwise, the ethnic languages will face further endangerment by NP.

The argument being trailed is that there is a bleak future for a vertical NP rise to power in Nigeria. It may however, continue to creolize as evident in the post-Creole continuum.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Therefore, for NP to rise in power a greater percentage of the wide range of issues raised must be satisfactorily addressed. For example, NP should be standardized. There should be a positive mentalist attitude towards NP. To this effect, linguists, government agencies and politicians should re-package NP and re-present it to the Nigerian polity as a language that can work effectively like English. In line with that, the intrinsic, extrinsic and functional arguments of NP should be intensified. The implications of these examples are that a new language implementation policy coupled with adequate governmental and corporate group financing is needed to valorise NP.

### **The Implication of NP Valorisation**

The major implication of valorising NP is that a greater preponderance of the Nigerian citizenry (since it is the language with the largest population of speakers in the polity) will gain access to information in various fields of endeavours such as in sciences, arts, education and technology. This in turn will give rise to a healthy inter group and individual competitions and invariably empower the polity generally.

## **CONCLUSION**

NP has been investigated diachronically and synchronically in this write-up. Popular ideas have equally been weighed with regard to its relationship with the E vis-à-vis speakers of the two. The philosophizing on the subject matter brought in illuminations that indicate that 1. There is a kind of asymmetrical power relation between the NP and E speakers; 2. That speakers of NP lack the power base to influence policies that can empower the language; 3. That there is no urgent need to get NP empowered in the Nigeria sociocultural and political context; 4. That the Nigerian people have a negative (mentalist) attitude towards the language and associates failures in the E to the negative influence of NP; 5. That NP has little or no economic value; and 6. That NP has a bad historical antecedents.

Conclusively, a myriad of factors converge to determine a people's linguistic choices. Prominent among the factors is a language that can afford its speakers a maximal sociopolitical and economic upward mobility. NP lacks this vital feature.

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