Language use in the electronic media in Borno State of Nigeria

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Abstract
This paper discusses the languages used in the electronic media establishments in Maiduguri, the Borno State Capital: Borno Radio (BR), Borno State Television (BSTV) and Nigerian Television Authority (NTA). The media, especially the electronic media, in their efforts to reach the "grassroots" make use of some specific languages with a view to diffusing programmes and news. Their ultimate objectives are: education, entertainment, edification and enlightenment i.e.4Es (cf. Brann, 1995). The paper intends to quantify the duration of transmission in these languages thus giving the possibility of comparison. The investigation identifies that BR uses 15 languages. Among them are Hausa and Kanuri for the 4Es; English, Shuwa (Arabic) and Marghi for E1, E2, and E3; Fulfude and Bura/ Babur for E1 and E2; German and French are for E3 only. BTV uses 6 languages, Hausa, Kanuri and English (for the 4Es), Indian (Hindu) and Pidgin for E3 and Arabic (Classical) for E4. NTA also uses 6 languages. Among them Hausa, Pidgin and Indian serve for E3 and Arabic for E4.

1.0 Introduction

This paper discusses the languages used in the electronic media establishments in Maiduguri, the Borno State Capital: Borno Radio (BR), Borno State Television (BSTV) and Nigerian Television Authority (NTA). The media, especially the electronic media, in their efforts to reach the "grassroots" make use of some specific languages with a view to diffusing programmes and news. Their ultimate objectives are: education, entertainment, edification and enlightenment i.e. 4Es (cf Brann, 1995). This study is set to investigate languages used in these electronic media: (a) Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) which is a Federal Government owned media in the state, (b) the Borno Radio and (c) Borno State Television which are both state-owned media. The paper intends to quantify the duration of transmissions in these languages by these establishments thus giving the possibility of comparison.

Though each individual or group of individuals has the right to be informed in his mother tongue as specified in chapter 36 (1) of the 1979 Constitution, the electronic media find it difficult to carry out this assignment, due to the growing multi-ethnic and multi-lingual nature of cities like Maiduguri. However, in addition to English, which is the *de facto* national/official language of Nigeria and the language of intra-international communications *par excellence*, some autochthonous languages are used for the 4Es. Though English maintains its position as the language of the electronic media in the country due to its status i.e. official, the autochthonous languages are constantly dropped or changed for others. This socio-political phenomenon depends largely on the function and communicative range of the languages. Sometimes, one may think that these languages are added just to absorb political pressures or because their speakers hold important positions or posts in the state. For instance languages like Dera, Joghode etc, which are used in Radio Borno are not demographically significant in terms of their speakers in the state. This socio-political linguistic fact leads to a greater number of languages ever found used on air. Brann (1982) observes that more than one hundred languages are used on air in Nigeria alone.

Constitutionally, this number is even small as each state in the northern part of the country has more than one hundred languages or thereabout. For instance, in Chapter 8 of the Cultural Policy of Nigeria (CPN), 8.2.2., it is stipulated that "the state shall promote .... the production of programmes in Nigerian languages." Whatever the case, the aim of the media is to reach as much as possible the "grassroots." This can be perfectly done with the use of strong lingua francas or "network languages" which are significant in terms of their demographic strength. But language use in the media may be seen as a political affair, as Brann (1995) argues thus "as an essentially centralised service of government, the development of language use in Broadcasting has followed closely the pattern of administration (Mackay (1964), Ladele et. al.(1979)". Bura, Bade, Fulfulde, Hausa, Kanuri, Marghi, Shuwa (Arabic), Bole, Ngamo, Ngizim, Karekare, Waha (Laamang) and Wandala, (Mandara), were among the languages formerly used by the media in the state. Presently the station uses 12 (twelve) Hausa, English, Kanuri, Guduf, Fulfulde, Babur, Shuwa (Arabic) Marghi, Mandara, Joghode, Waha and Dera in addition to French and German which are used for only entertainment in terms of exchange.

programmes, and classical Arabic which is used for editification. Thus we can observe that some languages like Karekare, Ngizim, Ngamo, Bole and Bade are no more used, probably because their speakers belong to the newly neighbouring state i.e. Yobe State. Some other languages like Joghode, Guduf and Dera are used instead. This paper on language use in the media shall take into cognisance the ethno-linguistic composition of area of broadcast, which is dynamic in terms of ethnic and linguistic compositions. It is sociolinguistically pertinent to look into not only the languages used in the media, but also the purposes they are used for and the frequency of their use as either federal-owned or state-owned. That reflects in a way the government's language policy and planning. For instance some languages like Guduf, Mandara, Joghode, Waha and Dera are used for only education, while others like Fulfulde, Shuwa (Arabic), Marghi are used for education, entertainment and edification, whereas Hausa, English, Kanuri are used for all the 4Es in Radio Borno, where efforts are to represent as many autochthonous languages as possible. In the Nigerian Television Authority and Borno State Television, the linguistic pictures are very different.

1.1 Historical Background

Though this study is synchronic in nature, reference to historical facts is with a view to understanding and having a clear picture of the present sociolinguistic situation in the media establishments in Maiduguri which reflects implicitly or explicitly government's language policy and planning. Maiduguri was established in 1907. Soon after its creation in 1925, Seidensticker (1984) observes that it consisted of 5 wards with a total population of 15,000 inhabitants. Through the years the city developed to an ethno-linguistic complex with 49 wards or thereabout (the figure is yet to be confirmed by the authorities with the creation of Jere L.G.A that cuts across the city). The population of the city is about one million in habitants. Historically, many factors contributed to the ethno-linguistic development of the city as an urban centre. There are six periods that marked this development: (a) from 1907 – 1914 which is the period from its creation to the First World War (WW1). The city was then a recruitment centre hosting various ethnic groups within and across Nigeria borders, (b) from 1914 – 1938, the period from the WW1 to the WW2, (c) from1939

–1959, the period from the WW2 to independence, (d) from 1960-1966, the period from Independence to the nomination of the city as the capital of North-Eastern State (NES), (e) 1967-1978 the period from the nomination of the city as the capital of NES to the nomination of the city as the capital of Borno State and (f) 1979 to date when the city acquired its full metropolitan features.

These periods witnessed an influx of people in search of education and/or employment opportunities, because of which the city grows ethno-linguistically complex. This sociolinguistic fact affects the electronic media establishments in the discharge of their duty, which is summarily to cater for the 4Es. The constant changes in the ethno-linguistic and administrative compositions require changes in the language use in order to reach the "grassroots" as much as possible. The Borno Broadcasting House, as it was called, dates back to 1954 during the British colonial administration. The station aimed at re-broadcasting news from Lagos and Kaduna in four (4) languages: English, Kanuri, Hausa and Fulfulde. This continued until 1970 when the station had its first medium wave transmitter which marked the beginning of local programmes and news carried in 13 languages: English, Kanuri, Hausa, Fulfulde, Shuwa (Arabic), Babur, Marghi, Dera, Bade, Bole, Ngizim, Karekare and Guduf. Since then more indigenous languages have been used. The Corporation changed its name from Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) to Borno Radio Corporation (BRC). In addition to BRC, the Borno State Television (BSTV) was established in 1983. In 1984 the two media houses i.e. the BRC and the BSTV were merged to form the Borno Radio and Television (BRTV). In addition to these two media houses, in 1977 the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) (federal owned media) was established. Whereas the two (state owned) media establishments use more and more local languages, the NTA uses few but far ranging languages i.e. languages of intra – and inter-national communications. It is observed that not only the language use varies from one media establishment to another, but also the contents and length of transmissions.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

This paper is aimed at:

a) Identifying the languages used in the electronic media in Maiduguri i.e. RB, BTV and NTA.
b) Identifying which language(s) is/are used for what purpose(s) i.e. entertainment, education, enlightenment, and edification, in these media houses.
c) Computing the duration(s) of transmissions in these languages in a week, quarter and year.
d) Determining the percentage of language use in the media stations.

The results are aimed at providing answers to the question of which language or languages is/are used in which station(s) for what purpose and for how long etc.

1.3 Methodology

The data consist of the programme schedules of the electronic media establishments under investigation i.e. BR, BTV and NTA for the year 1997 which are classified according to (a) the language used for the transmissions,(b) the purpose(s) i.e. the Es. (c) the durations of the programmes of each quarter are computed thus week/quarter durations for the 4 quarters of each media establishment. (d) the percentages of the durations of the use are also determined. For the sake of illustration, we provide the *modus operandi* of the computations, which differ from one media to another due to the difference in the length of transmissions per day etc.

a. The total duration of a week transmissions for the BRTV is 3,300 mns. While that of one quarter, which is 90 days, is obtained as follows:

$$\frac{3300 \times 90}{7} = 42428 \text{ mns} = 707.14 \text{ hours}$$

The percentage of a quarter's transmissions in obtained thus:

$$\frac{TX \times 100}{42428}$$ Where TX is the total quarter duration of transmissions in a language.

b. The total duration of a week's transmissions for NTA is 3515 mns. Thus the quarter duration is obtained as follows:

$$\frac{3515 \times 90}{7} = 45192 \text{ mns} = 753.21 \text{ hours}$$

The percentage of a quarter's transmissions is obtained thus:

$$\frac{T \times 100}{45192}$$

c. A day's duration of transmissions of BR is 19 hours equivalent to 1140 mns/day. Thus one quarter is:

$$1140 \times 90 = 102600 \text{ mns} = 1710 \text{ hours.}$$

d. The percentage of the duration of transmissions in a quarter is:

$$\frac{T \times 100}{102600}$$

These procedures i.e. a, b, c, d presented above are used with a view to obtaining the week/quarter durations and percentages of languages used in each of the three stations.

2.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

In this section we intend to present and interpret the data which consist of languages(s) used and their durations for the purpose(s) i.e. 4Es of the three electronic media under investigation BTV, BR and NTA. The durations are computed in minutes for convenience. For ease of presentation and interpretation we intend to consider the media establishments one after the other.

a) Borno Television (BTV)

In this media establishment, six (6) languages are used: Hausa, Kanuri, English, which are used for all the 4Es. Indian (Hindu) and Pidgin, are used for E3 and Arabic (classical), is used for E4. It is observed that Pidgin is reflected only in the 2nd and 4th quarters. It is used with a weekly duration of 30 mns, about 0.5 hours and quarterly duration of 385mns about 6.41 hours. Though Indian is also used for E3 i.e. films, it is featured in all the four quarters with a weekly duration that differs from one quarter to another, due to the length of the films played. Arabic (classical) is used for only E4 that features in the 3rd quarter. Hausa, Kanuri and English are used for all the 4Es with weekly and quarterly durations that vary from week to week and quarter to quarter. For the sake of illustration, we provide the summary of the languages used in the station and the durations of transmissions for the 4Es in the 4 quarters here below:

Quarter	Purpose	Languages (LL)						
		H	K	E	I	P	A	O
1st	E1	178	190	370	-	-	-	-
	E2	211	289	688	-	-	-	-
	E3	120	219	570	164	-	-	-
	E4	150	60	90	-	-	-	-
	Total Week	659	758	1718	164			
	Total Quarter	8486	9358	22089	2121	-	-	
	%	20	23	52	5			
2nd	E1	172	177	180				
	E2	280	184	720				
	E3	80	130	518	120	30		
	E4	120	120	115				
	Total week	655	661	1533	120	30	-	-

	Total Quarter	8421	8501	19721	1542	385	-	-
	%	21.83	22.06	51.13	4	1	-	-
3rd	E1	150	115	150	-	-	-	-
	E2	130	130	645	-	-	-	-
	E3	160	160	825	135	-	-	-
	E4	180	160	30	-	-	30	-
	Total week	620	565	1650	135	-	30	-
	Total Quarter	7971	7264	21217	1735	-	385	-
	%	20.66	18.83	55.01	4.5	-	1	-
4th	E1	200	165	165	-	-	-	-
	E2	280	350	660	-	-	-	-
	E3	60	190	135	135	30	-	30
	E4	220	230	120	-	-	-	-
	Total week	790	935	1080	135	30	-	-
	Total Quarter	10159	12021	13885	1735	385	-	385
	%	26.34	31.16	36	4.5	1	-	1

FIG. I: Summary of LL and durations of transmissions in BTV.

Keys: H=Hausa, K = Kanuri, E = English, I = Indian, P=Pidgin, A = Arabic, 0 = Others (African), E1= Education, E2 = Enlightenment, E3 = Entertainment, E4 = Edification, LL = Languages.

From the chart presented above, we can observe that the longest duration in the 1st quarter is English with 1,718 mns/week about 26.63 hours/week and 22,089 mns per quarter about 365.15 hours/quarter, followed by Kanuri with about 758 mns/week

about 12.63 hours/week and 9358 mns /week and Hausa with 8486 mns/quarter about 141.43 hours/quarter. In the 2nd quarter, English maintained its percentage of use, which is 51.13% as against 52% in the first quarter. The longest duration of English is for E2 with 688 mns/week about 11.46 hours/week in the first quarter while in the 2nd, the use increases to 720mns/week about 12 hours/week. The percentage of English increases to 55.01% in the 3rd quarter followed by Hausa with 20.66%. This percentage drops to 36% in the 4th quarter followed by Hausa with 26.34%. Other languages (African) is introduced for 30 mns/week about 0.5. English in the 4th quarter is followed by Kanuri with 31.16% then Hausa with 26.34%.

b. Radio Borno (RB)

The State Government as pointed out above equally owns this electronic media establishment. It uses 15 languages: Hausa, Kanuri, are for all 4Es, Guduf for E1 only, Fulfulde for E1 and E2, Bura/Babur for E1 and E2. Shuwa (Arabic) for E1, E2 and E4, Marghi for E1, E2 and E4, Mandara used for E1 only French and German for E3. Joghode for E1, Arabic (classical) for E4 only, Waha for E1and Dera also for E1. In this media, many local languages (i.e state languages) are used with a view to reaching the "grassroots". Guduf, Joghode, Waha and Dera, which are used for E1 have each 60mns/week about 1hour/week and 771 mns/quarter about 12.85 hours/quarter. In E2, English has the longest duration in 1st to 3rd quarters and is not used for E4 in this media establishment. For the sake of illustration we provide the summary of languages used in the media establishment with their duration of transmissions.

From the summary chart presented in the Appendix we can deduce that the duration of transmissions varies according to languages and quarters. It can be noticed also that English is not used for E4. This is due to the fact that matters related to E4 are transmitted in the "State languages" aimed at reaching the "grassroots". The longest duration for E2 is reflected against English with about 1245mns/week ~20.75 hours/week followed by Hausa with about 1030mns/week ~ 1716 hours/week, 1030mns/week ~1716 hours/week in the 1st quarter. In the 2nd a long duration is recorded against Kanuri for E3 with about 1380 mns/week ~23 hours/week. It can also be observed that English has the longest duration for E2 with about 1258

mns/week ~20.96 hours/week in the 2nd quarter. English still maintained the longest duration for E2 in the 3rd quarter with about 1220mns/week ~ 20.33 hours/week followed by Hausa with about 840 mns/week ~14 hours/week. Kanuri has a long duration for E3 in the 3rd quarter with about 1003mns/week ~16.71. In the 4th quarter, Kanuri has the longest duration for E3 with about 1000 mns/week ~ 16.66 hours/week. It is noticed that Guduf, Joghode, Waha and Dera are used for E1 only, with a weekly duration of 60mns/week = 1 hour/week and 771 mns/quarter ~ 12.85 hours/quarter in all the quarters. However, the duration of Dera drops to 30mns/week~ 0.5 hours/week and 385 mns/quarter ~ 6.41 hours/quarter in the 3rd quarter while that of Joghode drops in the 4th quarter with the same duration. The highest percentage of use is reflected against Hausa with 33.28% in the 1st quarter with about 34145 mns/quarter ~ 569.08 hours/quarter followed by Kanuri with 30.9% in the 2nd quarter with 3171 mns/quarter ~ 528.63 hours/quarter. In the 3rd and 4th quarters, Kanuri has the highest percentage of 28.68% with about 29430 mns /quarter ~490.5 hours/quarter in the 3rd quarter; and 29.93% with about 30715 hours/quarter ~ 511.91 hours/quarter in the 4th quarter. It is followed by Hausa with 28.57% with 29313 mns/quarter ~488.55 hours/quarter in the 3rd quarter and 27.31% with 28 mns/quarter ~ 467.13 hours/quarter in the 4th quarter. The use of English is generally low. The highest percentage of the use of English is reflected against the 2nd quarter with 24.28% with about 24917 mns/quarter ~ 415.28 hours/quarter. The percentage dropped slightly in the 1st quarter with 23.88% and 23.18% in the 3rd and 23.19% in the 4th. The percentages of Fulfulde, Babur, Shuwa (Arabic), Marghi and Mandara are generally low because they are used for E2. French and German which are used for only E3, also have low percentages of 0.75% in all the quarters with 60mns/week =1hour/week and 771 mns/quarter ~ 12.85 hours/quarter. This low percentage justifies the fact that they are meant for special exchange programmes between Radio France Internationale (RFI) and Radio Deutsche Welle.

c. Nigerian Television Authority (NTA)

The Federal Government owns this media establishment unlike the previous. It uses Hausa, Kanuri and English for all the Es, Pidgin for only E3, Arabic (classical) for E4 and Indian for E3. Pidgin is featured only in the 1st and 3rd quarters. In this media establishment, English has the longest duration for almost all the Es. This is due to

the wide communicative range of the language and its function for vertical communication in the country. The low duration of English is reflected against E4 with 30 mns/week ~ 0.5 hours/week in all the quarters. Generally the use of Kanuri is lower than Hausa for all the quarters and 4Es. This shows that Hausa has more duration than Kanuri which is a "local language". Arabic (classical) has the lowest duration of 35mns/week ~ 0.58 hours/week in all the quarters followed by Pidgin with 60 mns/week = 1 hour/week and 771 mns/quarter ~12.85 hours/quarter. For the sake of illustration we present the summary of durations of transmissions in NTA.

Quarter	Purpose	Languages (LL)					
1st		H	K	E	P	A	I
	E1	120	60	180	-	-	-
	E2	110	110	1090	-	-	-
	E3	180	60	1130	60	-	155
	E4	100	60	30	-	35	-
	Total week	545	290	2430	60	35	155
	Total Quarter	7007	3728	31242	771	450	1992
	%	15.50	8.25	69.13	1.70	0.99	4.40
2nd	E1	110	60	150	-	-	-
	E2	165	110	1090	-	-	-
	E3	170	70	1140	-	-	155
	E4	140	70	30	-	35	-
	Total week	585	310	2410	-	35	155
	Total Quarter	7521	3985	30985	-	450	1492
	%	16.64	8.81	68.58	-	0.99	4.40

3rd	E1	130	60	200	-	-	-
	E2	125	110	1080	-	-	-
	E3	215	50	1000	60	-	155
	E4	140	30	30	-	35	-
	Total week	615	240	2310	60	35	155
	Total Quarter	7907	3085	29700	771	450	1992
	%	17.49	6.82	65.71	1.70	0.99	4.40
4th	E1	125	75	285	-	-	-
	E2	145	125	1220	-	-	-
	E3	175	80	645	-	-	155
	E4	150	70	30	-	35	-
	Total week	695	350	2280	-	35	155
	Total Quarter	8948	4500	29314	-	450	1992
	%	19.80	9.95	64.86	-	0.99	4.40

Fig. 3: Summary of Durations of transmissions in NTA
Keys: H = Hausa, K = Kanuri, E = English, P = Pidgin, A =Arabic, I = Indian

From the chart presented above we can observe that English has the longest durations in the 3Es except for E4 whereby only 30mns about 0.5 hours/week is reflected in all the 4 quarters. This is connected with the fact that Hausa and Kanuri serve the purpose specified in chapters 36 (1) and 8 (8.2.2) of the 1979 Constitution of Nigeria. This media establishment uses few languages for its services taking into cognisance the communicative range of the languages. English as a *de facto* national and official language is aimed at capturing audiences that cut across the nation while Hausa is for regional and Kanuri is for local purposes. Thus the media operates a sort of "Triglotic Configuration" (cf Brann (1980). Averagely, English has 67.70% with

12.1241mns ~ 2020.68 hours in all the 4 quarters with an average of 30310 mns/quarter ~ 505.17 hours/quarter. Hausa is coming next with 17.35% about 31383 mns ~523.05 hours in all the 4 quarters with an average of 7845 mns/quarter ~ 130.76 hours/quarter. Out of the 3 languages i.e. Hausa, English, and Kanuri, the last has the least average percentage of about 8.45% = 15298 mns ~254.96 hours in all quarters with an average of 38.24 mns ~63.74 hours/quarter. The other languages i.e. Pidgin and Indian which are used for E3 and Arabic used for E4 have very low percentages because they are used for special purposes. Arabic has an average percentage of 0.99%, 7.5 hours/quarter. Indian has 4.46% =1992 mns ~ 33.2 hours/quarter and Pidgin has 1.7%, 771 mns/quarter ~ 12.85 hours/quarter.

3.0 Summary and Conclusion

This investigation which is aimed at analysing the language use in the electronic media in Maiduguri, Borno state capital - BTV, NTA and BR, identifies that RB uses 15 languages out of which Hausa and Kanuri are used for all the 4Es while English is used for E1, E2, and E3. This station does not transmit programmes related to E4 in English, the programmes related to E4 are rather transmitted in "local languages". In addition to Hausa, Kanuri and English this station i.e. RB uses Guduf, Mandara, Joghode, Waha and Dera for E1 only and Fulfulde, Shuwa (Arabic) and Marghi for E1, E2, and E4, Babur for E1 and E2, German and French for E3 as exchange programmes and Arabic (classical) for E4. The use of many languages in this station, which is state owned is in conformity with the Decree Number 8.2.2 of 1979 Constitution of Nigeria, which is aimed at promoting indigenous (local) languages. Though languages like Hausa and English are not native languages of the state, their use reflects their function as strong lingua francas in the State whereby non-indigenes use them at various levels. Arabic is also a non-native language but it is used for religious purposes as the state is predominantly Islamic. French and German are used for special exchange programmes like Indian and Pidgin, which are used for E3 i.e., films, dramas etc. Arabic is used exclusively for E4. In this station, English has a percentage of 24.82% of use in all the 4 quarters with about 9,699 mns ~ 1616.53/hours of transmissions. The highest percentage of transmissions in English is reflected against E2 because of the network programmes which are hooked up from

the Headquarters in Abuja with an average of 1180 mns/week ~ 19.67 hours/week. In this station, Hausa has the highest average percentage of about 29.67 with 121827 mns ~2030.45/hour of transmissions in all the 4 quarters. Its average percentage of transmissions in E2 is equally high with about 2669 mns ~ 44.48 hours. Kanuri which is one of those languages which have high percentages of transmissions has an average of 121247mns ~ 2020.78 hours of transmissions in all the 4 quarters. The highest transmission is in E3 with an average of 1115 mns ~ 1858 hours/week and an average percentage of 29.54% of transmissions. Other languages i.e Guduf, Fulfulde, Babur, Maghi, Joghode, Waha, Shuwa, and Dera, which are equally used, have low percentages of transmissions because they are used for either E1 or E2. Few of them e.g. Fulfulde, Shuwa and Marghi are used for E4.

In BTV, which is also, a state owned station the linguistic situation is quite different. The station uses 6 languages: Hausa, Kanuri, Arabic, (classical) English, Pidgin and Indian. As in BR Pidgin and Indian are exclusively used for E3 while Arabic is used exclusively for E4. Here, Hausa, Kanuri and English are used for all the purposes i.e. 4Es. The highest percentage of transmissions is in English with an average of 48.53% with about 74.815 mns ~ 1245.91 hours in all the 4 quarters. Similarly, the highest duration of transmissions is reflected in E2 with an average of 2368 mns/week ~39.46 hours/week. Kanuri follows English with an average percentage of 23.75% having 36593 mns. duration of transmissions in all the 4 quarters ~ 609.88 hours with an average of 152.47 hours/quarter. Hausa has an average percentage of 22.20% of transmissions with 103,693 mns ~ 1728.231 hours in all the 4 quarters, making an average of 432.05 hours/quarter. Indian and Pidgin have low percentages of transmissions.

Language use in the media establishments especially the electronic media should take into consideration the function and high communicative range of languages with the view to reaching the "grassroots". Though socio-political background behind a language affects such language's policy in the electronic media, it is considered as unfortunate with our linguistic situation which is highly multilingual and multi-ethnic since the change in political position may affect the language use in the electronic media.



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