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Language Endangerment: A Case of Language Shift of Bade/Ngizim in Yobe State

[1]Abubakar Babangida; [2]Musa Babayo & [3]Muhammed Maina Ma'aji

[1,2]Department of Hausa
School of Languages,
Umar Suleiman College of Education, Gashua, Yobe State Nigeria
[1]abubakarbabangida1110@gmail.com/070 36245696
[2]08067437389

[3]Department of French
School of Languages,
Umar Suleiman College of Education, Gashua, Yobe State Nigeria
[3]08066216695

ABSTRACT
This study tries to investigate the effect of language shift in Bade/Ngizim language with the aim of finding out the extent or level on which the language is shift as a result of endangerment. The research has employed the Ethnographic Research approach that involves observing variables in their natural environments or habitats in order to arrive at objective research outcome, which, at the same time uses observation, interview and participation. The study adopts the work ofUNESCO expert committee on language endangerment (2003). Among the findings revealed by this study are the factors that cause language shift and these are;Inter Community Marriage, Lack of Economic Activities, Lack of Research on the Endangered Languages, Globalization, and Lack of Institutional Support, Cultural Background and Migration. More so, the research also has confirmed that Bade/Ngizim language is under serious threat of shift. As part of its findings, this research has discovered a lot of things in line with language shift which include a case of language shift in Bade/Ngizim language. This study revealed that only 17.05% of their native speakers were found to have an in–build mastery of their individual languages which is quite insignificant. The native speakers of the language (Bade/Ngizim) appeared to be very much comfortable while speaking other languages like Hausa by Bade and Bole by Ngizim speakers where 62.60% of such speakers were recorded there. Also, among the finding unveiled by this study was interruption on intergenerational transmission in Bade/Ngizim language. The scores recorded here shown that, out of the eleven (11) items designed on the questionnaire and administered on their native speakers, it was expected that Bade/Ngizim language scored 55 marks which is the highest point to be obtained on the eleven (11) items on the questionnaire in order to mark the language as safe. However, Bade/Ngizim have scored only 27 out of the 55 marks, this ultimately placed the languages as absolutely shift.
Keywords: Bade/Ngizim language, native speakers, Hausa,

INTRODUCTION

Languages are often seen as a symbol of ethnic and national identity. Ma**n**y endangered language complainers claim that when a language allies out, a vague way of looking at the world also disappear (Fishman, 1989).

Language diversity is essential to human heritage each and every language embodies the unique cultural wisdom of a people. The less of any language is thus a less for all humanity. According to UNESCO (2003), approximately six thousand languages still exist, many out of them are under threat. Therefore, there is an imperative need for language documentation, new policy initiative and new materials to enhance the vitality of these languages.

In almost every part of the world, minority languages are seriously under shift, threat of extinction. At the same time, some dedicated efforts are being made to document, revive and maintain the languages shift from the verge of extinction or totally disappearing from the globe for not having the desired attention.

Language shift is a very common phenomenon in Africa and the world at large. Therefore, Nigeria or Yobe state will never be an exception.

Yobe state is located in northern part of Nigeria. It was carved out of Borno State in 1991 by the then military government of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. The dominant linguistic and cultural force, until the mid of 20th century, was Kanuri. But in recent years, Hausa has become the universal lingua franca for all parts of northern Nigeria including Yobe state. Nonetheless, numerous minority languages remain in shift to each other and active use. They all have a substantial community of first language speakers. [Therefore, lack of interest plus documentation in the communities in seeing their languages developed through publication in and on them make Yobe state an ideal place for a broad linguistic project.]

Bade/Ngizim is classified as members of Chadic languages under the Afro-Asiatic phylum. It is spoken in northern Nigeria, in Bade and Potiskum local government areas of Yobe State. Its close linguistic relatives are Bole, Angas and Tangale. Their population is 200,000, approximately Bade has four different dialects that are Dila, Magwal, Xuwai and Gashua variety. (Babangida, 2018 p. 2)

CHADIC OVERVIEW

The Chadic Language family comprises about 150 languages that lie in a band south of the Sahara desert, stretching across southern Niger, northern Nigeria, northern Cameroon, and southcentral Chad Republic. A single Chadic language, Hausa, constitutes the entire western end of the Chadic area.' Hausa is the overwhelmingly largest Chadic language with well over 20 million native speakers, whereas most other Chadic languages have fewer than 100,000 speakers. The Hausa native-speaking area covers most of the northwest quadrant of Nigeria and most of southern Niger. It is the lingua franca for all of northern Nigeria and most of Niger. Chadic languages at one time probably formed a block from near the Niger River in the west to their current eastern extent in Chad Re- public. Hausa has absorbed many of its cousins in the west, Kanuri has replaced Chadic languages west and southwest of Lake Chad, and Kanembu and Chadian Arabic have cut through the original Chadic area of Chad Republic.

In the 1930's, Johannes Lukas presented the first comprehensive classification of languages of the Lake Chad basin, proposing a "Chado-Hamitic" group and a "Mandara" or "Chadic" group (Lukas 1936). A principal criterion for this categorization was the presence or absence of grammatical gender. Greenberg (1950) set the stage for the modern classification of Chadic. On the basis of lexical resemblances and shared patterns in morphology, Greenberg proposed a unitary group of "Chad" languages with nine subgroups, which included all Lukas's "Chado-Hamitic" and "Chadic" languages and was itself a branch of the larger Afrasian (= Afroasiatic) family.

In the first true comparative Chadic publication, Newman and Ma (1966) proposed a subgrouping that unified Greenberg's two largest groups of Chadic—group 1 at the western end and group 9 at the eastern end—into a "Plateau-Sahel" branch, with the remainder of Greenberg's groups united in a "Bill-Mandara" branch. They identified a number of sound changes that united or differentiated the various subgroups and reconstructed a list of 150 items for a proto-Chadic lexicon.

Newman and Ma's Plateau-Sahel group soon became untenable. Newman (1978) himself noted that counts of lexical similarities did not justify a special linkage between the western branch (Greenberg's group 1) and the eastern branch (Greenberg's group 9). Moreover, a major criterion for Newman and Ma's classification was a putative correspondence of Plateau-Sahel *s to BiuMandara Research in the late 1960's revealed that many of the Plateau-Sahel languages of Nigeria also have lateral fricatives, thus ruling this out as a criterion for subgrouping.

Drawing on a large amount of Chadic research and publication in the 1960's and 1970's, two reclassifications of the Chadic languages emerged about the same time in the late 1970's. Newman (1977) updated what was known about sound changes among the Chadic languages and presenteda new list of 150 proto-Chadic reconstructions. Newman proposed a four-way division of the Chadic languages into West (= Greenberg's group 1, all spoken in northern Nigeria and including Hausa), Biu-Mandara (= Greenberg's groups 2-7, spoken in northeastern Nigeria and northern Cameroon), Masa (= Greenberg's group 8, spoken mainly in western Chad, extending into eastern Cameroon), and East (= Greenberg's group 9, all spoken in Chad Republic). The map above reflects this classification, lighter to darker shades of gray distinguishing the groups from west to east.

The second reclassification is that of Jungraithmayr and Shimizu (1981), repeated in Jungraithmayr and Ibriszimow (1994). This classification has West and East branches identical to those of Newman (1977). Both reclassifications also recognize "Masa" as a unitary group. However, unlike Newman's distinct high-level groups of Bill-Mandara and Masa, the Jungraithmayr et al. classification has a single Central Chadic branch. This branch, in turn, has three sub-branches, with the languages of Newman's Masa branch included within one of those sub-branches. It may well be that Masa is linked to the other "Biu-Mandara"/"Central Chadic" languages, but a low-level classification of Masa within Central Chadic is questionable. Shryock (1989), using a variety of criteria from sound change, lexical change, and morphological change, was unable to find evidence for a link between the Masa languages and the Biu-Mandara/Central Chadic languages as opposed to any other branch of Chadic. The conservative Newman (1977) classification, with four-high level branches, thus seems to be the most plausible among current proposals. Branch affiliations of languages cited below will be indicated by [W], [B-M], [M], and [E] following the language name.

Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study is to investigate the extent of language shift (as a result endangerment) in Bade/Ngizim languages and ascertain the level of shift and established the reasons that lead to the shift.

Statement of the Problem

In July 2005, Yobe Language Research Project has shown that, in addition to being genetic sisters/cousins, the indigenous Chadic languages of Yobe state constituted an interesting linguistic area i.e. an area which is full of linguistic research opportunities. Inspite of this, there is very little published documentation of any of these languages, yet they have substantial communities of first language speakers. This has made Yobe state an ideal place for broad linguistic projects. In addition, some linguistic experts, Crystal 1998, for example, established that only 600 of the 6000 or so languages in the world are ‘safe’ from the threat of extinction.

Based on the above linguistic experts assertion, this study come across very little academic research that works on language shift phenomenon. Therefore, this has made it necessary for us to make a thorough investigation on the devastating effect of language shift in Bade/Ngizim language.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study limits its scope within the areas where Bade/Ngizim language is spoken only which includes, Bade, Jakusko Potiskum and some part of Fiki etc.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Bamghose, (1993, p. 3) claims that, even though the concept of language endangerment is taken as a given actual fact there is no uniform definition of endangered languages, the most obvious definition is by number of speakers. Obviously a language with fewer speakers is more likely to be endangered when compared with larger languages. Speakers of such languages tend to learn another language (more widely spoken) for purpose of interaction outside their immediate community, where language loyalty is not strong; it is a short step to language shift and eventually language death. He further said that endangerment is a structure which comes as a result of incidence of domination by a more powerful language. In this sense many African languages will, in varying degree, qualify as endangered either by widely spoken national language such as Swahili or by official language of a wider communication such as English, French or Portuguese.

Machinyanse, (2018, p. 2) argues that, the most widely affected languages by language endangerment are minority languages as a result of certain factors like; globalized economies and media are the most prominent social factors that successfully change the culture landscape of the entire globe affecting negatively the languages human speaks. It is clear facts that indigenous languages whose speakers are affected directly by these modern global trends are on the verge of extinction. Other factors are cultural/political/economic marginalization and hegemony, this happen when political and economic power is closely linked to a particular language and culture so much that there is strong incentive and benefit for individuals who use the privileged language, this compels speakers of minority languages to abandon their languages in favor of another more prestigious one.

Simon and Charles (2020), maintained that language endangerment is a serious concern to linguist and language planners. Language planners have turned their attention in the last several decades for a variety of reasons, speakers of many smaller less dominant language stop using their heritage language and begin to use another. Parents may begin to use only the second language for their children and gradually the intergenerational transmission of the heritage language is reduced and even cease. As a consequence, there may be no speakers who use the language as their first or primary language and eventually the language may no longer be used at all. A language may become dormant or extinct, existing only in recordings or written records and transcription. Languages which have not been adequately documented disappear altogether.

UNESCO, (2003) stress that, a language endangerment is simply refers to a situation when the language is on a path towards extinction without adequate documentation. A language that is extinct can never be revived. A language is said to be endangered when its speakers cease to use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next. That is, there are no new speakers, adults or children. About 97% of the world's people speak about 4% of the world's languages, and conversely, about 96% of the world's languages are spoken by about 3% of the world's people (Bernard, 1996, p, 142). Most of the world's language heterogeneity, then, is under the stewardship a very small number of people.

Even languages with many thousands speakers are no longer being acquired by children; at least 50% of the world's more than six thousand languages are losing speakers. We estimate that, in most world regions, about 90% of the languages may be replaced by dominant languages by the end of 21st century. Therefore, language end may be as a result of external forces such as military, economic, religious, cultural, or educational subjugation, or it may be caused by internal forces such as a community's negative attitude towards its own language. Internal pressures often have their source in external ones, and both halt the intergenerational transmission of linguistic and cultural traditions. Many indigenous

peoples, associating their disadvantaged social position with their culture, have come to believe that their languages are not worth retaining. They abandoned their languages and cultures in hopes of overcoming discrimination, to secure a livelihood, and enhance social mobility, or to assimilate to the global market place.

3.1 METHODOLOGY

The study, entitled 'Languages and Endangerment: A Case of Language Shift of Bade/NgizminYobe. Uses Ethnographic Research approach that involves observing variables in their natural environments or habitats in order to arrive at objective research outcome, which, at the same time uses observation, interview and participation, (cf, Chamo, 2015, p. 272).

However, the target audiences for the research were native speakers of Bade/Ngizim language from the age of 10 years above irrespective of their gender variation. The data obtained through the interview were recorded for further transcription, translation and final analysis. The data were analyzed based on the outlined determining factors by UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages. Under each factor there was adopted grades from 0 to 5, where 0 represents complete shift to another language (termed as extinct), whereas 5 represents vitality of a language (which termed as safe). The remaining indices (1 to 4) represent the percentage on which a language is endangered.

4.1 DATA PRESENTATION

Item one in the questionnaire

In what domain do you use your language?

a. Home b. School c. Market d. Office e. Place of Worship
f. All of the above g. None of the above

S/NoLang	Home		Sch		Mark		Off		P/W		A/A		N/A		Total		
1.	Bade	45	47.37	2	2.26	6	6.32	0	0	0	0	26	27.37	9	9.47	88	

Item two on the questionnaire

How frequent do you use your language?

a. Always b. Sometimes c. Never

S/N	Language	Always		Sometimes		Never		Total
1.	Bade/Ngizim	30	34.09	47	53.41	11	12.50	88(100%)

Item three in the questionnaire

To what extent do you currently speak your language?

a. Always b. Sometimes c. Never

S/N	Language	Always		Sometimes		Never		Total
Bade	39	44.32	40	45.45	2	2.27	7	7.69	88(100%)

Item four in the questionnaire

How will you rate your attitude towards your language?

Very good/I speak it always b. Fair/I speak it sometimes

S/N	Language	V/Good		Fair		Poor		V Poor	total
Bade	39	44.32	40	45.45	2	2.27	7	7.69	

Item five in the questionnaire

What language(s) do you currently speak apart from your mother tongue?

Hausa, English, Fulfulde and Kanuri

Bade	5	(0.76)

Item six in the questionnaire

How comfortable are you when speaking your second language more than your mother tongue?

a. Very comfortable b. Comfortable. c. Not comfortable

S/N	Language	V/Good		Fair		Poor		V Poor	total
Bade	16	18.18	55		2	2.27	7	7.69	88(100%)

Item seven in the questionnaire

What is your level of proficiency in your language?

a. No proficiency b. Basic/Elementary c. Limitedd. Bilingual e.Intuitive

S/N	Language	N/P		B/E		LTD		B/G		I/T	Total
Bade	13	14.77	25	28.41	15	17.05	20	22.73	15	17.05	88(100%

Item eight in the questionnaire

Have you ever seen any written document in your language or not?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

S/N	Language	Yes		No		Total
1.	Bade	28	31.82	60	68.18	88(100%)

Item nine in the questionnaire

Can you read or write in their language or not?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

S/N	Language	Yes		NO		Total
Bade	28	31.82	60	68.18	88(100%)	

Item ten in the questionnaire

Is your language taught in schools?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

S/N	Language	Yes		NO		Total
Bade	5	5.68	83	94.32	88(100%)	

Item eleven in the questionnaire

Is your language used in places of worship within the speech community?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

S/N	Language	Yes		NO		Total
Bade	45	51.14	43	48.86	88(100%)	

DATA ANALYSIS

Bade/Ngizim Language

Bade/Ngizim is the name of the language inter changeably being used by its native speakers is among the languages examined, their respective levels of shift and endangerment by the research team. However, the same percentage analysis and indices scale research measure are used on the data obtained from the native speakers of the language (Bade/Ngizim) in determining its specific level of shift and endangerment.

In the first instance, item 1 on the questionnaire set to determine the specific domain in which the native speakers of Bade/Ngiim language are mostly using the language. For this therefore, 47.37% of the respondents clearly stated that they are using the language at home which emerged as the highest percentage recorded on that particular item. This percentage shows that the language is placed on indices

3 of the research measure; i.e the languages are definitely shift and endangered at the same time. Consider the following table

b. Home b. School c. Market d. Office e. Place of Worship
f. All of the above g. None of the above

S/NoLang	Home		Sch		Mark		Off		P/W		A/A		N/A		Total	
2.	Bade	45	47.37	2	2.26	6	6.32	0	0	0	0	26	27.37	9	9.47	88

With regards to the level of frequency on the usage of Bade/Ngizim language by its native speakers as an item 2 on the questionnaire, another percentage figure also recorded. This shows that 42.05% of the respondents recorded are frequently using the language always. By such a percentage, the language seems to be placed on indices 3 of the research measure. This means that Bade/Ngizim language is definitely in shift and an endangered language.

b. Always b. Sometimes c. Never

S/N	Language	Always		Sometimes		Never		Total
2.	Bade/Ngizim	30	34.09	47	53.41	11	12.50	88(100%)

An item 3 on the questionnaire was designed to determine the extent to which the native speakers of Bade/Ngizim are currently speaking the language among themselves or to the younger generation. Here the percentage recorded shows that only 34.09% of the respondents are found to be speaking the language to their children or parents. This means that Bade/Ngizim language is marked to be placed on indice 2 of the research measure which vividly make it to be severely shift and endangered.

b. Always b. Sometimes c. Never

S/N	Language	Always		Sometimes		Never		Total
Bade		39	44.32	40	45.45	2	2.27	7	7.69	88(100%)

On the other hand, item 4 of the questionnaire series that is set to determine the attitude of native speakers of Bade/Ngizim toward their language. For this, the percentage recorded shows that only 44.32% have very good attitude and are speaking the language always. By this proportion, the language is placed on indices 3 of the research measure indicating that the languages are shift and also definitely endangered.

Very good/I speak it always b. Fair/I speak it sometimes

S/N	Language	V/Good		Fair		Poor		V Poor	total
Bade		39	44.32	40	45.45	2	2.27	7	7.69

While item 5 of the questionnaire series which enquired on the languages the native speakers of Bade/Ngizim are speaking apart from their mother tongue. For this, 48.64% of the responses show that are the only native speakers of Bade/Ngizim that are speaking other languages like Hausa, English, Fulfulde and Kanuri apart from their mother tongue. However, even with such a figure recorded, the language is marked to be placed on indices 3 which termed as definitely shift and endangered language.

Bade	5	(0.76)

When the level of comfort ability of the native speakers of Bade/Ngizim is enquired as item 6 on the questionnaire series, another percentage figure also recorded. This means that 62.50% are comfortable when speaking the other language more than the Bade/Ngizim language. This indicated that the language is placed on indices 3 for the fact that there is a case of language shift to those languages mentioned above. Therefore, by implication it shows that the language Bade/Ngizim is definitely shift and endangered.

S/N	Language	V/Good		Fair		Poor		V Poor	total
Bade		16	18.18	55		2	2.27	7	7.69	88(100%)

Items 7 of the questionnaire series is designed to find out the level of proficiency of the native speakers of Bade/Ngizim language in their mother tongue. For this, only 17.05% of the respondents claimed to have an in–build mastery of the language. The percentage, therefore is quite insignificant enough to place the language on an appreciable level of being far from shift, endangerment. To this extent, the research measure indices indicated that Bade/Ngizim language is placed on indices 1, i-e critically shift and endangered language.

S/N	Language	N/P		B/E		LTD		B/G		I/T		Total
Bade	13	14.77	25	28.41	15	17.05	20	22.73	15	17.05		88(100%

When the native speaker of Bade/Ngizim were asked on whether they have ever seen or heard about a written documents in their language as designed in item 8 of the questionnaire series, they responded thus: 31.82% of the native speakers of Bade/Ngizim language claimed to have seen or heard about a written document in the language. This insignificant proportion recorded here, shows that the language witnessed a lesser degree of documentation. Therefore, the language termed to be placed on indices 2 of the research measure which indicated that language is shift and endangered.

S/N	Language	Yes		No		Total
1.	Bade	28	31.82	60	68.18	88(100%)

Item 9 on the questionnaire series is designed to investigate if the native speakers of Bade/Ngizim can read or write in their language. The responses recorded here show that only 32.92% of the respondents claimed that they can read and write in their language. Therefore, the percentage indicated that the language (Bade/Ngizim) is placed on indices 2 of the research measure which marked the language as severely shift and endangered.

S/N	Language	Yes		NO		Total
Bade	28	31.82	60	68.18	88(100%)	

When Bade/Ngizim language is enquired as whether or not it is being taught in the school of the speech community as designed in item 10 of the questionnaire series, we recorded responses thus: only 5.68% are found to attest that the language is taught in their school. Therefore by this meager percentage, the language Bade/Ngizim is here placed on indices 1 which is in shift and endangerment stage.

S/N	Language	Yes		NO		Total
Bade	5	5.68	83	94.32	88(100%)	

Item 11 on the questionnaire series was set to investigate the status of Bade/Ngizimlanguage in the places of worship within the speech community. The native speakers of the language to this regard responded that 51.14% that the language is used in either mosques or churches. This shows that, the language is qualified to be placed on indices 3 of the research measure indicating that it is still in the shift and lead to endangered stage definitely.

S/N	Language	Yes		NO		Total
Bade	45	51.14	43	48.86	88(100%)	

4.3 The Level of Language Shift Endangerment in Bade/Ngizim Based on Percentage Analysis

As mentioned earlier, this study analyzed the data obtained from the field based on the outline determining factors by UNESCO Ad hoc Expert Group (2003) on endangered languages and shift. Under

each factor there was adoptable grades ranging from 0–5, where 0 represent complete shift to another language (termed as extinct), whereas 5 represent the vitality of the language (termed as safe). The remaining indices 1- 4 represent the percentage on which a language is in shift and endangered.

Therefore, the following statistical analysis was used in determining the level on which, Bade/Ngizim language under study is graded based on the scores recorded in respect of which, the language studied.

CONCLUSION

Inter Community Marriage, Lack of Economic Activities, and Lack of Research on the language shift and Endangered Languages, Globalization, and Lack of Institutional Support, Cultural Background and Migration. The research also confirmed that Bade/Ngizim language is under serious threat of shift endangerment.

As part of its findings, this research work has discovered a lot of things in line with language shift and endangerment which however include a case of language shift Bade/Ngizim language. In this case, only 17.05% of the native speakers were found to have an in–build mastery of the language which is quite insignificant. As such, the native speakers of the language (Bade/Ngizim) appeared to be very much comfortable while speaking other languages like Hausa and Bole where 62.60% of such speakers were recorded there. Also, among the finding unveiled by this study was an interruption on intergenerational transmission in Bade/Ngizim language.

Bade/Ngizim as popularly known is the language under study. Based on the data obtained from the native speakers of the language, and later analyzed by the researchers, it has been discovered that Bade/Ngizim language is most critically shift and endangered. The scores recorded here shown that, out of the eleven (11) items designed on the questionnaire and administered on their native speakers, it was expected that Bade/Ngizim language scored 55 marks which is the highest point to be obtained on the eleven (11) items on the questionnaire in order to mark the language as safe. However, Bade/Ngizim have scored only 27 out of the 55 marks, this ultimately placed the language as critically shift and endangered.

Bade/Ngizim languages that scored 13.54% and 31.82% respectively of item 8 of the questionnaire which shows the extent of codification of the language. This percentage appeared to be quite meager to serve as the only percentage possessed on language documentation. In line with the above finding discovered, it has also been realized that, there is lack of awareness on the side of the native speakers and their traditional rulers of Bade/Ngizim language on how to document and maintain languages. Never the less, in priority complex is discovered to be present among the native speakers of the language. Furthermore, some of the native speakers of Bade/Ngizim language; they don't want to be identified with their respective language. Instead, they prefer to associate themselves with the dominant language of their area particularly when the dominant language is socially well rated or politically or economically viable.

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