AN ASSESSMENT OF LEVEL OF LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF EGGON LANGUAGE OF NASARAWA STATE

BY

SULEIMAN ADAMU SARVI

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Department of African Languages and Cultures,

Faculty of Arts,

Ahmadu Bello University,

Zaria, Nigeria

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the work in this thesis titled **"**An Assessment of Level of Language Endangerment in Nigeria: A Study of Eggon Language of Nasarawa State" was Performed by me in the Department of African Languages and Cultures, under the supervision of Professor Munir Mamman, Dr. Magaji Yakawada Tsoho and Dr. Salisu Garba Kargi. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this work has been presented for another degree or diploma at any institution.

Suleiman Adamu Sarbi _____ Date: _____

Certification

This thesis titled **"**An Assessment of Level of Language Endangerment in Nigeria: A Study of Eggon Language of Nasarawa State" meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) of the Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

Professor Munir Mamman Chairman, Supervisory Committee	_____ Signature	_____ Date
Dr. Magaji Yakawada Tsoho Member, Supervisory Committee	_____ Signature	_____ Date
Dr. Salisu Garba Kargi Member, Supervisory Committee	_____ Signature	_____ Date
Dr. Balarabe Abdullahi Head of Department	_____ Signature	_____ Date
Prof. Kabir Bala Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies	_____ Signature	_____ Date

Dedication

The work is dedicated to my parents, may their soul rest in perfect peace, Amin Thumma Amin.

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Abstract

The contribution of the study is to investigate and find out whether Eggon Language of Nasarawa State is endangered, the degree of its endangerment, factors responsible for its endangerment and whether the endangerment is reversible. It contains five chapters with chapter one as general introduction which contains the Statement of the problem, the aim and objective of the study, research questions, justification of the study, the scope, basic assumptions and significance of the study. In chapter two, the related literatures have been reviewed in which general observations on the review and the ground for the present study have been provided. Chapter three contains issues on the research methodology in which a part from the library work, three hundred and eighty one (381) questionnaires has been filled by equal number of respondents and the same number has been interviewed, as informants, in collecting the data of the research. Area and population samples have been determined and the latter has been based on 381 respondents for a total population of 50,000 – 52,000 etc. The chapter also discloses the theoretical framework of the study, its assessment and the justification for using it in the present study as the pioneer work that has empirically tested the framework. After ascertaining the endangerment of Eggon, the work has endeavoured to discover the degree of the endangerment of the language and has been found to be severely endangered. The research has also discussed that the intergenerational language use of the Eggon, and the negative attitude of the native speakers towards the language have been discovered the major factors that have initiated and hastened the endangerment of the language. However, the endangerment has been found to be reversible as the language is not extinct. It is still spoken by some generations and transmitted by some parents. Finally, the research recommends that, to revitalize the language, there is an urgent need to document and standardize the language and adequate pedagogical, grammatical and literary materials should be provided.

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Definitions of Technical Terms

The following are some of the operational concepts**:**

Bilingualism – is a phenomenon that devotes to the study of production, processing and comprehension of two languages (Bhatia, 2014:1).

Code-mixing– is thus a sign of deficiency in, or ignorance of, one of the languages in contact (Ahukanna, 1990:179).

Code-switching – is the occurrence of forms from one language (called the embedded language) in an utterance that is primarily composed of another language (called the matrix language) within the same conversation (Landweer, 2013:3 of 10).

Critically endangered – is a language used by very few speakers all 70 years old and older, great-grandparent age (Grimes, 2013:9).

Definitely endangered – is the language that is no longer learnt as a mother tongue by children at home (Hornsby, 2013:4).

Deprived language **–** a deprived language is one which declines as a result of domination (Fakuade, 1999:59 and Bangboshe, 2003).

Developed Language – is a language with well established orthographies, standard written varieties, long traditions of writing, large and varied corpora of

written literature among other types of texts and sophisticated and dynamic meta-language (Chukwu, 2005:177).

Developing Language – is the one that has only a recent history of writing (Chukwu, 2005:177).

Dialect – in a popular usage, the term dialect refers to a form of a language that is regarded as sub-standard, incorrect or corrupt as opposed to the standard or pure form of a language (Wardhaugh, 2000:276).

Diglossia – is a situation where two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community with each having a definite role (Yakasai, 1999:XV1).

Domain – a socio-cultural construct abstracted from topics of communication relationships between communicators, and locales of communication in accord with the institutions of a society and the spheres of speech community (Fishman, 1972 in Landweer, 2013:3).

Dominated Language – is a language that is gradually being replaced in its basic domains by a language of wider communication.

Dormant language – is the language that no longer has any fully proficient L1 users but has an ethnic community that associates itself with it and view the language as a symbol of that community's identity (Lewis & Simon, 2013:2).

Endangered language - an endangered language may simply be one that has not been, or is only poorly described (Fakuade, 1999:59).

Eroding Language – is the language that is spoken only by some children and older people, while others do not speak it (Grimes, 2013:9).

Extinct language – an extinct language no longer has any fully proficient L1 users and is no longer claimed by any extent community as the language of their heritage identity. Therefore extinct languages are lacking in both users and social uses (Lewis & Simon, 2013:2).

Globalization – is simply the domination of the world system by the West, led by the United States of America in a unipolar world where there is no other rivals power to challenge its hegemony. One of the strongest manifestations of globalization is the internet, which is English mediated and English dominated (Jibril, 2005).

Indigenous languages – indigenous languages here refer to Nigerian languages which are neither international languages nor official languages of the Nigerian nation (Omego, 2005:199).

In-group language – is the language used for basic face to face relationship. Examples include regional or social dialects such as age group dialects (Dogo, 1985 in Yakasai, 1999:XV11).

Language Attrition – is a gradual, at times, unnoticed disintegration of the structure of a language in contact situations. The contact situations vary but at its extreme attrition may result to language death since it is no possible to keep a language without getting it exercised (Fabunmi and Salawu, 2007:261).

Language Codification – is the language modernization techniques involving the development of dictionaries, textbooks and literature books (Ikara, 1987:7).

Language Engineering – is that domain of applied linguistics concerned with the design and implementation of strategies (i.e.) the conscious and deliberate steps) towards the rehabilitation and optimal utilization of individual languages. In fact, it is the mechanism of language planning that recognizes problems and proceeds to 'engineer' solutions to such problems (Capo, 1990:1).

Language Graphization – is a language modernization technique involving the development of writing system (Ikara, 1987:7).

Language Modernization – the term "modernization," it generally connotes the expansion of the lexicon, i.e. the creation and adoption of new words in order to enable the language cope with the demands of abstract and precise notions needed in philosophy, law, science and technology. The same applies to 'development' except that this may not be restricted vocabulary items (Capo, 1990:1).

Language planning – is a government authorized long term sustained and conscious effort to alter a language – It is a deliberate attempt in resolving language related problems necessary for the development of a particular language (Dada, 2011:75).

Language Revitalization – is the attempt by interested parties to halt or reverse the decline of a language or to revive an extinct one (Pikawi, 2014:92).

Language Situation – is the total configuration of language use at a given time and place including such data as how many and what kind of languages are spoken in the area by how many people under what circumstances and what the attitudes and beliefs about languages held by the members of the community are (Bleambo, 1990:186).

Language Standardization – Is the selection of basic standard. By this is meant the specific regional lect thought to be central enough to be accepted by the other dialects speakers. This basic standard is then codified and later enlarged to other dialects (Capo, 1990:5).

Lingua franca – is any language used for communication between groups who have no other language in common (Omego, 2005:201).

Linguistics – is the science dealing with the origin, structure, history, regional variations and phonetic attributes of language (Webster's, 1988:296).

Linguistic Assimilation **–** is the belief that, everyone, regardless of origin, should learn the dominant language of the society (Wardhaugh, 2000:347).

Linguistic Pluralism – is the recognition of more than one language. It takes a variety of forms. It can be territorially based or individually based, or there may be some combination of the two. It can be complete or partial so that all or some aspects of life can be conducted in more than one language in a society (Wardhaugh, 2000:348).

Living languages – These are languages featuring significant population of first language speakers (Obiero, 2010:206-207).

Media – is a powerful vector of development. Associating a language with any media is a powerful way of enhancing the vitality of such language, promoting its use and ensuring positive attitude towards such a language (Enwere & Uchamma, 2005:91).

Minor Languages – minor languages are those languages that have no standard orthographies, standard varieties, written literature and meta-languages and are spoken by small number of people (Bleambo, 1999:1).

Moribund language – is a severely endangered language, thus a situation where parents stop or are forced to stop speaking and teaching their children their native tongue **(**Lyam-Yisa, 2012:57).

National language – means a language that has the authority of government conferred on it as a lingua franca of all the ethnic groups in the country: as a matter of deliberate choice by the government; as a symbol of oneness, unity and nationhood and of the achievement of independence in an erstwhile colonial state (Ikara, 1987:21).

Nearly extinct language – is a language that characterizes cases with fewer than 50 speakers or a very smaller decreasing fraction of an ethnic population (Obiero, 2010:206-207).

Official language – is the language used by the government for purposes of administration, law, commerce, and education and in all other official functions (Ikara, 1987:21).

Repertoire – is a term used in sociolinguistics to refer to the range of languages or varieties of a language available for use by a speaker, each of which enables him to perform a particular social role. The term may also be applied collectively to the range of linguistic varieties within a speech community (Yakasai, 1999:XV111).

Saved Language – Language expected to be learned by all children and all others in the ethnic group (Tohono and Johnson 2002).

Severely endangered language – is a language proficiently spoken only by the oldest generation such as the grand-parents and older, while the parent

generation may understand it, but they do not speak it to the children or among themselves (Hornsby, 2013:3 of 8).

Sociolinguistics – is the study of verbal behaviour in terms of the social characteristics of speakers, their culture and the ecological properties of the environment in which they interact (Yakasai, 1999:XV111).

Speech Community – is any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction over a significant span of time and set off from other such aggregates by difference in the frequency of interaction (Yakasai, 1999:XV111).

Stable but threatened language – all children and older people are speakers, but few in number (Grimes, 2013:9).

Status planning – is concerned with the standing of one language in relation to others – it is concerned with the policy which is usually the work of politicians and bureaucrats (Dada, 2011:75).

Underdeveloped Language – Is the language that exists only in the spoken form (Chukwu, 2005:177).

Vehicular language – is a language that is used as a second language only but with no living native language speaker. It is only used for specific, restricted functions that are generally not related to any ethnic identity (Lewis & Simon, 2013:2).

Vernacularization – is the restoration or elaboration on indigenous language and its adoption as an official language (Wardhaugh, 2000:348).

Vulnerable/threatened language – is the language that is used orally by all generations but only some of the child-bearing generation are transmitting it to their children (Obiero, 2010:212).

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Language is a functional aspect of human nature that plays significant roles in the General endeavour of man. This irrespective of whether the language form is oral, written or even semiotic. It is evident that Nigeria is bestowed with linguistic variety which offers insight into cultural and psychological perspective with which people conduct their daily affairs. In this regard, Nigeria is then bestowed with various developmental opportunities through its numerous languages. Definitely, Nigeria is one of the frontline multilingual countries of the world. This is inherent in the fact that "Africa, itself, is considered to be perhaps the most multilingual continent in the world, with more languages spoken per capita than anywhere else" (Yemi, 2007:5).

Currently, the languages listed for Nigeria numbered 527 languages out of which 520 are living languages and 7 are extinct. 10, out of the living languages are non-indigenous, 20 are institutional, 78 are developing, 351 are vigorous while 27 are threatened and 44 are dying (Lewis, Simons and Fennig, 2016:1). Therefore, Nigeria is a country of many languages. This multilingual characteristic of Nigeria is definitely inherent in many states of the federation with Nasarawa State being one of them. Unfortunately, the most remarkable implications of multilingualism is the fact that it leads to the subsequent endangerment of some of the languages involved in the process which, in turn, gives birth to language extinction (Wardhaugh, 2000:98).

There are thirty six (36) states in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, including Nasarawa State, the area of this study. Among them, the areas with endangered languages are, Adamawa, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Edo, Gombe, Jigawa and Kaduna States. The rest are Kebbi, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Rivers, Taraba, Yobe States and Abuja.

Nigeria's multilingual character coupled with the fact that language as an overall curious phenomenon has made research into language relations (such as colonization, endangerment and extinction) a vogue in today's language studies in Nigeria. Ideally, the purpose of conducting a research of this kind falls between the range of understanding the nature of multilingualism, its sociolinguistic outcome and preventing or rather reversing the linguistically unpleasant consequences such as language endangerment and language death or extinction. This study selects Eggon, as one of the languages of Nasarawa State, with a view to studying language endangerment in Nigeria.

In the presentations of Kigbu (1984) and Adgidzi (1999), they said the Eggon oral traditions narrates that the Eggon ancestors originated from the hill country in the Far East (Egietne) where their founder (Eggon) first dwelled and practiced traditional religion (Ashum Cult) and traditional farming. Some Eggon ancestors shifted to a place called Ngazargamu in the area of Lake Chad where they lived for another time using their traditional religion and agriculture. Around 11 century AD, some Eggon ancestors moved from Ngazargamu to southward with Abro Agbi as the leader, and

his brothers Jade Oka and Ambina. They settled in Kwararrafa, a place east of present Wukari town. During their stay, they faced epidemic problem that led to the death of some of them. Consequently, some Eggons had to migrate from the area to south east direction until they reach river Arikya. There, Jade Oka, Ambina and some others crossed the river to another settlement called Wamba while Abro, his family and some others moved to the west of the river and established a town of Ogba (Arugba) east of present Shabu town in Lafia local government area.

At the middle of 11th century AD, Abro and his team moved next to a new settlement called Angro. He had chosen the area for defence mechanism. In the new settlement, Abro gave birth to three sons, Anzo, Abe and Offo from the most beloved wife. After some time, he also had another son in person of Ehwlo (Eholo) from another wife. According to other traditions, Ehwlo (Eholo) was, for one reason or the other, the adopted son of Abro. Now, whatever the case, Abro was more affectionate to his three sons of the most beloved wife than the other son, adopted or otherwise, which created some enmity and personal hatred between the two sides. The most considerable part of the scene was that, when Abro reached oldest age, he trusted most of his precious property to the sons of the beloved wife and Ehwlo (Eholo) discriminated. For that reason, Ehwlo (Eholo) became angry and attempted killing Abro. The dichotomy in Abro's family gave birth to the two sub-tribal divisions of Anzo and Eholo. From there, hostilities continued, from time to time, between the two sides. God so kind Eggon were bestowed with a centre forum called "Eggon Federation Council of Elders of Peace" situated in Ogako in Ekudugba Clan. This council of Elders of Peace

was a neutral entity and was responsible for resolving any misunderstanding between Anzo and Eholo. All together, Kigbu (1984:V11) gathered two versions from his informants of Eggon origin thus: first, that Eggon came from South-East and second, that they were from Borno. However, the study directly disagreed with the later version and therefore provided probable alternatives thus: They could not be beyond the Niger-Benue confluence as the linguistic evidence seems to suggest or as the tradition itself signifies, they may just be a mixture of different ethnic groups as a societal necessity. Kigbu states further, that the issue of the Eggon origin rests unresolved.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Sociolinguistic researches, especially those on language endangerment across the world, have been conducted by scholars such as Kay Williamson (1999), Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006), Tohono and Johnson (2002), Miyaoka (2002) Obiero (2010), Hornsby (2013), Landweer (2013), Lewis, (2013), Michael (2013) and Gloria (2013) among others. Some Nigerians such as Emenanjo (1999), Fakuade (1999), Kuju (1999), Ugwuoke (1999), Bleambo (1999), Ugorji (2007), Roseline Ndimele (2007), Fabunmi (2007), Fabunmi and Salawu (2007), and Lyam-Yisa (2012) as well as Haruna (2005a & b, 2006 and 2014) have made recognizable contributions on the issue of language endangerment. All the works mentioned above have been conducted on language endangerment and endangered languages in and outside Nigeria. However, none of them treated language endangerment in relation to the indigenous languages of Nasarawa State, let alone the Eggon language which, specifically, is the

concern of the present study. Therefore, the present study opens up relatively new grounds in terms of area and population samples, thus subsequently filling up a gap in the study of general phenomenon of language endangerment, at the same time exposing Nasarawa State as an area of minority multilingualism and a potential multilingual research area located in the Northern part of Nigeria.

Nigeria as a whole is a multilingual country. Consequent to linguistic contact, the nature of Nigerian multilingualism is inherent in almost all the states in the Federation. Nasarawa state is among the frontline states in terms of such linguistic heterogeneity. The state is feeling the effects of such sociolinguistic phenomenon (multilingualism). Now, considering the general hypothesis in Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:1) that several scholars predict that up to 90% of the world's languages may well be replaced by dominant languages by the end of 21st Century, which would reduce the present number of almost 7'000 languages to less than 700, there is a need for scholars and researchers across the world to make the hypothesis a reality as the present study attempts to do.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

Nigeria is a multilingual country with thirty six states and the Federal Capital Territory Abuja some of which inherited such a linguistic complexity. Nasarawa State is discovered to be among the states with such heredity of Nigerian multilingualism. However, it is important to find out whether effort has been or is being made to preserve and promote the languages or abandon them to go into extinction. Because

wherever there is language contact, there will be bilingualism which manifests in code-switching and eventual language shift which is a sign of endangerment. The present work therefore, is directed towards assessing language endangerment, a study of the Eggon language of Nasarawa State.

The aim is to study the current sociolinguistic situation of Eggon and the objectives of the study are to investigate and find out whether: the Eggon language is endangered the degree of its endangerment, the factors (external and internal) initiating and hastening its endangerment, and whether the endangerment (if any) is reversible.

1.4 Research Questions

As a guide to the researcher and for the research to have a focus the following research questions have been employed:

a) Is Eggon really endangered?

b) If Eggon is really endangered, what is the degree of the endangerment?

c) What are the factors initiating and hastening the endangerment of Eggon?

d) What is the level of intergenerational use of the Eggon language?

e) Is the endangerment of Eggon reversible through revitalization programmes?

1.5 Justification of the Study

In relation to Eggon community, their language is selected, for this study out of all the indigenous languages of Nasarawa State based on the considerations that:

a) They are the major indigenous community in the state.
b) Some researches have been conducted on some aspects of the life of Eggons without any study on the endangerment of the language despite the fact that many points explored by sociolinguists to be factors for language endangerment affect it.

1.6 The Scope of the Study

The study investigates the issue of language endangerment as it affects Eggon language of Nasarawa state, with greater emphasis on intergenerational language use and transmission. The scope of this study is limited to the assessment on the endangerment of the Eggon language of Nasarawa State, and therefore, no revitalization effort such as documentation and/or description of the language is consisted. The study, also, specifically confines itself to Eggon community within Nasarawa State, not in Diaspora and from 2005 – 2015.

1.7 Basic Assumptions of the Study

This study is concerned with investigating Eggon language of Nasarawa State in relation to language endangerment. For the purpose of authentic investigation and presentation of justifiable results, the study hereby forms the following assumptions:

a) The most remarkable implications of multilingualism is the fact that it leads to the subsequent endangerment of the languages involved in the process which in turn gives birth to language extinction (Wardhaugh 2000:98). Therefore, it is assumed that the Eggon language of Nasarawa state is endangered.

b) Languages are classified according to the degree of their endangerment, especially in relation to intergenerational language transmission level (Krauss 1992 in Gloria 2013:1). Therefore, it is assumed that certain degree of endangerment that has affected Eggon is of critical proportion.

c) According to Dawulung (1999:32) there are many languages that each has the right to exist. How they exist depends on a number of factors. It is assumed that the Eggon language is endangered through various factors.

d) The deciding factor for predicting the degree of danger affecting language or the feasibility of its revitalization is not a mere number of speakers. Many conditions (including national policies) can influence a language's fate, but first and foremost is the question of whether children are learning the language of their parents and grandparents as a native language and using it on a daily bases, (Miyaoka (2002:3). It is assumed that the Eggon language is not adequately used and not learnt formally.

e) A language is endangered when it is on a path toward extinction. Without documentation, a language that is extinct can never be revived, (Tohono and Johnson, 2002:2). Even though language endangerment is, in most cases, a natural phenomenon, it is assumed that the endangerment of the Eggon language is reversible through revitalization programmes.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The present study is significant as it might lead to the attainment of the following:

a) The study fills in the academic gap left by scholars and researchers in the sociolinguistic area of language contact, and its consequences in Nasarawa State.

b) The study becomes a reference material for sociolinguists, language teachers and students as well as those interested in sociolinguistic literature.

c) The study has some practical outcome, for instance, to motivate the Eggon Community in encouraging them, to re-empower their language or empower it further.

d) The study might stimulate the interest of other Nigerian scholars especially those of Nasarawa State provenance to undertake further research on Eggon and/or other Nasarawa State languages.

e) It is also hoped that the study serves as enlightenment for government and might therefore trigger policies on indigenous languages in general and those of Nasarawa State in particular.

1.9 Languages of Nasarawa State and Neighbouring Eggon Areas

Language	State	Location	Classification	Sources
Ake	Nasarawa	Lafia LGA. 3 villages	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, B	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:3) Sarvi (2005:50)
Alago	Nasarawa	Awe and Lafia LGAs	Benue-Congo, Idomoid,	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:4) Sarvi (2005:44)

Alumu-Tesu/ Arum-Cesu,	Nasarawa	Akwanga LGA, near Wamba.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Alumic.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:5) Sarvi (2005:49)
Bu/Nakere	Nasarawa	Akwanga LGA. 4 villages	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, A	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:14) Sarvi (2005:51)
Eggon	Nasarawa	Nasarawa Egon, Akwanga, Wamba, Lafia, Awe, Doma, Obi, Keana, Keffi, Kokona, and Karu LGAs; Nassarawa and Toto LGAs.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, B	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:23) Sarvi (2005:33)
Eloyi	Nasarawa Benue	Nasarawa LGAs; Agatu LGA, Benue river areas.	Benue-Congo, Idomoid	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:25) Sarvi (2005:39)
Gade	Nasarawa Abuja Capital Territory	Nasarawa and Toto LGAs Abuja Municipal Area Council and Kuje LGA.	Benue-Congo, Nupoid,	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:30) Sarvi (2005:47)
Gwandara	Nasarawa	Keffi, Lafia, Nasarawa, and Akwanga LGAs;	Afro-Asiatic, Chadic, West, A, A.1.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:35) Sarvi (2005:37)
Hasha/Yashi	Nasarawa	Wamba and Akwanga LGAs	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, B.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:36) Sarvi (2005:49)
Lijili	Nasarawa	Awe and Lafia LGAs.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Southern	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:59) Sarvi (2005:36)
Mada	Nasarawa Kaduna	Akwanga and Nasarawawa-Eggon LGAs; Jama'a LGA on southern border; Kaura LGA.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, A.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:61) Sarvi (2005:38)

Mama/Kantana	Nasarawa	Akwanga LGA.	Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern,	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:62) Sarvi (2005:51)
Nungu/ Rendre	Nasarawa Kaduna Plateau	Wamba, Akwanga, and Nasarawa-Eggon LGAs; Sanga, Jama'a, and Kaura LGAs; Riyom and Bokkos LGAs.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, A.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:62) Sarvi (2005:45)
Agatu	Benue Nasarawa Kogi	Otukpo LGA, Agatu, Ochekwu, and Adoka districts; Awe and Nasarawa LGAs; Northeast.	Benue-Congo, Idomoid, Akweya, Etulo-Idoma, Idoma.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:2) Sarvi (2005:40)
Basa	Kogi Nasarawa Benue	Bassa and Ankpa LGAs, confluence of Niger and Benue rivers Nasarawa LGA Makurdi LGA.	Benue-Congo, Kainji, Western, Basa.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:9) Sarvi (2005:46)
Duhwa/Kerifa	Plateau Nasarawa	Barkin Ladi LGA Akwanga LGA, Kerifa village	Afro-Asiatic, Chadic, West, A, A.4, Ron Proper	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:21) Sarvi (2005:50)
Duya	Kaduna Nasarawa	Jama'a, Kagarko, and Jaba LGAs Karu LGA	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Northwestern, Koro.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:22)
Ebira	Kwara Nasarawa Edo	Okene, Okehi, and Kogi LGAs Nasarawa LGA; Akoko-Edo LGA	Benue-Congo, Nupoid, Ebira-Gade.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:22) Blench (2011:21)
Gbagyi	Kaduna Nasarawa Abuja	Kagarko, northwest Kachia, Kanuru, Igabi, Soba, Giwa, Birnin-Gwari, and Chikun LGAs, Kaduna City; Keffi, Nasarawa LGAs; Bwari, Kwali, Kuje,	Benue-Congo, Nupoid, Nupe-Gbagyi, Gbagyi-Gbari	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:31) Sarvi (2005:42)

	Capital Territory Kogi	Abuja Municipal Area Council LGAs; Kogi LGA.		
Goemai	Plateau Nasarawa	Shendam; Lafia and Awe LGAs	Afro-Asiatic, Chadic, West, A, A.3, Angas Proper	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:33) Sarvi (2005:44)
Kofyar	Plateau Nasarawa	Qua'an Pan and Mangu LGAs; Lafia LGA.	Afro-Asiatic, Chadic, West, A, A.3, Angas Proper, 1.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:52)
Koro Wachi	Kaduna Nasarawa	Kachia and Kagarko LGAs; Keffi LGA.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Northwestern, Koro.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:52)
Ninzo	Kaduna Nassarawa	Jama'a LGA; Akwanga LGA.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, A.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:70) Sarvi (2005:41)
Numana-Nunku-Gbantu-Numbu	Kaduna Nassarawa	Jamaa and Sanga LGAs; Akwanga LGA.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, A.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:71) Sarvi (2005:48)
Nyankpa	Kaduna Nassarawa	Jama'a LGA; Karu LGA.	Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Northwestern, Koro	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:72) Sarvi (2005:51)
Toro	Kaduna Nassarawa	Sanga LGA; Akwanga, Wamba, LGAs, northeast of Wamba, Turkwam village.	Benue-Congo, Plateau.	Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2016:87) Blench (2011:82)
Yeskwa	Kaduna Nasarawa	Jama'a LGA; Keffi LGA	Benue-Congo, Plateau Western Group	Sarvi (2005:42) Crozier & Blench (1992:111)
Kulere	Plateau Nasarawa	Bokkos LGA Farin Ruwa LGA	Afro-Asiatic, Chadic, West, A, A.4,	Sarvi (2005:47) Blench (2011:53)
Nakere	Nasarawa	Wamba LGA	Unclassified	Sarvi (2005:51)

Table 1 showing Languages of Nasarawa State and Neighboring Eggon Areas

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

With the phenomenon of language endangerment and death, the two have become highly significant topics. Although this has not necessarily led to significantly more documentary work being undertaken on endangered languages in Nigeria, nonetheless, a degree of endangerment has been noticed and information has been provided where recent sociolinguistic data is available (Blench 2011:V1). Despite the role of language, many of the indigenous Nigerian languages have suffered serious deprivation from the negative exogenous influences of such foreign languages as English. Many of the languages have been shifting as a result of lack of adequate usage (Enwere and Uchamma 2005:89). The work cited example with Igbo that drops seriously and suffered luck of proficiency from native speakers. Moreover, Enwere and Uchamma (2005:89) observe that many of the indigenous Nigerian languages "are at various levels of endangerment and possible extinction." This is because many of them including some of the major ones are losing ground due to increasing loss of interest in them and loss of fortune through *low* students' enrolment to study them. The researchers then cited some scholars who have observed language future endangerment with some major Nigerian languages such as Igbo and Yoruba.

This study has been concerned with Language endangerment. For easy sorting and application of the materials, the review has been divided into sub-chapters containing

materials that provide definition and/or description of language endangerment, endangered languages in Nigeria and in Nasarawa State, factors contributing to language endangerment, stages of language endangerment, assessment of language endangerment, language revitalization, justification for revitalizing endangered languages, responsibility for language revitalization, revitalization programmes and revitalized endangered languages. In the end, general observations on the review and the ground for the present study have been provided.

2.2 Language Endangerment

Linguists, language educators and of course many other scholars define language endangerment in similar and different respective ways. Among those who contribute to that respect include Hornsby (2013), Gloria (2013), Lewis et al (2013), Johnson and Tohono (2002), Miyaoka (2002) Fakuade (1999), and Kuju (1999) , Emenanjo (1999), Enwere & Uchama (2005), Jibril (2005), Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006), Lyam-Yisa (2012), and Landweer (2013).

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Hornsby (2013:1-3 of 8) asserts that, three main criteria are used as guidelines for considering a language endangered, Hornsby called them "indicators of language endangerment" thus the number of speakers currently living; the mean age of native and/or fluent speakers; and the percentage of the youngest generation acquiring fluency with the language in question. In addition to that, Hornsby (2013:1) suggests that a more complete scale would look something like that proposed by Lewis (2006) containing seven parameters of endangerment thus: age; demographics; language use;

language cultivation; development, literacy and education; status and recognition; language attitudes; and amount and quality of documentation.

Gloria (2013:1) says that, there are many ways of defining language endangerment, "the most simplistic being below some critical number of speakers, thus smaller languages are in more danger". This definition is in line with Ugwuoke (1999) who listed languages supposed to be endangered based on the numerical strength of the speakers. The work is placed on the framework of Brenzinger (2003) who defined an endangered language as "one which has less than 5,000 speakers". However, in 2006 Brenzinger came to dispell such a notion of absolute number of speakers (5,000) to the extent of citing Suruaha language with only 150 speakers but all monolingual speakers.

A language is in danger when its speakers cease to use it, 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. In addition to that, an endangered language is a language that is at risk of falling out of use as its speakers die out or shift to speaking another language (Tohono and Johnson, 2002:2, and Dorian 1980, in Gloria 2013:1).

Linguists, language educators, anthropologists and indeed other scholars express their views on the reality of language endangerment. From the historical perspective of language endangerment, Emenanjo (1999) cited Dorian's Language Death (1981),

and Investigating Obsolescence (1989) and Elmendorf's (1981) "Lost Speakers and Language Change", as among the first definitive works to draw attention to the worldwide phenomenon of language endangerment. Emenanjo (1999:78) reports krauss (1992) to, probably, be the first to point out that as many as half of the world languages may be moribund. And after a study of the worst-case scenarios, Krauss holds that it is a plausible calculation that at the rate things are going – the coming Century will see either the death or the doom of 90% moribund languages. He added that: "the present guest-estimate is that a language dies somewhere in the world every two weeks and that When a language surrenders itself to modern idioms and when speakers become bilinguals, the penalty is death."

Enwere and Uchamma (2005) are of the view that despite the role of language as a repository of the history of a people, many of the Nigerian languages have suffered untold deprivation from negative influence from the foreign languages such as English. Many of them have been shifting as a result of lack of adequate usage. The work cited example with Igbo that drops seriously and suffered reduction in proficiency. Moreover, Enwere and Uchamma (2005) observe that many of the Nigerian languages are at various levels of endangerment and possible extinction. In addition to that, Jibril (2005) asserts that "many languages spoken by small group of speakers are endangered."

Kuju (1999:38) reports linguists to have estimated that a language dies somewhere in the world every two weeks, equivalent to 26 languages every year. To crown it all,

even languages with many thousands of speakers are no longer being acquired by children; at least 50% of the world languages are losing speakers. Moreover, it is estimated that, in most world regions, about 90% of the languages may be replaced by dominant languages by the end of the 21st Century (Tohono & Johnson 2002:2).

Fabunmi & salawu (2007:245) and Hornsby (2013:1) and some other scholars have pointed out that "only 600 of the 6,000 or so languages in the world are safe from the threat of extinction." When Fabunmi & Salawu (2007:245) sloped to Nigerian situation, they discovered that alarmingly, both population and language endangerment complement each other. They further predicted that "in the next twenty five years, most of the languages in Nigeria would be gone." According to Landweer (2013:1) furthermore, "the fact that languages die is not new, Koine Greek and classical Latin both are dead as spoken languages. The only reason we know of them is because of the written record that was left behind." The source continues to opine that, in Papua New Guinea, we have 830 languages. Of that number, nine (9) are considered extinct, and at least sixteen (16) others, with speaker population of less than fifty (50), could be considered endangered if not dying by almost any observer. In addition, there are languages such as Taiap, Doga, and Mamaa whose population figures could suggest potential language vitality, however upon closer examination these vernaculars are in fact dying as a result of the effect of language use choices made by the majority of individuals of those speech communities. In essence, instead of using Taiap, Doga and Mamaa, former speakers have instead chosen to use Tok Pisin, Anuki/Jimajima or Finungwa respectively.

Three cases of endangered languages such as global case, Nigerian case and the case of Nasarawa State have been reviewed to provide examples of language endangerment worldwide. In each case, effort has been made to determine the number of languages by synchronising different sources, especially with a view to identifying and justifying the clashing figures in the estimates, the type of language policies by governments and linguistic attitudes of the varying speech communities, all in an attempt to examine the cases of endangered languages on the three levels of linguistic situation.

Therefore, in a situation where parents stop or are forced to stop speaking and teaching their children their native language, the language may easily and quickly become severely endangered. For instance, the case of Tiv as reported in Lyam-Yisa (2012:57), the situation in which "parents feel that it is a waste of time learning Tiv language instead of English for morbid curiosity that they may not be able to speak English if not caught young". So an endangered language on the other hand, in this regard, is not used in formal education and its communicative role is limited to in-group status. In general sense, such language is mainly used in traditional purpose, rituals, festivals and village meetings etc

In reality, language death has been, and is always being identified as a global problem. The threat of language death engulfs many languages in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe and many other parts of the world. The loss of language is however characterized by being reduced demographically, in terms of speech

communities, especially where the language is partially or completely documented. Language endangerment is sometimes classified on the basis of proportion of speakers within the distribution of estimated users. This is similar to the decision in which language is classified as major or minor and which is influenced by figures related to population density of speakers, thus demographic size and geographical spread of the language.

Language situation is the total configuration of language use at a given time and place including such data as how many and what kind of languages are spoken in an area, by how many people, under what circumstances and what are the attitudes and beliefs about languages held by the members of the community (Ferguson 1966 in Bleambo, 1990:186). The world is definitely a multilingual environment where thousands of languages exist. However, there are clashing statistics on how many languages are in the world. Some of them are presented in Emenanjo (1999:78 & 2005:6) who observed 6,528 languages spoken by 6.5 billion people; Ethnologue (2005) cited by Jibril (2005:6) in which 6,912 languages have been reported. To crown it all, the world comprises as many as seven thousand (7,000) languages, Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:1). Whichever numerical position the world languages occupy, the seven thousand languages as estimated by Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:1) are distributed among the countries of the world. The statistical data shows that about ninety seven per cent (97%) of the world people speak about four per cent (4%) of the world's languages; and conversely, about ninety six per cent (96%) of the world's languages are spoken by about three per cent (3%) of the world's people. The statistics continue

to disclose that, out of the seven thousand (7,000) languages of the world, approximately eighty five per cent (85%) are spoken in only twenty two (22) countries. Some of such countries exhibit high level of linguistic diversity by housing large numbers of different languages.

Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:4) categorically disclose that Papua New Guinea is the home of nine hundred (900) or 830 languages as Landweer (2013:1) asserts, thus on top of Indonesia that houses up to seven hundred (700) languages. Nigeria then occupies the next position by sheltering up to five hundred (500) languages, followed by India with four hundred (400) languages, then Cameroon which speaks almost three hundred (300) languages, followed by Mexico with almost two hundred and fifty (250) languages and then some others such as Brazil with more than two hundred (200) languages. One of the effects of such linguistic heterogeneity is bilingualism through language contact which initiates and motivates linguistic interference; borrowing and integration.

Ethnologue is a popular database maintained by SIL International, one of the most active research agencies in the world, which kept up to date statistics by the contributions of linguists worldwide. Of the 6,912 languages in different countries globally, Ethnologue disclosed that 32.8% (2,269) were in Asia and 30.3% (2,092) in Africa. The source further asserts that "Areas with a particularly large number of languages nearing extinction include: Eastern Siberia..., Central Siberia, Northern

Australia, Central America, and the Northwest Pacific Plateau. Other hotspots are Oklahoma and Southern South America."

Lewis, Simons & Fennig (2013:1) present that there are 1,535 languages (in the world) with less than 1,000 first language speakers. There are 478 languages with less than 100 speakers and 135 languages with less than 10 speakers. Definitely, this indicates varying degrees of endangerment.

In almost every society languages come into contact for various and obvious reasons. Situations of such kind necessarily disclose different language prestige, some will be felt superior while others will definitely be felt inferior or otherwise dominant and dominated respectively. It is quite evident that speakers of languages with lower status commonly acquire proficiency in the language of the dominant group. Gradually, the people run into language shift through code-mixing and code-switching. In the end one discovers that the minor group assimilates, culturally and linguistically, into the major one.

It is worthy of note that, in the world conception of linguistic reality, in most heterogeneous countries, only negligible number of languages have considerable numbers of speakers and most of the languages are not assigned an official status within their societies. Consequently many of those deprived and dominated languages are scared by more homogeneous languages, exoglosics, as the case is in many countries. For example, Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:4) disclose that in Europe,

"Sorbian is replaced by German and the Saami languages in Sweden and Finland are threatened by the respective state languages, as Breton in France."

As a global phenomenon, endangered languages are discovered in various continents, countries and states such as African continent where many small languages assimilated their linguistic identity and cultural heritage to Swahili in Tanzania, Somali in Somalia, or Arabic in the state of the Maghreb region. In a more considerable situation of language replacement, languages of wider communication gain the better influential position as a result of urbanization or market forces. Few of these kinds of situations include Hausa in Nigeria and Niger, Amharic in Ethiopia, Wolof in Senegal, and Mambara in Mali all of which gained advantages of speakers as trade languages, over the minor languages. Eventually, languages of small speech communities are endangered by the trade languages. Further examples show that in Southern Ethiopia alone, "Ongota is replaced by Ts'amakko (Tsamay), Kwegu (Koegu) by Mursi, Shabo by Majang and Harro by Bayso" (Brenzinger & de Graaf, 2006:4). Note that all the replacements of languages by languages often took place among the endoglosics in both countries. This can be described as the loss of speakers and gain of speakers by the dominated and the dominants respectively.

As in the rest parts of the world, linguistic situation in Papua New Guinea discloses remarkable decline in linguistic vitality. An in-exhaustive list presented by PNG language resources intends only samples of highly endangered languages, these are Abom, AK, Ambakich, Dumpu (Watiwa), Gweda, Karawa, Magori, Makolkol,

Munkip, Rempi (Aic), Taiap, Tenis, Turaka, Turunsa and Wiarumus among others, with Abaga and Aribwatsa under probable extinction (SIL 2007 – 2012).

As a whole, there are one hundred and thirty six (136) language families in the world (Lewis 2013:2). Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:5) asserts that most European languages belong to the Endo-European language family "which represents the world's largest group of languages with nearly two (2) billion speakers" or "nearly three (3) billion speakers in the words of Lewis et al (2013:2). The Sino-Tibetan family to which China belongs occupies the next position in terms of total number of speakers. Howeve, Niger-Congo is the largest language family in terms of languages with 1,524 living languages. In addition to that, Emenanjo (2005:15) reports five largest languages to be Mandarin Chinese, English, Hindi, Spanish and Russian spoken by 45% of the world population.

Just like the situation in African countries, many languages in Europe are threatened by some few languages. For example, Brenzinger de Graaf as above observes that, "within the Celtic subgroup Breton and Scottish Gaelic are endangered, while Irish Gaelic, despite the official support with the Irish republic, is not safe". The story is similar if not exactly the same with Germanic subgroup. For example, the East and the North Frisian dialects in Germany are threatened. So also the dialects of Low Saxon in the Netherland and Germany, the Mennonite Low German language and Yiddish are equally endangered. Likewise Rheto-Romanic, the Romance language spoken in Switzerland is endangered. North Frisian in Germany is a member of the

Coastal West Germanic subgroup. Over centuries, North Frisian has been strongly influenced by Danish and Low German and later on by High German. In addition to the fact that the group (language) has no official status, out of 155,000 people of the group, some 8 – 10,000 (5 – 7%) speak North Frisian, while about 60,000 (40%) considered themselves to be Frisians. According to Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:11), the 1990 constitution of the state of Schleswig-Holstein has made provisions for protection and support of North Frisian. Between 1991 and 1996 North Frisian was taught in few primary schools as a school subject and unofficially as medium of instruction (optionally) and in a multilingual methodology. However, the German Federal Republic has no official policy regarding North Frisian. In addition to that, /Xam and Ainu have suffered physical and cultural genocides in South Africa and Japan respectively.

Lyam-Yisa (2012:57), moreover, reports a sudden shift towards severe endangerment that has occurred with many Native American languages and with European languages such as Berton in Northwestern France. Indeed, language official neglect results by letting the minority languages, such as many Amerindian languages, die by simply not doing anything to keep them alive.

In Northern Africa, Amazigh (Berber) are the indigenous inhabitants but are not known as such until the "Islamic conquest" of the Arabs right from "7th to 8th centuries." Islam and Arabic language began to house the Amazigh speaking communities. The colloquial varieties of Arabic language began to gain strong

influence and later became the mother tongue of most of the Amazigh speakers. Therefore, up till now, such colloquial Arabic varieties continue endangering the ancestral languages of the indigenous populations of the Northern Africa.

In Australia, the Djingili have ten (10) fluent elderly speakers left thus the ethnic proup shifted to English-based creole, and Gugubera have fifteen (15) fluent speakers left of the traditional language out of fifty (50) members in the ethnic group. However, in Chile, Huilliche language greatly lost communicative domains. The Hukumina language of Maluku in Indonesia had only one speaker left as of 1989 who was 80 years old then. Though she could remember some phrases and sentences but had had no one to speak the language with, Auye (with 300 speakers), Foya, Tobati, Yoke, etc. of Irian Jaya in Indonesia. The youngest speakers of the Tlingit language in Alaska and Canada shifted to speaking English as first and second language. In addition to that, Uspanteko and Sipakapense in Guatemala; Cajamarca Quedua in Peru are endangered (Grimes 2013:56).

In fact, the Turki language of China did not escape abandonment as mother tongue. There are about 30 households of the language speakers, mainly older people. As a result of intermarriage by young people with other language groups, the Turki language group as a whole has shifted to speaking Mandarin. So also the Manchu language of China with population of 1,821,000 left in the group, but there are only estimated 20 – 70 speakers left all over 70 years old (Grimes, 2013:6).

Among many more other languages listed as endangered across the world is Agta of Centeral Cagayan in Philippines with 500 speakers (Grimes, 2013:17) etc.

2.3 Endangered Languages in Nigeria

Despite the fact that Nigerian languages attain an in-depth experience of intensive and extensive multiple write-ups, and though the languages directly or indirectly host several publications, only negligible number of them has been described. Moreover, there is yet to have systematized *scheme* in order to avoid what Capo (1990:2) referred to as unnecessary repetitions through "Quotations and re-quotations of the same data." Consequently, scholars and researchers should be encouraged through provision of adequate funds and academic preparations and then geared towards working "beyond snippets and anecdotal description".

Solomon (2003:31) believes that the scenario is becoming pathetic and unfortunate that most of the young people that are living mostly in urban centres of our society contribute drastically to language death in their inability to communicate effectively or fluently in their mother tongue.

Ugwuoke (1999:14) and Crozier & Blench (1992) claimed the number of 5,000 speakers to be a borderline for endangered languages. Based on such a borderline, Ogwuoke discovered one hundred and fifty two (152) indigenous Nigerian languages in some states as "in danger of disappearing." The numerical presentation came with Bauchi having the largest number of twenty eight (28) languages as endangered,

followed by Kaduna, Plateau and Taraba with eighteen (18) languages each. Samples of endangered languages across some Nigerian states are tabled as follows:

Table 2 Sample of Endangered Languages in Some Nigerian Satates

State	Language	Location	No. of speakers	Source
Adamawa	Holma	North of Sorau on Cameroon Border	04	Haruna 2014:16 Ugwuoke1999:20 Blench 2011:34
	Ngwaba	Fachi and gudumiya of gwambi LGA	1,000	Haruna 2014:15 Ugwuoke1999:25 Blench 2011:66
Bauchi	Dulbu	Bauchi LGA	80	Ugwuoke1999:18 Blench 2011:20
	Gyem	Toro LGA, Lame District	100	Ugwuoke1999:20 Blench 2011:33
Bayelsa	Mini	Brass LGA	3 villages	Ugwuoke1999:21
	Kugbo	Brass LGA	2,000	Ugwuoke1999:22 Blench 2011:53
Benue	Etulo	Gboko LGA	2,900	Ugwuoke1999:18 Blench 2011:25
	Iyive	Kwande LGA	2,000	Ugwuoke1999:20 Blench 2011:41
Borno	Putai	Damboa LGA	Dying	Blench 2011:74 Haruna2014:15/16
	Jara	Biu LGA	4,000	Haruna 2014:15 Ugwuoke1999:20 Blench 2011:43
Cross R.	Bakpinka	Akamkpa LGA	Dying	Ugwuoke1999:16 Blench 2011:9
	Kiong	Odukpani & Akamkpa LGAs	Shifting to Efik	Ugwuoke1999:22 Blench 2011:50
Edo	Oloma	Akoko LGA	353	Ugwuoke1999:25 Blench 2011:71
	Emhalhe	Akok-Edo LGA	249	Ugwuoke1999:18 Blench 2011:24

Gombe	Awak	Kaltungo LGA	2,035	Ugwuoke1999:15 Blench 2011:
	Cen Tuum	Cham town, Balanga LGA	Small number of old people	Ugwuoke1999:17 Blench 2011:
Jigawa	Kwarkwanci	Gwaram LGA	1 old woman	Muhammad 2014:2
Kaduna	Dungu	Saminaka LGA	310	Ugwuoke1999:18 Blench 2011:20
	Kiballo	Saminaka LGA	335	Ugwuoke1999:21
Kebbi	Dendi	Argungu & BagudoLGAs	839	Ugwuoke1999:18 Blench 2011:19
	Gwambi-Wuri	Wasagu	02	Ugwuoke1999:19 Blench 2011:32
Niger	Bassa-Gumna	Chanchaga	02	Ugwuoke1999:16 Blench 2011:10
	Fungwa	Rafi LGA	900	Ugwuoke1999:19 Blench 2011:27
Plateau	Janji	Jos LGA, Rukuba District	360	Ugwuoke1999:20 Blench 2011:42
	Chokobi/Zoka	Jos LGA, Jerf District	425	Ugwuoke1999:17 Blench 2011:91
Rivers	Defaka	Bonny LGA	Less than 1,000/200	Ugwuoke1999:18 Blench 2011:18
	Ogbogolo	Ahoada LGA	One Town	Ugwuoke1999:25 Blench 2011:70
Taraba	Ambo	Sardauna LGA	One village east of Baissa	Ugwuoke1999:15 Blench 2011:4
	Gbaya/Baya	Mambila & Gashakar LGAs	200	Ugwuoke1999:16 Blench 2011:29
Yobe	Maaga	Gujba LGA	4,000	Haruna 2014:15 Ugwuoke1999:24 Blench 2011:59
Kwara	Sarko		Almost Extinct	Ugwuoke1999:27

Table 2 Showing Sample of Endangered Languages in Some Nigerian State

2.4 Endangered Languages in Nasarawa State

Nigeria as a whole, as had been said, is a complex linguistic environment, in fact, one of the most complexes in the world. This linguistic complexity implicates various researches and studies by the Europeans and reputable Nigerian scholars in both historical and applied linguistics. This situation is more so considering varying multiple results on the numerical strength of Nigerian indigenous languages (the endoglosics). Okwudishu (1990:198) reported Hansford (et al) in relation to the extent of linguistic diversity in Nigeria thus, "about a quarter of all languages spoken in Sub-Saharan Africa are spoken in Nigeria".

When Okwudishu (1990) subsided to a study of Plateau state, she considered it to "epitomise the general linguistic diversity of Nigeria". She, in addition to that, consolidated the stand by citing Greenberg (1956) who opines that, "the region formally described as Central Plateau has the highest mathematical coefficient of linguistic diversity in the whole world." The question here is, what would be the possible and/or imaginable reason for that, what would have been the situation of the area along its history? These questions have been attempted for answer by some scholars. For instance, Bouquiaux (1970) in Okwudushu (1990:198) and Miri (1999:121) explained the situation of linguistic diversity of the area and its peculiarity to the fact that central Plateau was "a real mosaic of diverse people."

Now looking at the linguistic nature of Plateau area, one can easily presume the State situation to be inherent in Nasarawa State having been created from the area.

Obviously true is the linguistic situation of Nasarawa State. However, despite the fact that various researches were conducted by Europeans and Nigerian native scholars, up till now the results are disclosing the complex linguistic nature of Nasarawa State. This is because the results in terms of numerical strength of the languages are clashing. According to Sarvi (2005) there are twenty three (23) native languages in Nasarawa State while Okwudishu (1999) initially reported twenty (20) languages for Nasarawa State. However, in her validity check she later realised that she omitted Ake/Akye increasing the number to be twenty one (21) languages. She still omitted Nyenkpa located at Karshi and Panda Local Government of Nasarawa State, and Numana located at Jama'a Local Government of Kaduna State and Akwanga Local Government of Nasarawa State (Sarvi 2005:48 & 51) respectively. Okwudishu also cited Hansford to have listed Nakere as a language. But according to her, Nakere and some others reported by Hansford are dialects of Buh which means reducing the Number of languages of the state or at least makes the number inconsistent. However, Sarvi (2005:51) consolidated the stand of Hansford by listing Nakere as a language located at Wamba Local Government of Nasarawa State. Moreover, in the list of Okwudishu, Migili and Koro are independent languages, while in Sarvi (2005:36), Koro is the name given to Migili by other people, thus Koro alteronym of Migili autonym. In essence, one can still claim that the numerical strength of Nasarawa State, just like other linguistic situations in different areas of the world, remains unresolved, as recently, Adeyanju (2014:12) makes the obsrevtion of this work more relevant by suggesting 29 indigenous languages for Nasarawa State. The reasons for

the varying statistics have been suggested in the general observation on the review of related literature.

Considering the language theory of Skinner, Jeosen, Palermo and Lipsit in Malabu (2008:11), one can attribute the endangerment or death of any indigenous language of Nasarawa State to the nonchalant attitudes of parents, not speaking or even not encouraging their children to speak the native languages. The theory states that, language is the result of reinforcement of the child's attempt to imitate the adult speech. The theory emphasizes that: "Children acquire adult language as they are reinforced for correct responses. As a result of this reinforcement, children try to produce sounds as they hear them from the adults so that they can be reinforced." This study supposes that the knowledge of this theory is the bedrock on which many members of different ethnic groups of Nasarawa State lay their justification for criticizing parents about the inability of young stars to speak their respective native languages.

(Not only Nasarawa State languages alone,) many Nigerian languages do not have written forms. Some of the few that have writing system are not, as a matter of policy, used in any literary context such as formal schooling. This is for the simple fact that many of the existing orthographies are not "optimal" in the word of Capo (1990:3). Therefore, there is a need to initiate, through rigorous linguistic study, an "optimal" orthography system for each language. However, in relation to endangered languages in Nasarawa State, some languages have been reported as endangered, the languages

include, Ake found in Lafia Local Government with 354 speakers (Ugwuoke, 1999:15), or 3,000 speakers as reported in (Blench, 2011:3); Karfa found in Akwanga Local Government with 800 speakers (Ugwoake, 1999:15) and (Blench, 2011:49); and Yashi also found in Akwanga Local Government with 400 speakers (Ugwoake, 1999:27) and Crozier & Blench (1992:110). Moreover, another research pertaining to Nasarawa State, particularly Eggon is Sarbi (2005) which is a study on the influence of Hausa on some selected languages of Nasarawa State. The work investigated the influence on three languages namely Eggon, Migili and Gwandara. In the study on each of the languages, the work calminated in forming untested hypothesis that if the situation of the three languages continues the way it were, the languages might become endangered. This is because according to Sarvi (2005:34 – 35) the languages are in a considerable contact with more stronger and linguistical more prestigious ethnic groups such as Hausa. In addition to that, it had been observed that the ethnic groups particularly Eggon and Gwandara are interspersing through migration and exogamy. The languages are not adequately documented, therefore, not learnt in a formal settings etc. (Sarvi, 2005:35, 37, 38 & 101-102) In fact, the situation of the three languages is one of the motivating factors that prompted the present study to further select Eggon among the three languages to investigate language endangerment.

2.5 Factors and Causes of Language Endangerment

In connection to the factors responsible for language endangerment, Kuju (1999:39) asserts that indigenous languages and their knowledge disappear where natives are

stripped of their land. However, in many parts of the world language disappears as well, because the young who are in contact with outside world have embraced the view that traditional ways are illegitimate and irrelevant. Kuju also attributed language disappearance to political decision which sometimes forces ethnic groups to move or split; economic prospects which call the attention of the youth into urban areas where their local languages could not be fully used; and the threats of epidemics, i.e. some ravaging diseases sometimes, somewhere, somehow wipes a considerable number of certain language speakers thereby reducing the number of speakers. The inability of the endangered languages speakers to realise that "they are losing something of inestimable value". Other scholars, as well, go along this and, of course, other lines. These include Emenanjo (1999), Andenyang (1999), Dawulung (1999), Kay Williamson (1999), Tohono & Johnson (2002), Miyaoka (2002), Jibril (2005), Omego (2005), Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006), Lyam-Yisa (2012) Hornsby (2013), Grimes, (2013), Gloria (2013) and most recently Sarvi (2014) for example,.

Andenyang (1999) and Gloria Kindel (2013:1) enumerated and discussed factors responsible for loss of language as economic, political, effect of colonial administration and researches, as well as small number of speakers. However, according to Dawulung (1999:32) there are many languages that each has the right to exist. How they exist depends much on a number of factors among which are government policies, the educational system of the land, the economic and socio-political development of the nation, influence of the inter group relationship and, of

course, the native speakers themselves. The last but the most important item is in line with Kay Williamson (1999:162) who opines that:

> The fate of small languages is in the hands of the speakers. If they wish their language to grow and develop, they should take steps not only to use it themselves but to ensure that their children are adequately exposed to it and retain it as their home language to pass on to the next generation. If parents neglect this, their children will have little or no knowledge of their own language, and in a few generations, the language could die out.

Omego (2005:203) and Jibril (2005) argued that the adoption of English by Federal Government as the official language of the nation is one of the factors militating against the development of indigenous languages. The neglect of indigenous languages in favour of English, especially by language teachers, has a tremendous effect on the children. Hence, the children have the impression that only English is important and has priority over their indigenous languages. This impression needs to be corrected by studying and developing Nigerian languages alongside English. This, Jibril maintains, is in addition to the fact that Nigerian National Policy on Education emphasises the teaching and development of only three major languages (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo). In states schools, little or no attempt has been made to teach the other tongues as enshrined in the National Language Policy... this has consequential effect that "all Nigerian languages are endangered."

Emenanjo (1999:79) drew an inference on "a cause-and-effect" or "stimulus-response" relationship between language and environment. He believes that, "a robust

environment begets and propagates a robust language. A deficient, deprived, dislocated and distressed environment begets, encourages and sustains a language that is in danger of disappearing (LIDODs).” along the same line, Tohono & Johnson (2002:2) and Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:3) summarise the factors of language endangerment into external and internal forces that, language endangerment may be caused by external forces such as military, economic, religious, cultural or educational subjugation or rather deprivation, or it may be as a result of internal forces such as community’s negative attitude toward its own language, in other wards language attitude. Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:1) explicated more and presented that:

> Endangered languages are not necessarily languages with few speakers. Even though small communities are more vulnerable to external threats, the size of the group not always matters. The viability of a language is determined first and foremost by the general attitudes of its speakers towards their heritage culture, of which their language may be considered the most important component. In this respect, the intergenerational transmission of the language i.e. teaching the heritage language is the most important features of language vitality.

Brenzinger & de Graaf cited example with Suruaha, that the Suruaha, for instance, a small Indian community that lives in a remote area of Amazonia in Brazil, consists of approximately 150 members, and all of them, including the children, were monolingual in Suruaha at the time of first contact with linguists. Despite the small size of the population, the community holds onto its language and traditional way of life in all domains. In contrast, many members of numerically large speech

communities no longer pass their heritage language onto the younger generation. Such languages may still be spoken by thousands of elders, but nevertheless must obviously be considered as being endangered. Language endangerment may arise when communities with different linguistic traditions live side by side.

Hornsby (2013:4-5) cited various linguists to present factors for language endangerment, these are "Intermarriage" (David & Nambia 2003) and (Baldauf & Kaplan 2007) "Market forces" (Ridler & Pans-Ridler 1984), (Baldauf & Kaplan 2007), (Schiffman 1998) and (Cauplan 2011) "Migration, Modernization, and National education policy*"* (Grimes 2001) "Assimilation" and "Attitudes" presented by (Hornsby, 2013:4-5).

In relation to factors responsible for language endangerment, Michael (2013:1) observes that, in some areas, a language community has been so ravaged by warfare or disease that the entire group is dying out. Other languages are dying because people are teaching their children English, French or Spanish for economic reasons. In addition to that, Cambridge Handbook of endangered languages ascertains "four main types of causes of language endangerment" that come under two main sections:

1) Those causes that put the population that speak the language into physical danger. These include:

a) Natural disaster, famine, disease etc. an example of this is the languages spoken by the people of the Andaman Island who were seriously affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and Tsunami.

b) War and genocide. Example of this are the languages of the indigenous population of Tasmania who were wiped out by colonists, and many extinct and endangered languages of the Americas where indigenous people have been subjected to genocide evidence, or in the cases of the Miskito language in Nicaragua and the Mayan languages of Guatemala that have been affected by civil war.

2) Those causes which prevent or discourage speakers from using a language. These include:

a) Political repression. This has frequently happened when nation-states working to promote a single national culture limit the opportunities for using minority languages in the public spheres, schools, the media, and elsewhere, ethnic groups resettled, children go to school far from home or otherwise have their chances of cultural and linguistic continuity disrupted. This has happened in the case of many Native American and Australian languages, as well as European and Asian minority languages such as Breton or Alsatian in France and Kurdish in Turkey.

b) Cultural/political/economic hegemony. This happened when political and economic power is closely tied to a particular language and culture so that there is a strong incentive for individual to abandon their language (on behalf of themselves and their children) in favour of more prestigious one. This frequently happens when indigenous population, in order to achieve a high social status, adopt the cultural and linguistic traits of a people who have come to dominate them through colonialism, conquest or invasion; example of this kind of endangerment are the Welsh language in Great Britain, and Ainu in Japan. This is the most common cause of language endangerment.

Miyaoka (2002:3 & 12 of 20) then, is of the view that the deciding factor for predicting the degree of danger befalling language or the feasibility of its revitalization, is not a mere number of speakers. Many conditions (including national policies) can influence a language's fate, but first and foremost is the question of whether children are learning the language of their parents and grandparents as a native language and using it on a daily basis. Landweer (2013:1-2 0f 8) also contributed along the line by discovering and developing eight indicators of ethno-linguistic vitality and documented in Pupua New Guinea context through the years of SIL's experience in nearly 300 speech communities, thus specifically with the view to focus on the process which undermines language vitality and leads towards that demise. The indicators are hereby summarised:

1) Relative position on the urban-rural continuum
2) Domains in which the language is used
3) Frequency and type of code switching
4) Population and group dynamics
5) Distribution of speakers within their own social networks
6) Social outlook regarding and within the speech community
7) Language prestige
8) Access to a stable and acceptable economic base.

Landweer then put forward questions for testing the factors as follows:

1) Is the speech community located in or near population centre where its members would have contact with speakers of other languages? Do they have access to such a population centre?

2) Is there sufficient use of the target language throughout community life? In essence, the more domains in which the vernacular is used the better (with the home as the best domain).

3) Is there linguistic ambivalence? In other words, do people characteristically switch between the normative code (1.e. local vernacular) and one or more other languages without any notable consistency, as opposed to more stable forms of bilingualism represented by situational code switches or diaglossia?

4) Are there speakers of the language? How is that group of speakers impacted by the language characteristics of the immigrants who came to live among them?

5) Is there a network of social relation supportive of the local language?

6) Is there internal and/or external recognition of the language community as separate and unique within the broader society? Is there materials or non-materials evidence of such a distinction?

7) Does the target language have prestige among other neighbouring or regional languages? What is the relative prestige of the language within the linguistic repertoire of the speech community?

8) Is there an acceptable economic base supportive of continuing use of the target language?

Moreover, Lyam- Yisa (2012:57) observes the causes for moribund languages as, the movement of people from one region to another, government policies (restrictions) and efforts to limit language diversities example, in South-Eastern African nation of Tanzania people are encouraged to abandon their local languages for Swahili. Lyam-Yisa (2012:56) attributes loss of language to the "increased contact among formally

isolated human societies." Languages, they say, need isolation to develop and to maintain their distinctive features and characteristics. When isolation ends, local languages tend to disappear naturally along with the traditional ways of life of a people.

Grimes, (2013: 2 – 4) presented causes of language shift, such as:

1) Parents push children to learn prestige language thinking that they can only learn one language well
2) Natural or man-made disaster – sudden shift (war, flood, earthquake)
3) Migration outside of traditional territory – planned shift
4) Use of second language in school – causing widespread shift
5) National language policy – causing some but not universal shift
6) Factors working against language shift
7) Other factors causing language shift – such as urbanization, industrialization etc.

Recently, Sarvi (2014 & 2016) revisited and then harmonized various factors as presented by different scholars in addition to his observation. He presents that, language endangerment can be caused by external and internal factors which include natural and artificial calamities, educational factor, economic factor, socio-political factor, demographic size of speakers, Exogamy and language attitudes and policies.

In fact, all the factors discovered and enumerated by various linguists and language educators are playing tremendous role in causing and promoting language endangerment. However, it is worthy of note that the ability of each factor to endanger a language depends much upon the status of the language, thus not every factor causes the endangerment of every language. So, one can opine that some factors lead to the endangerment of some languages while other factors cause endangerment to other languages (Sarvi 2014:11). Most of the factors for language endangerment discussed by scholars have affected the intergenerational use and transmission of the Eggon language and indeed cause its endangerment.

2.6 Assessing Language Vitality and Endangerment

Scholars across the globe suggested the empowerment of language and that endangered languages should be preserved by taking appropriate measures to prevent attrition, extinction or death. These measures, according to some scholars are broadly pointed out as status planning and corpus planning which go alongside a package of language use enlightenment strategies. However, before the preservation measures are taken, there ought to be the assessment of the language vitality or endangerment to determine the degree of either. Having that requirement in mind, language empowerment advocators suggest various methods of assessing language endangerment for relevant language revitalization programmes. Below are some evaluative factors for language vitality assessment provided by Tohono and Johnson (2002), Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006), Obiero (2010) and Lewis (2013).

Obiero (2010:205) reports the Landweer's (1998) 8 points indicators of ethno-linguistic endangerment or vitality thus:

The extent to which it can resist influence by a dominant urban culture;

The number of domains in which it is used;

The frequency and type of code switching;

The distribution of speakers across social networks;

The internal and external recognition of the group as a unique community;

Its relative prestige, compared with surrounding languages;

Its access to a stable economic base; and

The existence of a critical mass of fluent speakers

Obiero (2010), reports Fishman (1991) who postulated a continuum of 8 stages for assessing language loss or disruption, and with which to guide any plan of action that would lead to turning around the fate of an endangered language. The scale is calibrated in such a way that stage 8 indicates near total extinction while stage 1 indicates the least disruption.

Table 3 The Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS)

Level	Description
1	The language is used in education, work, mass media, government, at nationwide level.
2	The language is used for local and regional mass media and government services.
3	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders.
4	Literacy in the language is transmitted through education.
5	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form throughout the community.
6	The language is used orally by all generations and is been learned by children as their first language.
7	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it with their elders but is not transmitting it to their children.
8	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation.

Lewis (2013:1), Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:17-18) and Obiero (2010: 207-208) in relation to assessment of language vitality and endangerment, report Brenzinger (2003) who provides the summary of UNESCO's activities focussing on gathering information on the extent of language endangerment and the nature of such phenomenon. Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:17-18) asserts that, in 1995 UNESCO launched a clearing house for the documentation of endangered languages in Tokyo. Since then many international meetings have taken place, either addressing the problem of language endangerment in general or discussing a geographic approach (Africa, South America, The Russian Federation etc.). Within the frame work of these activities an international expert meeting was organized by UNESCO headquarters in Paris in March 2003. There, an UNESCO ad hoc expert group on endangered languages presented a draft report entitled "Language Vitality and Endangerment" for discussion among the wider audience of linguists, language planners, representatives of NGO's as well as members of endangered language speech communities. During

the meeting, a final document was produced and among the outcomes nine core factors were identified with the help of which the language situation of endangered languages can be assessed.

Lewis used the framework to evaluate a diverse selection of the world's languages sampled from the Ethnologue (Grimes 2000), thus on the basis of geographic location and size for the purpose of initiating and assessing feasibility of a comprehensive evaluation of the state of world's languages. After evaluating the effectiveness and usefulness of the framework, Lewis applied it to 100 languages from all parts of the world showing different vitality profiles for different languages and indicating varied nature of language endangerment. The factors are:

a) Degree of endangerment

1. Intergenerational language transmission
2. Absolute numbers of speakers
3. Proportion of speakers within the total population
4. Loss of existing language domains
5. Response to new domains
6. Materials for language education and literacy

b) Language attitudes and policies

7. Governmental and institutional language attitudes and Policies, including official language status and use

8. Community members' attitudes towards their own language

c) Urgency for documentation

9 Amount and quality of documentation

Factors from (1) to (6) are applied to assess language vitality and its state of endangerment. The most crucial single factor among them is (1), which determines the extent of language acquisition among the children within a community. It is obvious that a language without any young speakers is seriously threatened by extinction.

Tohono and Johnson (2002) analyse language vitality assessment using different evaluative factors as follows:

Factor 1: Intergenerational transmission

They present that 'the most commonly used factor in evaluating the vitality of a language is whether or not it is being transmitted from one generation to the next (Fishman 1991). Endangerment can be ranked on a continuum from stability to extinction. Even *safe* (language), however, does not guarantee language vitality, because at any time speakers may cease to pass on their language to the next generation. Six degrees of endangerment may be distinguished with regards to intergenerational language transmission.

Table 4 Intergenerational Language Transmission

Degree of endangerment	Grade	Speaker population
Safe:	5	The language is used by all ages, from children up.
Unsafe:	4	The language is used by some children in all domains; it is used by all children in limited domains.
Definitely endangered:	3	The language is used mostly by the parent generation and up.
Severely endangered:	2	The language is used mostly by the grandparental generation and up.
Critically endangered:	1	The language is used mostly by very few speakers, of great-grandparental generation.
Extinct:	0	There exists no speaker

Factor 2: Absolute number of speakers

According to Tohono and Johnson (2002:8), absolute number of speakers is impossible. However, they observe that "a small speech community is much more vulnerable to decimation (e.g. by disease, warfare or natural disaster) than a large one. A small language group may also merge with a neighbouring group, losing its own language and culture."

Table 5 Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population

Degree of endangerment	Grade	proportion of speakers within the total Reference population
Safe:	5	All speak the language.
Unsafe:	4	Nearly all speak the language.
Definitely endangered:	3	Majority speak the language.
Severely endangered:	2	Minority speak the language.
Critically endangered:	1	Very few speak the language.
Extinct	0	None speak the language

Table 6 Trends in Existing Language Domain

Degree of endangerment	Grade	Domains and Functions
Universal use	5	The language is used in all domains for all functions.
Multilingual parity	4	Two or more languages may be used in most social domains and for most functions.
Dwindling domains	3	The language is in home domains and for many functions, but the dominant language begins to penetrate even home domains.
Limited or formal domains	2	The language is used in limited social domains and for several functions.
Highly limited domains	1	The language is used only in a very restricted domains and for a very few functions.
Extinct	0	The language is not used in any domain and for any function

Table 7 Response to New Domain and Media

Degree of endangerment	Grade	New domains and media accepted by the endangered languages
Dynamic	5	The language is used in all new domains.
Robust/active	4	The language is used in most new domains.
Receptive	3	The language is used in many domains.
Coping	2	The language is used in some new domains.
Minimal	1	The language is used only in a few new domains
Inactive	0	The language is not used in any new domain

Table 8 Material for Language Education and Literacy

	Grade	Accessibility of Written Material
	5	There is an established orthography, literacy tradition with grammars, dictionaries, texts, literature, and everyday media. Writing in the language is used in administration and education
	4	Written materials exist, and at school children are developing literacy in the language, writing in the language is not used in administration.
	3	Written materials exist, and children may be exposed to the written form at school. Literacy is not promoted through print media.
	2	Written materials exist, but they may only be useful for some members of the community; and for others, they may have a symbolic significance. Literacy education in the language is not a part of the school curriculum.
	1	A practical orthography is known to the community and some material is being written.
	0	No orthography available to the community

Table 9 Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes and Policies Including Official Status and Use

Degree of support	**Grade**	Official attitudes toward language
Equal support	5	All languages are protected
Differentiated support	4	Minority languages are protected primarily as the language of the private domains. The use of language is prestigious.
Passive	3	No explicit policy exists for minority languages. The dominant language prevails in the public domain
Assimilation	2	Government encourages assimilation to the dominant language. There is no protection for minority languages.
Forced assimilation	1	The dominant language is the sole official language, while non dominant languages are neither recognized nor protected.
Prohibition	0	Minority languages are prohibited.

Table 10 Community Members' Attitudes towards Their Own Language

	Grade	Community Members' Attitudes towards Language
	5	All members value their language and wish to see it promoted.
	4	Most members support language maintenance
	3	Many members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
	2	Some members support language maintenance, others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
	1	Only a few members support language maintenance; others are indifferent or may even support language loss.
	0	No one cares if the language is lost; all prefer to use the dominant language

Table 11 Amount and Quality of Documentation

Nature of documentation	**Grade**	Language Documentation
Superlative	5	There are comprehensive grammars and dictionaries, extensive texts, constant flow of language materials. Abundant annotated high quality audio and video recording exist.
Good	4	There are one good grammar and a number of adequate grammars, dictionaries, texts literature, and occasionally updated every day media, adequate annotated high- quality audio and video recordings.
Fair	3	There may be an adequate grammar, or sufficient amount of grammar dictionaries, and texts but no everyday media, audio and video recordings may exist in varying quality or degree of annotation
Fragmentary	2	There are some grammatical sketches, word-lists, useful for limited linguistic research but with inadequate coverage. Audio and video recordings may exist in varying quality, with or without any annotation.
Inadequate	1	Only a few grammatical sketches, short word-lists, and fragmentary texts. Audio and video recordings do not exist, are of unusable quality, or are completely un-annotated.
Undocumented	0	No material exists.

2.6.1 Stages of Language Endangerment

Scholars all over the world investigated and examined the point of language endangerment from various dimensions including classification in which observation is made on the use of varying lexis ranging from stages and categories to degrees of language endangerment. The following scholars disclose their endeavour to that effect: Krauss (1992) in Miyaoka (2002), Emenanjo (2005), Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006), Fabunmi & Salawu (2007) and Landweer (1998) in Obiero (2010). Others are Lyam-Yisa (2012), Hornsby (2013) Lewis (2013), Gloria (2013) and Grimes (2013). For example, Miyaoka (2002) and Gloria (2013) quoted Krauss (1992) to have classified endangered languages into the following categories:

a. *Moribund languages*: Children have already stopped acquiring them as native languages. This category includes 20% to 50% of languages, as observed in (Miyaoka 2002:3 and Gloria 2013:1).

b. *Endangered languages*: Children are still continuing to learn them as native languages, but it is believed that they will move into category (1) by the end of twenty-first century if present trends continue. This category includes 40% to 75% of languages.

c. *Safe languages*: they are used or continuing to be spoken in the future. This category includes 5% to 10% of languages.

Krauss predicted that both 50% of the 6,000 languages of the world will be extinct within 100 years or by the end of the twenty-first century. In the worst case scenario, 95% will be either extinct or on the verge of extinction. In other words, this means that only 300 languages (5%) can be considered safe at present. In relation to endangerment, Lyam-Yisa (2012:57) asserts that linguists group languages into three categories thus: "healthy, endangered and extinct". According to the source, Encarta (2006) defines these categories as follows:

a. Healthy language: one that is currently being learnt by children as a first language, example Hausa language. Healthy languages are generally used in all walks of life, thus at home, in school, at work and in other private and public settings.

b. Languages that are endangered are further divided into various levels of endangerment thus: A language is still considered healthy when the percentage of children who speak it typically falls below the percentage of adults. But in a situation where parents stop or are forced to stop speaking and teaching their children their native tongue, the language may rapidly become "severely endangered", for instance the case of Tiv where parents feel that it is waste of time learning Tiv language instead of English language for morbid curiosity that they may not be able to speak English if not caught young. The most endangered languages are termed "Moribund". A moribund language is one that still has native speakers, but it is not being learnt at all by children. Only

few elderly people speak it like Chamicuro tongue in Pampa Hermosa in Peru. In fact, it is believed that there are 400 moribund languages worldwide.

c. An extinct language or dead language: is one with no living native speakers at all.

In another categorization of language endangerment, Krauss (2007) has defined languages as: “Safe”, if it is considered that children will probably be speaking them in 100 years, “endangered” if children will probably not be speaking them in 100 years, (approximately, 60-80% of languages fall into this category), and “moribund”if children are not speaking them now.

Looking at the description of language endangerment above, Lyam-Yisa quoting Encarta (2006), Miyaoka (2002) and Gloria (2013:1) who quoted Krauss (1992) are not but the re-assignment of conceptual items among them. So also the five level models of language status in Fabunmi and Salawu (2007:246), the categorization of language vitality based on 5-levels scale by Ethnologue’s 14th edition (2000) presented in Obiero (2010:206-207), and that of Emenanjo (2005), the stages of language endangerment in Grimes (2013:9) and UNESCO’s four levels of language endangerment based on “intergenerational transfer” as presented in Hornsby (2013:3 of 8) are only variations on lexical selection.

Fabunmi and Salawu (2007:246) cited Wurn (1998) who recognised five level models of language status. This is in an attempt to place Yoruba language in its deserved column. These models are: (i) potentially endangered, (ii) endangered, (iii) seriously endangered, (iv) moribund and (v) extinction. Going by this categorization of endangerment, Fabunmi and Salawu (2007:246) placed Yoruba under the second category and postulated that the language be classified on the third level (seriously endangered) according to them, the last three levels are only cover-ups for language death! Any language that crosses the lines of either being potentially endangered and endangered is already passed into the limbo of time.

Obiero (2010:206-207) further presents Evaluative System of the Ethnologue for Language Vitality. This is a categorization of language vitality based on 5-levels scale by Ethnologue's 14th edition (2000) thus:

1 Living: These are cases featuring significant population of first language speakers.

2 Second language only: are cases in which language is used as second language only. No first language users (emerging users could be included here)

3 Nearly extinct: characterizes cases with fewer than 50 speakers or a very smaller decreasing fraction of an ethnic population.

4 Dormant: cases where there are no remaining speakers but a population linksits ethnic identity to the language.

5 Extinct: where there are no remaining speakers and where no population linksits ethnic identity to the language.

According to Emenanjo (2005), with the internet globalization, mass culture and English, as the language of the internet and world culture, confusion is now becoming roughly organised for all world languages, especially those variously identified as Endangered, Moribund, Dying, Deprived or even Dead. However, Grimes (2013:9) suggests the following stages of language endangerment:

Critically endangered – very few speakers all 70 years old and older, great-grandparent age, such as Achumawi spoken in California, USA; Jara spoken in Biu & Kwaya Kusar; Putai spoken in Damboa LGAs of Borno State; Boga spoken in Gombi LGA, Adamawa State and Luri spoken in Bauchi LGA, Bauchi State etc..

Severely endangered – speakers are only 40 years old and older, grandparent age, such as Kaska spoken in British Columbia, Canada; Maaka used in Bara town, Gulani/Gujba LGA of Yobe State; Diri used in Ningi & Darazo LGAs, Siri used in Ningi LGA of Bauchi State etc..

Endangered – speakers are only 20 years old and older, parent age,

such as Pech spoken in Honduras; Deno used in Darazo LGA Bauchi State, Dukkan LGA of Gombe State; Ga'anda used in Gombi LGA, Song, Guyak and Mubi LGAs of Adamawa State; Tal used in Pankshin LGA Plateau etc..

Eroding – speakers are some children and older people. Other children do not speak it, such as Ingush spoken in North Caucasus; Goemai used in Shandem of Plateau State, Lafia and Awe LGAs of Nasarawa State; Bura used in Biu & Askira LGAs of Borno State and Bata used in Demsa, Maiha, Yola North, Song, Goirei & Futore LGAs of Adamawa State etc..

Stable but threatened – all children and older people are speakers, but they are few in number such as Suruaha a small Indian Community that lives in a remote area of Amazonia in Brazil.

Safe – language expected to be learned by all children and all others in the ethnic group, such as English spoken all over the world and Hausa spoken in Northern Nigeria etc..

UNESCO, in Hornsby (2013:3 of 8) provides four levels of language endangerment based on intergenerational transfer thus, safe, vulnerable, definitely endangered, severely endangered, and critically endangered. According to the classification, the "safe" languages are saved or rather are not endangered in all respects. A Vulnerable language, though spoken by children, may be restricted to certain domains e.g. home.

The language is not spoken by children outside home. “Definitely endangered” is not spoken by children and they no longer learn the language as mother tongue in the home. With regards “severely endangered” language, only the oldest generation such as the grand-parents and older generations speak it, while the parent generation may understand it, but they do not speak it to the children or among themselves. The highest level of endangerment in the classification is “critically endangered” language which, even with the oldest generation, only few members speak it and the youngest speakers of the language are grand-parents and older and even then, they speak the language partially and infrequently.

2.6.2 Language Revitalization and Maintenance

This is the end product of language assessment. Revitalization programme usually relies entirely on the degree of endangerment befalling a language. Consequently, language revitalization, maintenance and promotion processes vary among language scholars. However, in supporting endangered languages, Tohono and Johnson (2002:2) suggest speech communities to have crucial role to play, as “it is the speakers, not outsiders, who maintain or abandon languages”. Therefore, if the speakers are ready for business in reinforcing their endangered languages, then professionals in linguistics are prepared with their tool bags to work with them in revitalizing the languages. Among scholars who play crucial role in suggesting revitalization procedures are Emenanjo (1999), Tohono & Johnson (2002), Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006), Obiero (2010), Lyam-Yisa (2012), and Gloria (2013).

Obiero (2010:1) states that, for over two decades now, linguists, educators and anthropologists have directed their efforts at researching about factors that occasion and result from language shift. However, since the formulation of the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) by Fishman (1991) to guide the assessment of language endangerment or vitality, numerous subsequent conceptual models have tended to focus more on evaluating world's languages with respect to their shift rather than their revitalization. Drawing from chronological overview of some metrics that have been proposed by various researchers together with institutions to guide the evaluation of language vitality or endangerment, and with due regard to some attempts at evaluating language revitalization efforts, various linguists and language educators discovered and presented key postulates that could inform efforts at building guidelines with which language revitalization activities may be set-up or examined. These were done in different and similar approaches through statements, consolidations and, of course, re-assignments of concepts. Let us now begin with the right for language preservation.

According to Emenanjo (1999:78), In spite of, or perhaps, in addition to the Languages of Wider Communication, the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (1996) recognises the existence of endangered languages (ELs) and the need to preserve them as the inalienable and non-negotiable possessions and rights of those who own them as God's gifts. For such a linguistic right, it is here suggested that language documentation, language revitalization and language maintenance be

embarked upon as steps that can be taken in order to rescue languages from endangerment. Tohono & Johnson (2002), Gloria (2013) and Obiero (2010), present essential areas for sustaining endangered languages which are unified as:

a) Motivate the Use of the language at home primarily so that children learn it as mother tongue. This can be done through the use of scholarship and employment opportunities for those who can speak the language. This is a sort of creation and development of environment in which the language may be used and which leads to intergeneration transmission of a language.

b) Language assessment and planning; Here, after assessing and discovering the level of endangerment, then basic linguistic and pedagogical training should be organized for the training of native speakers as teachers and use them to create bilingual/bicultural programmes and develop a second language learning programme for adults that can assist in expanding its domain into local government, media, local commerce etc. and widen the scope of language use.

c) Revitalization programmes: this consists of sustainable development in literacy and local documentation skills for documenting a language. This can assist in, recording as much data as possible which can pipe ways for language revitalization such as maintenance programme including language

development strategies such as literacy education, literature production, translation and the creation of language materials etc.

d) National language policy and educational policy should be Supported and developed and be made to promote educational programmes about the endangered language;

e) Improving living conditions and respect for human rights of speaker communities that may paste a strong sense of ethnic identity within the endangered community so that they can support a dominant factor in favour of diversity.

Obiero (2010:215-16) reports Brandt and Ayoungman (1989) to have proposed nine (9) Phases of Language Planning thus:

1) The introductory phase
2) The goal setting phase
3) Re-planning and research phase
4) Needs assessment phase
5) Policy formulation phase
6) Goal assessment and strategies towards reaching them
7) Implementation phase
8) Evaluation phase
9) Re-planning phase.

2.7 Justification for Language Revitalization and Maintenance

Whatever people do or say, there are obvious reasons for doing or saying it. The same thing may be done or said by different people in different ways for varying reasons. The issue of language endangerment is a global concern that attracted and indeed continues to attract the attention of linguists and researchers in other fields of study. Many of them advocate linguistic homogeneity for modern development and national unity. While others opt for the revitalization of endangered languages and language maintenance, and therefore provide reasons for which endangered languages ought to be revitalized and maintained. Among them are Kay Williamson (1990), Tohono & Johnson (2002), Lyam-Yisa (2012), Grimes (2013), Michael (2013), and Obiero (2010).

With regards the need or otherwise for language revitalization, Tohono & Johnson (2002:1) advocate the need for language and cultural diversity as essential to the "human heritage" as each and every language embodies the unique cultural wisdom of a people and that a loss of any language is thus a loss for all humanity. Justifying the need to save languages from endangerment or even extinction, Kay Williamson (1999:162) presented two arguments thus: There is educational argument as children learn better and fastest in their language (from known to unknown), and cultural argument, as each language is a medium for a culture, a life style and a way of thought.

Lyam-Yisa (2012:55), reports Hashim (2001) who asserts that there is every need for Nigerians to Protect and preserve their indigenous languages. This is because a loss of indigenous language is highly destructive since every activity of human such as cultural, tradition, socio-cultural and ethnic independence that is associated with it disappears with it. Language is therefore the vector of culture, so to lose an ancestral language is to weaken the links to the ancestors themselves. As language disappear, a wealth of culture, arts and knowledge disappear with it.

Pertaining to the justification of preserving or rescuing the endangered languages, moreover, Grimes (2013:1) suggested that endangered languages need to be preserved for the following importance:

a. Prevent loss of culture/way of life
b. Prevent loss of information about plants and wildlife, and
c. Preserve peoples' identity.

Introductorily, Obiero (2010:1-2) reports Crystal (2000) to have presented five arguments on the reasons behind concerns about language death thus:

a. Like biological species, a multiplicity of languages amounts to a diversity;
b. That languages are expression of identity;
c. That languages are in themselves repositories of history;

d. They form an integral part of the sum of human knowledge, and that,
e. As a slice of that knowledge, they are interesting subjects in their own right.

As Michael (2013:1) presents, whatever the cause, there are endangered languages, much as the black rhinoceros is endangered. But language is invisible, more intangible than a rhino. Wouldn't the world be simpler if there were fewer languages? Why care if these die out?

2.8 Responsibility for Language Revitalization and Maintenance

According to Emenanjo (1999:81), languages can be saved from endangerment by the local community through its use by speaking, reading, writing, understanding, energizing, promoting, maintaining, managing, propagating and overall developing the language and can be assisted by outsiders in place of mechanical or professional areas like description, collection of data, including orature and their description. But the critical crucial enduring areas of creative writing, literacy aesthetics, translation, semantics description etc belong to the native speakers. Therefore, Language engineering requires cooperation between the speakers of the language on the one hand and linguists and educationists on the other hand, and the Burdens of these may and may not be placed on government, NGOs or private companies. Almost all the sources contacted revolve around these pivots as follows:

Fakuade (1999), Kay Williamson (1990), Bomgbose (1993), Tohono and Johnson (2002), Miyaoka (2002) Brenzinger & Graaf (2006), Amfani (2012) and Gloria (2013) for example, Kay Williamson (1990:42) opines that, "For a minority language to establish itself effectively as a written language, there has to be cooperation between the speakers, who alone have the emotional commitment to develop their language, and various agencies who can help then..."

Along the line, Bomgbose (1993:29) opines that "when all is said and done, the fate of an endangered language may well lie in the hands of the owners of the language themselves and in their will to make it survive." According to Brenzinger (2006:19), maintaining language diversity requires not only the speakers themselves, but also the involvement of linguists, language planners, and policy makers. Brenzinger quoted Akira Yamamoto to have stated that "research in endangered language communities must be reciprocal and collaborative."

With regards to preserving endangered languages furthermore, Fakuade (1999:66) asserts that, one of the ways of ensuring that a language does not die is to have it transmitted to the younger generation. This is best done by making it possible for initial literacy to be acquired in the language. If this is done, materials prepared in the language should be used actively. Furthermore, in supporting endangered languages, Tohono and Johnson (2002:2) suggest speech communities to have crucial role to play, as "it is the speakers, not outsiders, who maintain or abandon languages". But basically, according to Gloria (2013:2), what keeps a language alive is its social

function. The only people who can stop a language from shrinking or dying are the speakers of that language. Along the line, Amfani (2012) emphasized that it is pertinent for speakers of non codified languages and those languages without functional literacy to understand that it is presently a high time for them to fold their hands and wait for government to single-handedly codify their languages and provide them with functional literacy, especially at present political world when sentiments are rooted and being off-rooted. Therefore, it is now the responsibility of ethnic communities to pioneer, in collaboration with government and linguists, the codification of their languages.

Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:2 & 19-20) stated that, the fundamental task of linguists is the research on the collection of data from endangered languages. Linguists may preserve data in documenting languages. However, the members of the speech communities uphold or give up languages. For that reason, only the speakers of the endangered languages themselves can opt for and execute language maintenance and revitalization measures. Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:19-20) continues to express that: Linguists and other scholars can assist communities in such attempts of language revitalization and maintenance, for example by making language resources from archives available by training community members to become language workers or even linguists, and also by helping to produce language learning and teaching materials.

According to Tohono & Johnson (2002:4-5) and Miyaoka (2002:12-13), in srevitalizing a language the role of speech communities on one hand and that of external specialists and speech communities together on the other are paramount. However, Gloria (2013:2 of 3) singles out the speakers to be responsible for language revitalization and maintenance since they are those who use or cease to use it. However, it is observed that the attitudes of, the Eggon language native speakers, towards their heritage language is greatly negative. In fact, the Eggon community is considerably indifferent with regards to whether the language dies or survives. They are carried away by prestige in English and Hausa. Therefore, the general assumption of this study is that, hardly can the Eggon community play tremendous role for anything like revitalization of the native language for their indifference about it.

2.9 Revitalization Programmes

Some revitalization (documentation) programmes have been, and of course are being put in place across the world for maintaining and even developing the linguistic culture of some speech communities (or endangered languages). These include, the establishment of "The Royal Institute of the Amazigh Culture" (IRCAM) in October 17th, 2001, by King Muhammed V1 of Morocco where Amazigh speakers are most numerous; and the revitaliztion effort of Ainu language in Japan, reported in the case study conducted and presented by Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:8). The Ainu Linguistic and Cultural identity disappeared as a result of planned government assimilation programme. According to the source, "many Japanese citizens fear discrimination of being Ainu and for that reason deny their origin." Several scholars

working on Ainu language assume that less than ten (10) speakers are proficient in Ainu language. Despite that however, Ainu language witnessed the "establishment of the Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture (FRPAC).

According to Haruna (2014:18 – 22) some Research and development in indigenous language documentation and preservation in Nigeria have been witnessed. These are, Nigeria Bible Translation Trust Jos which is currently working on 50 languages in the country with 28 languages in the north eastern region; the Jos Linguistic Circle on language development; CeLeLa Promoters and Trainers: the CeLeLa language is spoken by the Lelna people in Zuru, Sakaba, Danko, Wasagu and Fakai local government areas of Kebbi State and southern part of Rijau local government of Niger State; The southern Bauchi Language Survey which is more or less a solo project by Andrew Haruna himself and which concentrates on description and documentation of endangered languages of the Southern Bauchi area; Biu emirate Studies Series which has been founded by Dr Bukar Usman (2014). The Study Series Programme aims at restoring and promoting the Babur/Bura language and other languages and cultures of the Biu Emirate; then in Delta State, there is Urhobo language, for which Urhobo Resource and Language Learning Centre (URLL) has been established; and Ministry of Culture and Ijaw National Affairs, Bayelsa State witnessed the establishment of Association for Promoting Igala Language, Literature and Culture (APILLAC) etc.

In the end, to the best knowledge of this research, as far as Nasarawa State is concerned, no revitalization effort has been made on any indigenous language, despite the twenty three (minority) languages therein**.**

2.10 Revitalized Endangered Languages

Some languages have been able to recover completely or partially from being endangered. One of the famous examples is that of Hebrew. The language has now been estimated to have 5,150,000 mother tongue speakers in the world and who make 81% of the population of Israel. Nearly everyone in Israel speaks Hebrew as either their first or second language (Grimes 2013:18).

Another example is that of Cornish in United Kingdom (Great Britain). The language started reviving after it became extinct as a mother tongue in 1777. However, members of the ethnic group have brought it back recently so that there are reported to be a number of people under 20 who use it as first language, 1,000 who use it as their everyday language, and 2,000 others who speak it fluently. They have evening classes, correspondence courses, summer camps, childrens' play groups and it is taught in some schools (Grimes, 2013:19).

Other languages able to revive include Lacandon in Maxico, the speakers of which were 178 in 1942, but gains yet more speakers in 2000 to 1,000 speakers. So also the Seri, the Hokan languages in northern Mexico with population of 215 speakers in 1951 but increased the number of speakers to 800 in 2000. In addition to that,

Nambukuara language of Brazil declined from 10,000 to 600 in 1940s but presently revives to 900 speakers (Grimes 2013:20) etc.

Definitely, various scholars investigated the issue of language endangerment, factors for endangerment, method of assessing language endangerment and strategies for preventing language endangerment. However, some of the works cannot be said to be based on the methodology of linguistic profiling, and as general overview, some of them did not map out any population or area samples, let alone talk about Nasarawa State in whichever respect. Many of the works are either case study on languages other than those of Nasarawa State let alone Eggon language or area samples other than Nasarawa State.

The only works which are observed to be directly related to Nasarawa State languages are Okwudishu (1990) and Sarvi (2005) and those specifically conducted on Eggon Community such as Kigbu (1984) which is a Masters Degree in History and Enna (1995), a Ph.D Degree in Theater Art, none of which tested or even assessed language endangerment. Since Nasarawa State qualifies as a minefield of minority languages such as Eggon, the phenomenon of minority multilingualism and its attendant consequences is worth taking a look at along the line of scientific investigation.

This study is, therefore, prompted to the sociolinguistic field of language endangerment which is the gateway to language attrition, moribund, extinction or death. Language endangerment has, over the years, been studied and analysed.

Multiple works which directly or indirectly study language endangerment have been compiled and presented in conferences and published in books, journals, Newspapers and of course on the internet, just as hinted above. In addition to that, Bleambo (1999) for instance, presented a report on two different workshops organised by NINLAN and conducted at Yola and Jos covering the attendance of 40 and 80 participants who considered 40 and 38 ethnic groups respectively. Unfortunately, Eggon, an indigenous language of Nasarawa State did not feature in any of the discussions mentioned above. So, there has been great need to check and discover the endangerment of Eggon, the degree of the endangerment and its reversibility.

2.11 General Observation on the Review

The works reviewed are relevant and therefore related to the present study for the fact that they discussed, and cited various scholars on the issue of language endangerment such as definition of language endangerment, reality or otherwise of endangerment, factors for endangerment, stages of endangerment, revitalization of endangered languages and the responsibility of revitalizing and maintaining endangered languages, that is to say, who, among scholars, government or language speakers, will take the charges of revitalizing endangered language? Moreover, the reasons behind preserving, maintaining and developing indigenous Nigerian languages etc. are suggested. Some of the works did not map out any population or area samples, let alone talk about Nasarawa State in whichever respect. Therefore this might have been the chance for the present study.

Most of the works reviewed are similar, in one way or the other, to the present study as they pipe ways and provide clues to this study, especially in relation to various aspects of sociolinguistic phenomenon of language endangerment in Nigeria. However, the difference between the two works by far exceeds the similarity. Most of them are either cases study on languages other than those of Nasarawa State or area samples other than Nasarawa State. Importantly as well, many of the works have no any proximity with Nasarawa state or the native languages or ethnic groups therein, let alone studying Eggon, an language of Nasarawa State.

Some of the works reviewed attached much emphasis to numerical strength in assessing language endangerment. For example, Ugwuoke (1999) who marked out less than 5,000 speakers to be cut off point for endangerment, and other works such as Fakuade (1999) who believed in the number of speakers as determining factor for endangerment etc. However many scholars argue seriously on the inaccessibility of this kind of framework. This is because language endangerment cannot be assessed solely on number of speakers. There are some languages with fewer speakers but not endangered, the Suruaha, for instance, a small Indian community that lives in a remote area of Amazonia in Brazil, consists of approximately 150 members, and all of them, including the children, were monolingual in Suruaha at the time of first contact with linguists. Despite the small size of the population, the community holds onto its language and traditional way of life in all domains (Brenzinger 2006:3), while others with many thousands or even million speakers but endangered. Therefore the criterion pointing or labelling endangered languages employed by Ugwuoke and others such as

(Fakuade 1999:58) is insufficient and of course not reliable to present work. After all, the work is a general study on Nigerian languages which cited only three out of twenty three languages of Nasarawa State of which, importantly as well, Eggon is not part.

Other observations pose in the following questions as why varying estimates on world, Nigerian and Nasarawa State languages? Why are there forced assimilations in some parts of the world, especially in the United States and Europe but advocates for language heterogeneity for other parts of the world such as Nigeria? How viable is language isolation (especially in the Nigerian context) as suggested in Lyam-yisa (2012:56)? And who is to blame if and when the speakers of a language prefer to abandon it in favour of more prestigious one? Is there no human right of language choice in Nigeria? After all, language endangerment is greatly a natural phenomenon.

There are statistical variations among scholars regarding the number of world languages, Nigerian languages and of course Nasarawa State languages. This shows that the exact number of contemporary world's languages is not yet ascertained. This is virtually binding upon various reasons such as the general inability to distinguish between languages and their respective dialects. Then time frames within which some languages are dying and some more are newly discovered. The next variable in the variation of estimates depends on the extent and means of the research conducted. There is also inability to differentiate the names of ethnic group, their language and

towns and sometimes the names given to them by other communities. In addition to that, Okwudishu (1990:202) observes that:

> The popular conception of mutual intelligibility is that mutually intelligible dialects constitute a language. Using this distinction, one could easily jump to the conclusion that all mutually intelligible varieties are dialects of one language. Yet, there are cases of separate languages that share very high mutual intelligibility. The Scandinavian languages (Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish) provide good example of this type of intelligibility

The data on the numerical strength of Nasarawa State languages is also clashing as mentioned earlier. This might have connection with historical variables of migration and researches conducted. This is in the sense that the migrations were subsequent among different ethnic groups and the researches were conducted one after the other and the intervening variable of distinction between language and dialect is an obstacle. For example, while Okwudishu (1990) reported Koro and Migili as reperate languages, Sarvi (2005) argued that Koro is the name given to Migili by other communities, so the two names refer to only one speech community.

Definitely, the expansion of the **Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale** (GIDS) of Joshua Fishman (1991) to **Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale** by Lewis and Simons (2009 reported in Obiero 2010:2010) has contributed in having clashing statistics regards the number of world languages. In fact, there are so many living languages listed in the 17th edition of the Ethnoloque (7105) than there are in the 16th edition (6,909). Because, there was introduction of EGIDS in the 17th

edition which included the 188 languages which were placed in the dormant category (EGiDS 9) and which were counted as extinct in the previous edition, but are now being distinguisted from extinct (EGIDS 10) and therefore counted as living (Lewis et al 2013:2).

Some languages are, in one time, considered extinct but discovered to reincarnate in another time such as the case of Hebrew in Israel, Cornish in United Kingdom (Great Britain), Lacandon in Maxico, Seri, the Hokan language in nothern Mexico and Nambukuara language of Brazil etc.

In relation to UNESCO'S Absolute Number of Speakers, reported in Brenzinger (2003), Lewis (2013:1), Obiero (2010:207), Brenzinger & de Graaf (2006:18) etc., some of them have already denounced the claim that it is impossible to have absolute number of speakers as the birth and death rates are frequently on transit. In addition to that, there is an issue of language shift with some speakers which reduces the absolute number. However, Tohono and Johnson (2002:8) made the point very clear that "it is imposible to provide a valid interpretation of 'Absolute numbers', but a small speech community is always at risk." This is because "a small population is more vulnerable to decimation such as disease, warfare, or other natural disaster than the larger one. A small language group may also merge with a neighbouring group losing its own language and culture."

Another point of observation is the "language isolation" as suggested in Lyam-yisa (2012:56) this suggestion is in fact very difficult if at all possible especially in the Nigerian context where multilingualism is the order of the day. On the issue of language isolation Chukwu (2005:184) agrees that:

> Generally, language in all its ramifications cannot exist in isolation just as human beings cannot be alone without interacting with one another. Consequently, no attempt should be made to supplant one language with another rather the languages should be made to play complementary roles.

The arguments by some scholars on the need for language revitalization may sound plausible in the real sense. But why some countries/states especially the most developed ones such as United States and United Kingdom adopt language assimilation programmes? Though Nigeria is not adopting any language assimilation programme, but who is to blame if people decide to shift to speaking a non native language. Obviously, some scholars advocate language homogeneity for national unity, integration and eventually development. This work therefore appeal to the human right activists to see to the issue of language choice in Nigeria, as language diversity without national language among the indigenous is encouraging the scenario of linguistic domination by colonial languages which, in turn, widen the gap of development opportunity for Nigeria, because there is no country in the world that developed using a foreign language. So it is duty bound to make it a point that languages die naturally and language survival is entirely the business of the speakers,

if they wish to abandon it for reason(s) best known to them, there is no possibility that the language will not die.

In relation to Eggon community, just like other ethnic groups and linguistic areas, their population is not yet certain. Among the native speakers themselves, Kigbu (1984:1) and Enna (1995:73) ascertain that the Eggon community embraces a total population of about fifty thousand (50,000) people. Crozier & Blench (1992:35) and Blench (2011:22) report the population of Eggon as fifty two thousand (52,000). Recently, Lewis, Simons & Fennig, (Eds.) (2016:1) quoted 1990 source which presents the population of the Eggon as one hundred and forty thousand (140,000). Whatever, the case, the considerable number of Eggon does not prevent its language from endangerment, as they are interspersed through intermarriage and migration. The intergenerational use of the language is crippled and it is generally spoken in reduced number of communicative domains.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

It is going to be very difficult, if at all possible, to conduct a successful research without selecting and preparing the research methodology. The methods of data collection and presentation were already discovered by scholars, what is left for researchers is the selection and application of them or some of them, depending on the type and purpose of research. The study has employed appropriate strategies already discovered by linguists and other researchers in assessing the endangerment of the Eggon language. The methods of data collection and presentation as well as the theoretical framework that have been presented in the chapter are as follows:

3.2 Library Research

This is the use of intensive and extensive readings in order to have in-depth or deep and wide insight of the area covered by the study. This also include the study of relevant materials and documents such as thesis, textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, conference papers etc. covering the area of study, and other materials in the hands of, and/or compiled by the native and other scholars of the indigenous languages of Nasarawa State concerning the linguistic situation of the area and related materials.

3.3 Observation

The second method has been critical observation of speeches and interactions of the native speakers of the Eggon language. Here, there have been multiple visits and interactions with the speakers of the Eggon language of Nasarawa State. These have been done at different situations and occasions such as in markets, stations, mosques/churches and during ceremonial activities with a view to determine the language attitude of the people in varying domains and see how they interact with themselves and with members of other communities to discover both in-group and out-group use of the Eggon language. Radio and television have also been used as good domains (media) for language use by which code-mixing and code-switching observed.

3.4 Written Questionnaire

The third method is written questionnaire which covered the population sample of persons irrespective of gender and age. All together, three hundred and eighty one (381) questionnaires have been issued to the equal number respondents of the Eggon community knowledgeable about the linguistic group (Eggon) and who are familiar with language terrain of the state. The area samples used for questionnaire distribution are: Lafia, Agyaragu, Kayarda, Bukan Sidi, Bukan Alu, Adogi, Aridi, Akunagba, Ashangwa, and Mai Akuya under Lafia Local Government (25 & 26/11/2013); Nasarawa Eggon, Kagbu, Mada Station, Burum-Burum, Lambaga Amkpa, Arikpa, Wakama, Walko, Galle and Agbagi under Nasarawa Eggon Local Government (27 & 28/11/2013); Akwanga, Kwarje, Angwa Kpadem and under Akwanga Local

Gonernment (29 & 30/11/2013); Keana, Kadarko, Sarkin Noma, Aloshi, Gba, Kpayo under Keana Local Government (08 & 09/12/2013); Kokona, Gidi-gidi, Moroa, Akwan Mayo and Garaku under Kokona (10 & 11/12/2013); Awe, Burkano, Ribi, Tunga and Azara under Awe (06 & 07/12/2013); Doma, Ruttu, Damba, Alagye and Dogo Karmi under Doma Local Government (04 & 05/12/2013); Keffi, Angwan Eggon, and Kawo under Keffi Local government (02 & 03/12/2013) This category of respondents, as educated members of the community, has been requested to supply written form of information by filling the questionnaire. This is with a view to determine the intergenerational Eggon language transmission, the trends in the existing Eggon language domain, the response of the Eggon language to new domain, the materials for the language education and literacy, the government and institutional attitude to the language, the attitude of the Eggon community to their language, and the amount and quality of the Eggon language documentation.

3.5 Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire contains five (5) key questions (1 – 5) as presented in the adopted framework (Obiero 2010:212), to assess the endangerment or vitality of the Eggon language where the alternatives disclose the degrees of endangerment or safety, and questions 6 – 12 have been used to determine the factors responsible for the endangerment or safety of the Eggon language. The study used simple calculation in the description and presentation of the data collected. Thus each item of the questionnaire contains alternatives each to be chosen amongst 381 respondents as the population sample of the study. Therefore the total number of respondents that have

chosen an alternative in each item of the questionnaire determined the alternative most selected which ultimately indicated the degree of viability or endangerment of the Eggon language. The data has been presented in table forms (Pp 90 – 91).

3.6 Verbal Interview

For oral interview, three hundred and eighty one (381) informants have been visited randomly but in their predominant areas and areas of their good concentration and were interviewed to find out information concerning the reality and effect of intermarriage, market forces, politics, migration, socio-economic interaction determined by modernization, attitudes of speakers, and whether the language is adequately acquired and used especially by child-bearing generation, as factors for language endangerment. The population sample of this category of informants is selected from all walks of lives. The interviews have been conducted on 18 – 21/03/2015; 12, 16, 17, 26, 27, 29/05/2015; & 01/06/2015. For places of the interviews refer to item 3.4: Written questionnaire (Pp 78 – 79).

3.7 Description of the Interview

There have been two types of interview referred to as the first interview and the second interview. The first interview contains seven questions (1 – 7) in Hausa and their English versions in accordance with the adopted framework (Obiero 2010:212), which have been used to assess the endangerment or vitality of the Eggon language. The questions have been constructed with alternatives to support the questionnaire administered in English in investigating the endangerment or safety of the Eggon

language, the degree of the endangerment or safety and the factors responsible for the endangerment or safety of the Eggon language. The study used simple calculation in the description and presentation of the data collected. Thus the alternatives under each question could be chosen each amongst three hundred and eighty one (381) informants as the population sample of the study and the area samples are as covered in the questionnaire (Pp 78 – 79). Therefore the total number of informants that have chosen an alternative in each item of the interview determines the alternative selected which ultimately indicates the degree of vitality or endangerment of the Eggon language. The data has been presented in table forms (Pp 91 – 92).

There has, also, been the second interview as below. Though the questions are written down but they have been read for the informants, of between 30 – 60 years of age, to answer verbally, just as done with the first interview, and the choices have been calculated accordingly. The interview has been conducted on 1, 3, 7 & 9/01/2014. This section of the interview contained the random selection of fifty exogamous families of husband, wife/wives and children each. The population sample, fifty (50) families is randomly determined for the fact that it is uncontrollable as the number of children in one family might be more than that of the other. The purpose of this section is to find out, in the practical sense, the linguistic effect of exogamy on the wives and the children. Therefore, the section has been used to confirm or rather consolidate the result that has been obtained from the questionnaire and the first interview on the point of exogamy. This is because the respondents on the questionnaire and the first interview are not amongst the exogamous families.

Therefore, their responses have been based on mere observational experience. It has been a one-sided interview in the sense that only fifty husbands from different speech communities other than Eggon, who have gotten the hands of Eggon women in marriage, have been interviewed without single experience on the reverse.

3.8 Sample of the Study

Obviously, and as agreed by scholars and researchers across the world, "no concept is as fundamental to the conduct of research and the interpretation of its results as is sampling" (Osuala 2005:114 in Shu'aib, 2005) who also reported Sulaiman (1998) to have viewed sampling as "that portion of population which is studied closely in order to gain some knowledge and or make generalization about the population it represents." The study contains two samples, the area sample and the population sample and in each, random sampling technique has been employed for easy attainment of information and un-conflicting statistics.

3.8.1 Area Sample of the Study

The research focuses on Nasarawa State of Nigeria with particular consideration to areas such as Lafia, Nasarawa Eggon, Akwanga, Keana, Kokona, Keffi, Doma, Obi, Awe, and Karu, etc. towns and some other towns with good concentration of the Eggons people. Random sampling technique has been employed in order to obtain wide coverage and adequate representation of the areas and populations (respondents/informants) of the study across Nasarawa State. This is for the fact that some areas, such as Lafia, Nasarawa Eggon, Akwanga, Doma, and Kokona Local

Government Areas etc. have predominance of the Eggon people and other areas, such as Keffi, Awe, Karu, Keana, and Obi Local Government Areas etc. have considerable concentration of the Eggon people, while in other areas, such as Wamba, Toto, and Nasarawa etc. they are less concentrated. Therefore, the Towns visited in some local governments are more in number than those in some other local government (See Appendix 1V for the Locations of Eggon and Genetic Classification)

3.8.2 Population Sample of the Study

The study adopts the sampling techniques presented in Kreicie, and Morgan (2006) from the title: "Determining Sample for Research activities Educational and Psychological Measurement obtained from http//www.fns.usda.gov accessed on 13/08/2010. The technique contains: Table for Determining Random Sample Size from a Given Population. The table marks out various numbers (Ns) of population matching with their respective samples (Ss). According to the table, a total population number of 50,000 should have 381 respondents as the population sample, the total population of 75,000 should be represented by 382 respondents as population sample, while a total population of 100,000 people should have a population sample of 384 respondents, and 1,000,000 people and above, total population, uses 384 respondents as sample etc. note that the population sample is adopted in both the questionnaire and the first form of verbal interview. However, a separate and specialized interview, otherwise refered as second form of the interview has been prepared to randomly find the effect of exogamy on the children.

According to Welmers (1971 in Blench 2011:22) and Crozier and Blench (1992:35), the total population of the Eggon people is fifty two thousand (52,000), while Kigbu (1984:1) and Enna (1995:73) members of the Eggon community, ascertain that the Eggon community embraces a total population of about 50,000 people. Whatever the case, and in this case, the research uses three hundred and eighty one (381) respondents to be the population sample for fifty thousand to seventy four thousand nine hundred and ninety nine (50,000 – 74, 999) people as total population to be in accordance with the sampling techniques of Kreicie, and Morgan (2006). The research, randomly, distributed the questionnaire to members of the Eggon community in Nasarawa State of both sex and all ages that obtained educational quality making them capable of filling it. Below is the table containing the summary of the information about the respondents regards serial number, the LGAs, number of questionnaires distributed, age of the respondents and their educational qualification:

Table 12 Information about Respondents

SN.	L. G. Areas	Number	Age	Educational Background
1	Lafia	56	22 – 68	SSCE, ND, NCE, HND/Degree, M.SC, PhD
2	Nasarawa Eggon	55	24 – 64	SSCE, ND, NCE, HND/Degree, M.SC, PhD
3	Akwanga	30	21 – 55	SSCE, ND, NCE, HND/Degree
4	Doma	30	25 –58	ND, NCE, HND/Degree, M.A
5	Keana	30	35 – 49	ND, HND/Degree, PhD
6	Awe	30	31 – 52	ND, HND, PhD
7	Keffi	30	33 – 45	ND, Degree

8	Obi	30	30 – 56	ND, NCE, HND/Degree, PhD
9	Karu	20	26 – 51	Grade 11, ND, NCE
10	Toto	20	23 – 60	Primary 7, SSCE, ND,
11	Kokona	30	24 – 59	SSCE, ND, PGD, AD, HND/Degree,
12	Wamba	20	31 – 43	ND, NCE

3.9 The Theoretical Framework of the Study (EGIDS)

The present study adopts Ethnologue's Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) and UNESCO's framework, Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) as put forward by Lewis and Simons (2009) and reported by Obiero (2010:210 – 211). It is a 13-level model with the help of which all the world's languages (including those for which there are no longer speakers) can be classified. From the scale, a language can be evaluated by answering 5 key-questions regarding its identity function, vehicularity, state of intergenerational language transmission, literacy acquisition status, and a societal profile of its generational use.

The EGIDS is an attempt to expand the scope of the categorizations to include all of the 7,105 languages reported on in the 17th edition of the Ethnoloque, not just those which are losing users and uses. The expansion has made it possible for us to use the scale not only to calculate the degree to which a language has been endangered, but also the level of development that has been achieved, as standardization and modernization (language planning) activities have been implemented in an increasing

number of languages in which the interest, requests, participation and decisions of the leaders of a particular language group have been crucial for any language development (Lewis et al 2013:2).

Table 13 Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS)

Level	Label	Description	UNESCO
0	International	The language is used internationally for a broad range of function.	Safe
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media and government at nationwide level.	Safe
2	Regional	The languageis used for local and regional mass media governmental services.	Safe
3	Trade	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders.	Safe
4	Educational	Literacy in the language is being transmitted through a system of public education.	Safe
5	Written	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form in parts of the community.	Safe
6a	Vigorous	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language.	Safe
6b	Threatened	The language is used orally by all generations but only some of the child-bearing generation are transmitting it to their children.	Vulnerable
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation knows the language Well enough to use it among themselves but none are transmitting it to their children.	Definitely Endangered
8a	Moribund	The only remaining active speakers of the Language are members of the grand-parent generation.	Severely Endangered
8b	Nearly extinct	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grand-parent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language.	Critically endangered
9	Dormant	The language is used as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community. No one has more than symbolic proficiency.	Extinct
10	Extinct	No one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes.	Extinct

3.9.1 Evaluating the Framework

Though the numbering in the table above shows 10 levels, the labels themselves feature 13 categories. Levels 6a and 6b correspond to Fishman's GIDS at level 6; similarly, 8a and 8b correspond to level 8 in the GIDS. Levels 0, 9, and 10 are entirely new. The fourth column is made to correspond to UNESCO's endangerment or vitality categories.

From the model Obiero (2010:211) observes the way Lewis and Simons (2009) "have attempted to achieve three important things": The layering of "safe" languages so as to capture the diversity of their situations, the definitive expansion of categories falling below safe (as this would be of interest to revitalization programmes), and the flexibility of the entire grid (so a large number of world's languages are represented). Obiero (2010) observes that to demonstrate the adaptability of the model, Lewis and Simons explain how the 5 key-questions can guide the diagnosis and evaluation process:

Key-question 1 poses: *What is the current identity function of the language?* There are four possible answers to this question (Historical, Heritage, Home, and Vehicular) whose selection determines which of the rest of the questions would be focused next. Key- question 2 asks: *What is the level of official use?* This question helps to distinguish between the possible EGIDS levels when a language is serving the vehicular identity function. There are four possible answers which correspond to EGIDS levels 0 to 3. These are: International, National, Regional, not-Official. Key question 3 that must be asked when the answer to key question 1 is Home is: *are all*

parents transmitting the language to their children? Here, the two possible constraining answers are, Yes or No. If Yes is the selected answer, Key-question 4 must be answered in order to determine if the community is at EGIDS level 4, 5, or 6a. If No, is the selected answer, then key-question 5 must be answered to determine if the community is at EGIDS level 6b, 7, 8a or 8b. Key-question 4 asks: *What is the literacy status?* If the response to Key-question 3 is *yes*, then the status of literacy education in the community needs to be identified. Again there are three possible answers to this question: institutional, Incipient (written), and None. Key-question 5 poses: What is the youngest generation of proficient speakers? When the response to Key-question 3 (Intergenerational Transmission) is *No*, it is necessary to know how far along language shift has progressed in order to assess the current EGIDS level: Great grand-parent, Grand-parent, Parent, Children.

Obiero (2010:212) then states that, this model is yet to be tried out. Therefore, the present study intends to make empirical use of it. The model has been employed to assess and determine the degree of language endangerment or vitality with Eggon an indigenous language of Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

3.9.2 Justification for Employing the Framework in the Present Study

The framework has been employed in the present study for the following reasons:

Adequacy: It could cover and satisfy a wide range of numerous languages, such as a complex linguistic situation of Nasarawa State, which encompasses many languages with, presumably, varying levels of endangerment, particularly Eggon. Therefore, the

framework captures all degrees of language endangerment as well as all categories of safe languages.

Comprehensiveness: The model is explicitly clear and straightforward and has assisted in preparing guiding questions for proper directions of a research questionnaire.

Empiricism: As a new model, that had not yet been tested, there has been a need to make it a reality in the Nigerian linguistic situation of Nasarawa State.

3.10 Data Presentation

3.10.1 Endangerment of the Eggon Language: Data Presentation from the questionnaire

1) What is the current identity function of the Eggon language?			
Historical = 64 (16.8%)	Heritage = 122 (32%)	Home = 123 (32.3%)	Vehicular = 72 (18.9%)
2) What is the level of official use of the Eggon language?			
International = 59 (15.5%)	National = 27 (07.1%)	Regional = 22 (05.8%)	Not official = 273 (71.6%)
3) Are all parents transmitting the language to their children?			
Yes = 129 (33.9%)		No = 252 (66.1%)	
4) What is the literacy status of the Eggon language?			
Institutional = 37 (9.7%)	Incipient/written = 204 (53.5%)	None = 140 (36.7%)	
5) What is the youngest generation of the Eggon language proficient speakers?			
Great grand-parent 12 = 03.1%	Grand-parent = 154 (40%)	Parent = 86 (22.6%)	Children = 129 (33.9%)

Table 14 showing number of respondents for each alternative and equivalent in percentage: Questionnaire

3.10.2 Factors for the Endangerment of Eggon: Data Presentation from the Questionnaire

6) Do members of the Eggon community migrate outside Eggon speaking areas?			
Yes = 367 (96%)		No = 14 (3.7%)	
7) If yes, what is the possible degree of the migration?			
Law = 20 (5.3%)	Medium = 77 (20%)	High = 141 (37%)	Very High=143 (37.5%)
8) Do members of the Eggon community marry members of other communities?			
Yes = 379 (99.5%)		No = 02 (0.5%)	
9) If yes, how many Eggons marry from/to members of other communities?			
Most Eggons = 45 (11.8%)	Many Eggons = 129 (33.9%)	Some Eggons = 168 (44.1%)	Few Eggons = 39 (10.2%)
10) How many children of Eggon intermarriage speak Eggon Language at all?			
Most children = 30 (7.9%)	Many children = 31 (8.1%)	Some children = 240 (63%)	No children = 80 (21%)
11) Is Eggon language used in new domains such as ICT etc.?			
Yes = 109 (28.6%)		No = 272 (71.4%)	

Table 15 number of respondents for each alternative and equivalent in percentage: Questionnaire

12) Indicate the language you use **most** in each of the following domains: (Factors Continue)

Domain	Eggon		English		Hausa		Others		Undecided	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Home	245	64%	42	11%	94	24.7%	00	00%	00	00%
School	01	0.3%	368	96,6%	12	3.1%	00	00%	00	00%
Market	14	3.7%	44	11.5%	317	83.2%	06	1.6%	00	00%
Education	06	1.6%	375	98.4%	00	00%	00	00%	00	00%
Politics	29	7.6%	131	34%	217	57.1%	04	01%	00	00%
Work place	12	3.1%	294	77.2%	75	19.7%	00	00%	00	00%
Internet	06	1.6%	372	97.6	01	0.3%	00	00%	02	0.5%
ICT	04	1.1%	372	97.6	00	00%	00	00%	05	1.3%
Mosque/Church	33	8.7%	61	16%	272	71.4%	13	3.4%	02	0.5%

Table 16 showing number and percentage of respondents for each language and domain: Questionnaire

3.10.3 Endangerment of the Eggon Language: Data Presentation from the first interview

S/ N	Tambayoyi/Questions	Amsoshi/Responses	
1	*Tsakanin kai/ke da mahaifanka/ki, wane ne ya fi iya magana da harshen Eggon?* (Between you and your parent, who is more proficient in the Eggon language?)	*Su ne suka fi iyawa* (They are more proficient) = 369 (96.9%)	*Ni ne na fi iyawa* (I am more proficient) = 12 (3.1%)
2	*Tsakanin kai/ke da 'ya'yanka/ki, wane ne ya fi iya magana da harshen Eggon?* (Between you and your children, who is more proficient in the Eggon language?)	*Ni ne na fi iyawa* (I am more proficient) = 372 (97.6%)	*Su ne suka fi iyawa* (They are more proficient) = 09 (2.4%)
3	*Shin dukkan al'ummar Eggon suna koya wa 'ya'yansu harshen Eggon?* (Are all parents transmitting the Eggon language to their children?)	*Ee, dukkansu* (Yes, all of them) = 127 (33.3%)	*Ba dukkansu ba* (not all of them) = 254 (66.7%)
4	*Shin al'ummar Eggon suna yin qaura su zauna wuraren da ba a magana da harshensu?* (Do members of Eggon community migrate outside Eggon speaking areas?)	*Ee, suna yi* (Yes, they do) = 381 (100%)	*A'a, ba sa yi* (No, they don't) = 00 (00%)

5	*Shin al'ummar Eggon suna auren wasu al'ummu (waxanda ba Eggon ba)?* (Do members of Eggon community marry members of other communities?)	*Ee, suna yi* (Yes, they do) = 381 (100%)	*A'a, ba sa yi* (No, they don't) = 00 (00%)	
6	*Shin yaran da aka Haifa ta hanyar auratayya da al'ummar Eggon, suna iya magana da harshen Eggon?* (Are the children of Eggon intermarriage able to speak Eggon language at all?)	*A'a, ba sa iyawa* (Not, at all) = 277 (72.7%)	*Ee, wasu suna iyawa* (Yes,some of them can) = 95 (24.9%)	*Ee, yawanci suna iyawa* (Yes, most of them can) = 09(2.4%)

Table 17 showing number of respondents for each alternative and equivalent in percentage: First interview

3.10.4 Factors for the Endangerment of Eggon: Data Presentation from the first Interview

7 *Wane harshe ka/kika fi amfani da shi a waxannan muhallan magana?*
(Indicate the language you use **most** in each of the following domains):

Domain	Eggon		English		Hausa	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Gida/Home	197	51.7%	00	00%	184	48.3%
Tasha/Motor Station	48	12.6%	07	1.8%	326	85.6%
Kasuwa/Market	47	12.3%	07	1.8%	327	85.8%
Masallaci/Mosque/Church	44	11.6%	20	5.2%	317	83.2%
Siyasa/Politics	79	20.7%	05	1.3%	297	78%
Wayar-hannu /Handset	00	00%	250	65.6%	131	34.4%
Tafiye-tafiye /Travels	31	8.1%	05	1.3%	345	90.6%
Bukukuwa/Ceremonies	155	40.7%	27	7.1%	199	52.2%

Table 18 showing number and percentage of respondents for each language and domain: First interview

3.10.5 Factors for the Endangerment of Eggon: Data Presentation from the Second Interview

This interview has, specifically, been conducted with members of exogamous families, in order to find out the linguistic effect of intermarriage on the wives and the

children. As earlier mentioned, fifty (50) husbands have been sampled out randomly for the research. These husbands belong to different speech communities such as Hausa (mainly), Fulve, Migili, Alago, Kambari, etc. who have, altogether, married sixty four (64) Eggon wives (as some of them are polygamous) and have given birth to one hundred and fifty three (153) children.

Now, it has been discovered that out of the 64 Eggon wives, 60 wives have shifted to speaking Hausa. Only the remaining 04 wives have been able to continue speaking Eggon whenever they have been visited by their Eggon relatives. Moreover, out of the 153 children of the families, 152 do not even know the language let alone speaking it. Only the remaining 1 child, who has been brought up by his maternal grand-parent, is able to speak the Eggon language.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The greater the number of languages in a country or state is usually correlatable to the gravity of language endangerment in such area. This is evident in the Nigerian case being one of the frontlines of linguistic diversity in the world. Thus Nigeria is one of the countries with many endangered languages with Eggon among them. This can be seen in chapter two and four of this study, thus the review of related literature and data analysis and discussion respectively.

This study has specifically been designed to investigate language endangerment, a study of Eggon language of Nasarawa State. The data collected by means of different methods, with questionnaire as the bedrock, has been treated in accordance with the research questions of the study. Therefore, the present chapter contains the data analysis and discussion. Moreover, the analysis and discussion have been enclosed in five main sections itemized 4.1 – 4.5 which touch both the results of the questionnaire and those of the interview as follows:

4.2 The Endangerment of the Eggon Language

This study has constructed research questions before hand. The first of the research questions is in relation to whether the Eggon language of Nasarawa State is really endangered. Out of this question, an assumption has been formed that the Eggon

language is really endangered. It has, now, been established by the study that the language is really endangered. However, this establishment is analysed through the theoretical framework of the study as follows, Key-Question 1:

What is the current identity function of the Eggon language?

There are four possible answers to this question (Historical, Heritage, Home, and Vehicular) which selection determines which of the rest of the questions would be focused next. For example, Key-question 2 asks:

What is the level of official use of the Eggon language?

The question helps to distinguish between the possible EGIDS levels when a language is serving the vehicular identity function. There are four possible answers which correspond to EGIDS levels 0 to 3. These are: International, National, Regional, not-Official. However, the findings show that Eggon language is not serving the vehicular identity function for the following facts:

Amongst the 381 Eggon respondents, representing 100% of the population sample across Nasarawa State, 123 of them, equivalent to 32.3% considered the current identity function of the Eggon language to be “Home”; immediately followed by 122 respondents which is equivalent to 32% who considered it to be “Heritage”; while only 72 respondents which is equivalent to 18.9% asserted that the current identity

function of the Eggon language is “Vehicular”; and the remaining 64 respondents which is equivalent to 16. 8% considered it to be “Historical” even.

Moreover, the Eggon language would not have been vehicular, had it been, it would have failed on the way. This is because in relation to key-question 2 thus: what is the level of official use of the Eggon language? The following results have been obtained: Out of the 381 Eggon respondents across Nasarawa State, 273 respondents which is equivalent to 71.6% ascertained that the Eggon language use is “Not Official”, therefore deprived; 059 respondents which is equivalent to 15.5% indicated that Eggon is an “International” language; while 027 respondents which is equivalent to 07.1% asserted that the language is “National”; and the remaining 22 respondents, which is equivalent to 05.8% considered Eggon language to be Regional. In essence, the fact that Eggon language is not official, qualifies it not to be vehicular.

Now, according to the framework, the Key-question 3 must be asked when the answer to Key-question 1 is Home. Therefore, for the fact that greater number of respondents considered the current identity function of the Eggon language to be Home, Key-question 3 should be asked, thus, are all parents transmitting the language to their children?

Here, the two possible constraining answers are, YES or NO. If Yes is the selected answer, Key question 4 must be answered in order to determine if the community is at

EGIDS level 4, 5, or 6a. However, if No is the selected answer, then Key-question 5 must be answered to determine if the community is at EGIDS level 6b, 7, 8a or 8b as follows, Question 3):

Are *all* parents transmitting the language to their children?

In relation to whether all parents transmit the Eggon language to their children, amongst 381 respondents across Nasarawa State, 252 respondents which is equivalent to 66.1% opted for NO, while the remaining 129 respondents which is equivalent to 33.9% opted for YES. Therefore, the difference of 113 respondents which is equivalent to 29.7% indicates that question 5 should be posed. This is because, according to the framework adopted by this study, if the answer to question 3 is NO, then the respondents should be asked question 5 which determines the youngest generation of the language proficient speakers. In fact, the selected answer is really NO, which has been confirmed by the informants of the interview, thus:

Shin dukkan al'ummar Eggon suna koya wa 'ya'yansu harshen Eggon?

(Are all parents transmitting the Eggon language to their children?)

Here also, out of the 381 informants, 254, which is equivalent to 66.7 % opted for *A'a, ba dukkansu ba* (No, not all of them), and the remaining 127 informants, which is equivalent to 33.3% said, *i, dukkansu* (Yes, all of them). The fact that not all

parents of the Eggon Community transmit the language to their children therefore, question 5 posed:

What is the youngest generation of the Eggon language proficient speakers?

Here, out of the 381 Eggon respondents across Nasarawa State, 154 respondents which is equivalent to 40% ascertained that the youngest generation of Eggon language proficient speakers is the Grand-parent generation; 129 respondents which is equivalent to 33.9% believed in the Child-bearing generation; while 86 respondents which is equivalent to 22.6% agreed with Parent generation, and the remaining 12 respondents which is equivalent to 03.1% opted for Great Grand-parent generation. This result has been confirmed by the result of the interview in which out of the 381 informants, 369 equivalent to 96.9% said that their parents are more proficient in the Eggon language than them, and the remaining 12 which is equivalent to 3.1% said that they speak the language more fluently than their parents. In addition to that, 372 informants equivalent to 97.6% confirmed that they speak the Eggon language more fluently than their born children, while only 09 informants equivalent to 2.4% considered their children to be more proficient in the language than them.

Had YES been the selected answer for question 3, then Key-question 4 ought to be answered in order to determine if the community is at EGIDS level 4, 5, or 6a as follows:

Key-question 4: What is the literacy status of the Eggon language?

Out of the 381 respondents, 204 respondents which is equivalent to 53.5% ascertained that the Eggon language is Incipient/Written; 140 respondents which is equivalent to 36.7% attested that Eggon language is neither institutional nor incipient; while 37 respondents which is equivalent to 9.7% asserted that it is Institutional.

Therefore, the fact that the Eggon language is proficiently spoken only by the grand-parent generation indicates that the language is really endangered. This is going by the definitions and interpretations of language endangerment and endangered language put forward by various linguists across the world as reviewed in the literature. Again, the mean *age* of native and/or fluent speakers of the Eggon language and the percentage of the youngest generation acquiring fluency with the language show that it is endangered. In addition to that, looking at some other parameters of endangerment such as Demographics; Language use; Language cultivation, Literacy and education; Status and recognition; Language attitudes; and Amount and quality of documentation, it is also confirmed from the data presentation that the language is endangered.

There are many ways of defining endangered languages, the most simplistic being below some critical number of speakers. All variables being equal, smaller languages are in more danger. Even though the numerical strength of the Eggon community is considerable (50,000 – 52,000) as per as Nasarawa State is concerned, members of the community are seriously interspersed through migration and intermarriage. So the number of native speakers does not, considerably, add to the proficiency of the

language. Moreover, the fact that the Eggon language is classified among the minority languages in Nigeria stands as qualification for its endangerment.

It is consolidated, furthermore, that the Eggon language is endangered as it is not used in formal education, and its communicative role is limited to in-group communication. In general, the language is mainly used for traditional purposes: rituals, festivals, village meetings and its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next. Therefore, the language is at risk of falling out of use as its speakers die out and shift to speaking another language.

Definitely, considering the factors that have initiated and hastened the endangerment of the Eggon language in items 6 – 12 of the questionnaire, one will agree that the language is endangered, as it is not used in new domains and drastically lost many existing communicative domains to English and Hausa. Though the Eggon language is being used in the home domain, as the results on item 12 of the question suggest, there is an element of sentiment. This is because, as mentioned earlier on, 66.1% of the population sample, representing 252 respondents, is not transmitting the language to their children? Therefore, this is in line with the fact that an endangered language is one in which the child-bearing generation is no longer transmitting it to their children, or, when it is no longer spoken by its youth. Again, if we look at the results in item 1 of the questionnaire related to the current identity function of the Eggon language, only 123 respondents representing 32.3% considered home. But 122 respondents

representing 32% considered the identity function of the language to be heritage, thus the language is not used even at home. Importantly as well, looking at the results on the intergenerational language transmission in item 5 of the questionnaire, one discovers that the youngest generation of the Eggon language proficient speakers is the *Grand-parent* generation. These results have been confirmed by the ones in items 1, 2 and 3 of the first interview. Thus, according to 369 Eggon informants, equivalent to 96.9% of the population sample, their parents speak Eggon more proficiently than them and that 372 informants equivalent to 97.6% of the population sample ascertain that they speak Eggon more proficiently than their born children. It has also been confirmed by 254 informants, equivalent to 66.7% of the population sample that not all parents transmit the language to their children. If at all the language is adequately transmitted to the younger ones, learnt, and frequently used at home, this would not have been the case.

In any way, even if the result on item 12 (home domain) is reliable the language is, then, being chased by Hausa as the lingua franca and English as the official language. This is for the fact that Hausa occupies the second position of usage in the home domain with 94 respondents which is equivalent to 24.7%, and English with 42 respondents which is equivalent to 11%. The two languages together, dominate 36% of the home domain living 64% to the hosting language (Eggon), thus if all things being equal and that is with the results of the questionnaire. However, the results on item 7 of the first interview reveal more than that as 184 informants, equivalent to 48% of the population sample use Hausa even at home.

It is duty bound, at this juncture, to point out that even though the findings of this study, with regard to the literacy status of the Eggon language indicate that it is incipient, it is a non functional one as can be seen in the second position of the finding in which 140 respondents which is equivalent to 36.7% are not even aware of its reality. So, this has seriously affected readability in the language as almost all Eggon literates have no Eggon literacy background.

4.3 The Degree of Endangerment of the Eggon Language

The findings of this study contains that the youngest generation of the Eggon language proficient speakers is the "Grand-parent" generation as uncovered in the results of item 5 of the questionnaire. The results, therefore, indicates that Eggon language is on EGIDS 8a (Moribund/severely endangered). EGIDS, which is the framework adopted by this study, explicitly categorized languages in accordance with their viability or endangerment. According to the classification of endangerment, a language may be on EGIDS 6b, thus threatened or UNESCO's vulnerable, EGIDS 7, thus shifting or UNESCO's definitely endangered, EGIDS 8a, thus moribund or UNESCO's severely endangered, EGIDS 8b, thus nearly extinct or UNESCO's critically endangered, otherwise EGIDS 9, thus dormant or UNESCO's extinct etc. The framework certified that if "the only remaining active speakers of a Language are members of the grand-parent generation" such a language is said to be moribund or severely endangered in the correlated classification of UNESCO.

It is pertinent emphasizing here that EGIDS, thus the framework adopted by this study, as harmonized and put forward by Lewis and Simons and reported in Obiero (2010), and of course other scholars as well, presented such level of severely endangerment. For instance, it is revealed that any language, the speakers of which are 40 years old and older, thus grand-parent age such a language is said to be severely endangered. Moreover, any language that is used mostly by grand-parental generation and up, such a language is said to be severely endangered.

Therefore, since the Eggon language is not being transmitted to the children by all parents together with the fact that it is mostly spoken proficiently by grand-parent generation, then it is a moribund language, thus severely endangered by the categorization of UNESCO. In essence, any situation in which parents stop or are forced to stop speaking and teaching their children their native tongue, the language may rapidly become "severely endangered". In fact, this study established that the attitude of moribund/severely endangered languages as reviewed in the literature suits Eggon as another moribund/severely endangered language. This is because the findings of this study confirmed that the youngest generation of proficient speakers of Eggon is the grand-parent generation as you can see under item 4.1 from the question: "What is the youngest generation of the Eggon language proficient speakers?"

Now, if at all the language is adequately acquired by children, then, the youngest generation of proficient speakers would have been the childbearing.

Considering the four levels of language endangerment based on "intergenerational transfer" presented in the adopted framework and indeed examining one of the categories, thus "severely endangered*"* consolidates the endangerment of Eggon. This is for the fact that "severely endangered" language is proficiently spoken only by the oldest generation such as the grand-parents and older, while the parent generation may understand it, but they do not speak it to the children or among themselves. Therefore, based on the analysis and discussion above, which are based on the findings of the study, it is now inferred that Eggon language of Nasarawa State is severely endangered, but not critically endangered as the study initially assumed.

4.4 Factors for the Endangerment of the Eggon Language

There are several factors that have initiated and hastened the endangerment of the Eggon language as contained in the findings of this study. Almost all the factors affect the intergenerational language use and transmission of the language. The factors so far discovered are:

4.4.1 Migration Factor

Definitely, contact is the bedrock of every loss of language. For that reason, linguists and language educationists attribute loss of language to the increased contact among formally isolated human societies. Languages, they say, need isolation to develop and to maintain their distinctive features and characteristics. When isolation ends, local languages easily disappear naturally along with the traditional ways of life of a people.

Migration outside traditional territory can be intended or unintended as planned by governments causing shifts. For example, Indonesia reportedly decreases in number after moving down from the mountains to a coastal town on Serum Island. So also the United States, Russian and Canadian governments have moved indigenous children into boarding schools, insisting that they speak only the national languages in those schools. The same or similar thing is directly or indirectly happening in Nigeria where the results of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the National Examination Council (NECO) rarely considered without a credit in English (no matter the number of credits scored by a candidate). This compulsion definitely reduces the performance levels of the children in many courses as they have to concentrate to learning English. In the long run, many of the children end up 'between a devil and a deep blue sea' as they, in most cases, neither secure the credit in the English language nor do they perform well in many subjects. Importantly as well, this resulted in those children been cut off from their traditional ethnic language and culture. In addition to that, in Nasarawa state of Nigeria, it is observed that lack of pride of where one comes from contributes to language shift vis-à-vis Eggon, some members of which spend years outside the Eggon land and the direct result of this is that the Eggon language is being endangered.

Here, it is understood that Eggons are members of the community that frequently migrate for various reasons such as employment, scholarship, business and the need for urban lifestyle. Not only Eggons, the scenario is becoming pathetic and unfortunate that most of the young people that migrate and live mostly in urban centre

of our society contribute drastically to language death as they are unable to communicate effectively or fluently in their mother tongue.

Specifically, to justify the migration of the Eggon people, the finding is here presented through the posed question: "Do members of the Eggon community *migrate* outside Eggon speaking areas?" And the following result is obtained, that out of the 381 Eggon respondents across Nasarawa State, 367 respondents which is equivalent to 96% ascertained the migration, while only 14 respondents which is equivalent to 3.7% are not aware of the migration of the Eggon people. This result has also been concretized by the result of the interview thus, all of the 381 informants, equivalent to 100% of the population sample, agreed that members of the Eggon community migrate to non Eggon speaking areas.

In fact, not only that members of the Eggon community migrate to non Eggon speaking areas, but "very highly" migrate as can be seen in the following finding: With regards to the "possible degree of the migration", out of the 381 Eggon language respondents across Nasarawa State, which is equivalent to 100% of the population sample, 143 respondents which is equivalent to 37.5% believed that the degree of the migration is very high. Closer to that, 141 respondents which is equivalent to 37% believed that the migration level is high, while 77 respondents which is equivalent to 20% and 20 respondents which is equivalent to 5.3% ascertained to Medium and Low levels respectively. So, the fact that, the community is among minorities in the

Nigerian context almost anywhere they migrate to they are linguistically deprived or dominated by either official language or lingua franca respectively.

4.4.2 Exogamy

Exogamy is considered to be a factor for language endangerment. This is because all the children in the exogamous family are brought to speak the language of the wider community leaving the other (partner) language with no any number of speakers among the exogamous families. Now the fact that members of the Eggon community conduct exogamy makes their language endangered through the factor. This can be seen from the result of the posed question on "whether members of the Eggon community marry members of other communities" as follows: out of the 381 Eggon respondents, 379 respondents which is equivalent to 99.5% testified the exogamous nature of the Eggon people, while only 02 respondents which is equivalent to 0.5% opted for No. However, the result of the interview indicated hundred per cent (100%) acceptance that Eggons marry and are married by, members of other communities.

To crown it all, when the 381 Eggon respondents were asked: "How many Eggons marry from/to members of other communities?" the following results are obtained: 168 respondents which is equivalent to 44.1% said, Some Eggons. And as you can see from the findings, "Some Eggon" is immediately followed by "Many Eggons" with 129 respondents which is equivalent to 33.9% and "Most Eggons" with 45 respondents which is equivalent to 11.8%. Only 39 respondents which is equivalent to 10.2% thought of "Few Eggons". That made the study to have posed the Question:

“how many children of Eggon intermarriage speak Eggon language at all?” For which out of the 381 Eggon respondents, 240 respondents which is equivalent to 63% agreed that only “Some children” can speak the language while 080 respondents which is equivalent to 21% opted for No children, and only 30 respondents which is equivalent to 7.9% and 31 respondents which is equivalent to 8.1% ticked for Most children and Many children respectively.

At this juncture, it is pertinent knowing that this study supposed that, only few, if at all there is any, of the respondents who is exogamous. So they made their choices based on situational observations. This is because the interview with the exogamous families discloses that amongst 153 children from exogamous families, 152 children do not even know the language at all let alone speaking it, only one child, who has been brought up by his Eggon maternal grand-parent, is able to know the language. Therefore, exogamy is one of the factors causing endangerment of the Eggon language.

4.4.3 Economic Factor

Many scholars, as reviewed in the literature, contributed in this point of discussion. In fact, the causes for moribund languages and other various categories of language endangerment are the movement of people from one region to another, modernization, industrialization and other local markets which attract contact of mass people from various ethnic communities. There is hardly a unilingual economic sector in Nigeria. The contact among different communities usually leads to substratum influence of

some languages over others that can even cause language shift to more prestigious and more marketable ones.

Language disappearance is directly correlatable to economic prospects which call the attention of the youth into urban areas where their local languages could not be fully used. Definitely some languages are dying because people are teaching their children English or French or Spanish or, in the Nigerian case, major lingua franca such as Hausa, Yoruba or Igbo etc., for economic reasons. Now, let us concretize the assertions by the findings of the study as follows:

Eggon respondents across Nasarawa State were asked to indicate the language they use most in the market domain and the following result has been obtained. That of 381 administers of the population sample, 317 respondents which is equivalent to 83.2% indicated Hausa as the language they use most in their economic transaction, English took the attention of 44 respondents which is equivalent to 11.5%, while only14 respondents which is equivalent to 3.7% of the population sample of the Eggon native speakers use their native language (Eggon) in markets, and 06 respondents which is equivalent to 1.6% use other languages. In addition to that, even in their workplace, where they also earn a means of living and sustain their economic security, up to 294 respondents which is equivalent to 77.2% use English, an indication of the language deprivation. The second position has been obtained by Hausa, as 75 respondents which is equivalent to 19.7% ticked its column an indication of the language domination in this respect. In fact, only 12 respondents which is

equivalent to 3.1% use Eggon language in their workplace. Other languages have no respondents in this regard. These findings have been supported by the result of the interview that out of the 381 informants, 327, which is equivalent to 85.8% use Hausa in their market undertakings. Only 47 informants, equivalent to 12.3% use the Eggon language in the market and the remaining 7 informants, which is equivalent to 1.8% use English. Therefore, it is proved that economic transanction is one of the factors that led to the endangerment of the Eggon language.

4.4.4 Education Factor

It is paramount for any discussion on Nigerian Educational System to entail the issue of National Policy on Education (NPE) and National Language Policy (NLP). Many scholars see this factor as the stumbling block for maintenance and development of Nigerian languages.

The argument here is that, the adoption of English by federal government as the official language of the nation is one of the factors militating against the development of the indigenous languages. The neglect of the indigenous languages in favour of second language such as English, especially by language teachers, has a tremendous effect on the children. Hence, the children have the impression that only English is important and has priority over their indigenous languages. This impression needs to be corrected by studying and developing the Nigerian languages alongside English. In addition to that, the fact that Nigerian National Policy on Education emphasizes the teaching and development of only three major languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba)

leads to inferiority complex by minority languages speakers thereby shifting to speaking one or more of the major Nigerian languages or even English as the official language. In states schools, little or no attempt has been made to teach the other tongues as intails in the National Language Policy. This has consequential effect that most of the Nigerian languages are endangered. This ascertaining has been consolidated by the Eggon people themselves in the following finding:

The administered questionnaire of this study requested 381 Eggon language native speakers across Nasarawa State to indicate the language they use *most* in education domain and the following result has been obtained: that out of the 381 respondents representing 100% population sample, 375 respondents which is equivalent to 98.4% selected English which indicates complete Deprivation on the Eggon language. In this regard, only 06 respondents which is equivalent to 1.6% indicated Eggon and living Hausa, as the lingua franca of the region, and other languages with no respondents at all. A similar result has also been obtained in the school situation in which English gained 368 respondents which is equivalent to 96.6% living Hausa as the lingua franca with only 12 respondents which is equivalent to 3.1%, and the Eggon language with 1 respondent which is equivalent to 0.3%, let alone other languages that have ended with no respondent at all. Therefore, education in school is an absolute factor that initiated and hastened the severe endangerment of the Eggon language.

4.4.5 Socio-Political Factor

Many speakers of the native languages often associate their irrespective or rather disadvantaged social position with their non prestigious culture which, in turn, make them to accept that their indigenous languages are of no use, and therefore need to be abandoned. Consequently, they assimilate themselves into more prestigious linguistic and cultural heritages for fear of economic, social, political and even educational discrimination.

In fact, this factor is a causative agent to language endangerment. This has frequently happened when nation- states working to promote a single national culture limit the opportunities for using minority languages in the public spheres, schools, the media, and anywhere ethnic groups resettled, children go to school far from home or otherwise have their chances of cultural and linguistic continuity disrupted. Therefore, political decision, which sometimes forces ethnic groups to move or split, can be regarded as one of the factors militating against the survival of many languages. Here, the Eggon community accepted this factor as a stumbling block to the existence of the Eggon language, especially in relation to political endeavous. This is explicitly indicated in the following finding:

Amongst the 381 Eggon language respondents, who were requested to indicate the language they use *most* in political spheres, 217 respondents which is equivalent to 57.1% indicated Hausa as the lingua franca and of course Dominant language of the region. Then English, as the official language of the region and the nation at large, occupied the second position after been indicated by 131 respondents which is

equivalent to 43.4%. This linguistic situation shows considerable domination and deprivation respectively. In this domain, the Eggon language came third by gaining only 29 respondents which is equivalent to 7.6% of the population sample. To show that Eggon language is seriously obstructed in the political domain, other languages, even presupposed to be smaller than Eggon, yet gained indication by 4 respondents which is equivalent to 1%. In this respect, Eggon is Socio-politically endangered, as the native speakers of the language closed the socio-political doors for the native language (Eggon) and opened them for dominant and official languages (Hausa and English respectively). This is obvious looking at the results obtained in the interview thus, in the motor station, politics, travels and even ceremonies, Hausa has dominated 85.6%, 78%, 90% and 52.2% of the language use respectively. This, explicitly, shows the endangerment of Eggon through the factor.

4.4.6 Religious Factor

Though scholars usually claim the documentation of many minor languages and some of which have some religious books written in them, only few, if any, of the languages speakers use them for religious purposes. With regards to Christianity, for instance, it has been observed that, the rendition of some churches mass sermons, hymns, and other religious activities are done mainly in Hausa or English even with unilateral linguistic gatherings. Non-Hausa Pastors and Clerics, especially in the Northern part of Nigeria often use Hausa and sometimes English in preaching to members of their ethnic groups, occasionally with someone interpreting into the

indigenous languages. Indeed, this observation has been confirmed by the finding of this study as follows:

That amongst the 381 Eggon respondents across Nasarawa State, 272 respondents which is equivalent to 71.4% use Hausa in their religious undertakings, 61 respondents which is equivalent to 16% use English, while only 33 respondents which is equivalent to 8.7% use the native language (Eggon) and 13 respondents which is equivalent to 3.4% use some other languages, and then 02 respondents which is equivalent to 0.5% remained undecided. In addition to that, the result of the interview discloses that 317 out of every 381 Eggons, which is equivalent to 83.2% use Hausa in their religious activities, while only 44 Eggons, which is equivalent to 11.6%, use the native language for religious activities, living the remaining 20 Eggons, which is equivalent to 5.2% who use English in their religious life. Therefore, it is confirmed that the use of lingua francas and/or official language in religious domains causes the inadequate use of the Eggon language by its native speakers which, eventually, causes the endangerment of the language.

4.4.7. Negative Attitude of the Native Speakers towards their Language

Negative attitude of native speakers of languages engineer not only the endangerment, but also the extinction of many languages in the world. Certainly, one of the ways of sustaining language survival is to have it used and transmitted to the younger generation. However, many parents contribute to the endangerment of native Nigerian

languages for lack of use in the homes, thereby breaking the intergenerational transmission of the languages. It is prequently observed that in a bid to provide children with regard, as a head start in the fluency and mastery of the English language, parents who share common indigenous language now use the English language at home which causes poor performance or even inability in the language use.

It is also observed that "parents push children to learn prestige language (whichever), thinking that they can only learn one language well. This attitude affects Eggon, even though not to a great extent, as the finding of this study shows: according to 245 respondents which is equivalent to 64% of the population sample (381), at Home, they use Eggon more than any other language. However, 94 respondents which is equivalent to 24.7% and 42 respondents which is equivalent to 11% use Hausa and English respectively, even in the home domain, more than any other language.

To consolidate the point that shows the negative attitude of the Eggon people towards their native language, it is observed that some of the Eggon people either feel afraid, ashamed, shy or inferior to speak the native language to their children or among themselves. They prefer to speak English language or most often Hausa language to the peril of the native Eggon language. In fact, if native speakers of a language, such as Eggon, refuse to communicate in their language, they, in no distant future will lose their identity and culture. To save the Eggon language, all the Eggon people must learn how to speak, read and write it or else the language may go into extinction.

Indeed, it is pertinent pointing out that, not only in Nigeria, let alone the Eggon of Nasarawa State, even major languages with heavy population density, across the world, are endangered. It is believed moreover, that at least 50% of the world more than six thousand languages are losing speakers. Even languages with many thousand speakers are no longer transmitted to the younger generation. In most regions across the globe, many languages are assimilating into dominant ones. So, loss of speakers and eventual language shift is not a strange peculiar linguistic phenomenon, it is a worldwide spread linguistic situation. Indeed, this linguistic behaviour, thus the negative attitude of native speakers towards their native languages, across the world, Nigeria, and Nasarawa State in particular affects the Eggon community of Nasarawa State, as most of them refuse to use their native language (Eggon) in almost all domains. Here, it is established that the Eggon community is, very much, indifferent about the survival, sustenance and development of their native language (Eggon). This is because even at home domain, the language is rigorously being challenged by Hausa as the informants have indicated in the interview, that out of the 381 informants, 197 which is equivalent to 51.7% use the Eggon language at home, while up to 184, which is equivalent to 48.3% use Hausa. So looking at the difference of 13 responses equivalent to 3.4%, one can accept the fact that Eggon is explicitly being dominated at home, which results to language shift by its native speakers.

4.4.8 Inability of the Eggon Language to Respond to New Domains

If a language is minimally used only in few new domains or even not used in any new domains, such a language may be endangered as it is practically passive in coping

with changing and developing nature of the globe (Sarvi 2014:6). However, it is a global problem that many languages are unable to coup with changing development of the world especially the advent of internet and ICT the vehicle of which is considerably English. This problem is practical with Eggon as can be seen in the following statistical analysis:

Amongst the 381 Eggon respondents over Nasarawa State, which is equivalent to 100% of the population sample, who were asked whether Eggon language is used in "New Domains" such as ICT etc., 272 respondents which is equivalent to 71.4% indicated that it is not, while up to 109 respondents which is equivalent to 28.6% indicated that Eggon is used in new domains such as ICT. However, the little discrepancy observed here is that, when the same population sample were asked to indicate the language they use *most* in the internet and ICT services, 372 respondents which is equivalent to 97.6% use English in the Internet and equal number for ICT, while only 6 respondents which is equivalent to 1.6% use Eggon language in the Internet and 4 respondents which is equivalent to 1.1% use Eggon for ICT. Hausa accommodated only 1 respondent which is equivalent to 0.3% in the Internet and not even a single respondent for ICT. Other languages could not accommodate any respondent, while 2 respondents which is equivalent to 0.5% and 5 respondents which is equivalent to 1.3% remained undecided for the internet and ICT services respectively. The observation here is, if the response to the first question is ideal, then response to the second question is an indication that Eggon language is completely abandoned in new domains such as internet and ICT. It is more so in the result of the

interview where, in the use of handset facilities, the Eggon language has been dominated completely by English with 250 informants, equivalent to 65.6% and Hausa with 131 informants, equivalent to 34.4%

4.5 The Use of the Eggon Language by the Native Speakers

The fact that the attitudes of the speakers of Nasarawa State languages just like other *mino*r tribes, even at intergenerational language use, is assumed to be negative together with external and internal forces such as market, exogamy, migration, the need for scholarship, modernization, language policy and planning etc. put the languages into danger of all round domination and eventual language shift. The native speakers of the Eggon language seem not to be falling a part of those internal and external factors of language domination and deprivation, and language endangerment arises when communities with different linguistic background live side by side.

Eggon community, just like other Nasarawa State communities and communities of Nigeria at large are compelled, through language policy and National Policy on Education, to learn English. Therefore, English dominates, by deprivation, greater position of language use in schools and media. The socio-economic feature of Nasarawa State as a heterogeneous environment indicates the need for a lingua franca for specific and universal purposes. At this juncture, Hausa occupies the greater position. This type of linguistic situation usually initiates and promotes the influence of some languages over others which, in turn, leads to the endangerment of the deprived and dominated languages. As such, language endangerment manifests.

In reality, language death has been, and is always being identified as a global problem. The threat of language death engulfs many languages in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe. The loss of language is however characterized by being reduced demographically, in terms of speech communities, especially where the language is partially or completely documented. Language endangerment is classified on the basis of proportion of equal speakers within the distribution of estimated users. This is similar to the decision in which language is classified as major or minor and which is influenced by figures related to population density of speakers, thus demographic size and geographical spread of the language.

As a global phenomenon, language replacement occurs in various countries and states. However, it is evident that, very often, the official languages are the dominants. This situation, of language replacement, featured on African continent as many small languages assimilated their linguistic identity and cultural heritage to Swahili in Tanzania, Somali in Somalia, or Arabic in the state of the Maghreb region. In a more considerable situation of language replacement, languages of wider communication gain better influential position, this as a result of urbanization or market forces. A few of these kinds of situations, as hinted earlier, include Hausa in Nigeria and Niger, Amharic in Ethiopia, Wolof in Senegal, Mambara in Mali all of which gained advantages of speakers as trade languages, over the minor languages. Eventually, languages of small speech communities are endangered by the trade languages. Further examples show that in Southern Ethiopia alone, Ongota is replaced by Ts'amakko (Tsamay), Kwegu (Koegu) by Mursi, Shabo by Majang and Harro by

Bayso. Definitely, all the replacements of languages by languages often took place among the native languages in both countries. This can be described as the loss of speakers and gain of speakers by the dominated and the dominants respectively (Brenzinger & de Graaf 2006). In all the cases, however, the most considerable issue is the native speakers' attitudes toward their native language use.

People abandoned their languages and shift to speaking more prestigious ones for various reasons. Definitely, this attitude of language use put many (minor) languages into endangerment that may lead to subsequent extinction. This is because, a healthy language is the one that is currently being learnt by children as a first language and is generally used in all walks of life, thus at home, in school, at work and in other private and public settings such as motor stations markets, religious activities, festivals and other ceremonial occasions etc. Therefore, "when speakers of a language cease to use it, 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, such a language is endangered." So, an endangered language is one that is at risk of falling out of use as its speakers die out or shift to speaking another languag. This, to greater extent, is the situation of the Eggon language. This is because the language has already lost the intergenerational value of childbearing to grand-parental, as the findings have shown. Moreover, it has lost many considerable language domains and is unable to capture with the new ones, and the language is not used in literary activities as a result of lack of optimal orthography or literacy system. So the level of the Eggon language use is continuously declining.

In addition to that, the language is not formally leant in school, neither as language of instruction, nor as school subject. Therefore, it can be argued that the Eggon language is not adequately used and not learnt formally. This can be consolidated, as mentioned earlier, in the following points:

It is observed that there used to be a time when the Eggon people who could speak Hausa very well would make fun of those who could not. Then it was the fashion to speak Hausa only even if the subject of discussion should have been spoken in Eggon. The result today is that we have a young generation of the Eggon people who are coming up and do not know how to speak their mother tongue. This is because, the parents do not teach their children the Eggon language and themselves use the language meagerly, but Hausa as the general lingua franca. This leads to the children inability to know their socio-cultural heritage. Consequently, their language (Eggon) has been endangered. It is, furthermore, evident that "Eggon parents either feel ashamed or inferior to speak the native language to their children. They prefer to speak English language or most frequently Hausa language to the detriment of their native language. Definitely, this contributed greatly to the endangerment of the Eggon language.

4.6 The Reversibility of the Eggon Language Endangerment

Eggon is not an extinct language. It still has generations of speakers no matter how weak, and is spoken in some domains such as home as well as being transmitted by

some parents, and it is a fact that “An extinct language is one with no living native speakers at all”.

It is proved in the findings, that in relation to the language mostly used in the home domain and in relation to whether all parents transmit the Eggon language to their children, as well as, in relation to the youngest generation of the Eggon language proficient speakers the following findings have been considered:

That, out of the 381 respondents equivalent to 100% population sample, 245 respondents which is equivalent to 64% speak Eggon at Home; 94 respondents which is equivalent to 24.7% and 42 respondents which is equivalent to 11% use Hausa and English respectively, in the home domain. In relation to whether all parents transmit Eggon language to their children, amongst 381 respondents across Nasarawa State, 252 respondents which is equivalent to 66.1% opted for *NO*, while the remaining 129 respondents which is equivalent to 33.9% opted for *YES.* So also in relation to the youngest generation of the Eggon language proficient speakers, out of the 381 Eggon respondents across Nasarawa State, 154 respondents which is equivalent to 40% ascertained that the youngest generation of the Eggon language proficient speakers is the Grand-parent generation; 129 respondents which is equivalent to 33.9%, which is the second position, believed in the Child-bearing generation; while 86 respondents which is equivalent to 22.6% agreed with Parent generation, and the remaining 12 respondents which is equivalent to 3.1% opted for Great Grand-parent generation.

Therefore, the reversibility of the Eggon language endangerment is explicitly clear in the uncovered findings above which show that the Eggon is not an extinct language. It is a sign of survival of a language that out of every 381 speakers 245 which is equivalent to 64% speak the language at home. This is in spite of the fact that it is equally a sign of endangerment having 42 and 94 speakers which is equivalent to 11% and 24.7% speaking other languages (English and Hausa) respectively, at home.

It is also confirmed by the findings that 129 parents equivalent to 33.9% of the population sample transmit the Eggon language to their children, though this does not prevent the language from severe endangerment, as 154 parents which is equivalent to 40% of the population sample do not transmit the language to their children. In addition to that, it is a sign of language survival that the second proficient intergenerational speakers of the language are members of child-bearing generation with 129 respondents, equivalent to 33.9% of the population sample. So the language is still alive, though not devoid of severe endangerment, as the most proficient speakers of the language, according to the findings, is the grand-parent generation with 154 respondents, equivalent to 40% of the population sample. Therefore, since Eggon is a surviving language, its endangerment is reversible and can be revitalized, maintained and developed to any standard through various techniques of revitalization programmes which will be recommended subsequently.

4.7 Conclusion

From the study, it is concluded that not only is Eggon language endangered, but severely endangered. It is also proved that there are various factors that have led to the endangerment of the language. However, the endangerment of the Eggon language is reversible through well planned and implementable revitalization programmes. Indeed, it is also conclusive that Eggon language is documented with dormant or non functional literacy that is not even aware of by many literate Eggons, therefore it is meagrely used and not learnt formally.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter, which is the last one, contains the summary of the whole work, conclusion and recommendations.

5.2 Summary

The study has been conducted on the sociolinguistic phenomenon of language endangerment, the area that is short of rigorous fieldworks in the Nigerian context. This is in spite of the fact that Nigeria is among the frontlines in terms of multilingualism. The study contains five chapters.

In the first chapter of the study, general introduction has been contented. It is the chapter that contains, after introduction, the aim and objectives of the study, the bedrock of which was to study the current sociolinguistic situation of Eggon and investigate as well as find out whether the Eggon language is endangered; the statement of the problem in which the need for this study has been identified; the research questions; the justification of the study which encompasses considerations for selecting the Eggon language out of the indigenous languages of Nasarawa State. Other sub-titles contained in the chapter are, the scope of the study which is limted to the intergenerational language transmission on Eggon in Nasarawa State; the basic assumptions and the significance of the study.

Chapter two contains the review of the related literature, the content of which has been divided into sub-titles for easy sorting and application of materials. It contains materials that provide definitions and/or descriptions of language endangerment and endangered languages; factors contributing to language endangerment, stages of language endangerment, assessment of language endangerment, language revitalization, such as language documentation, justification for revitalizing endangered languages, the responsibility for language revitalization, revitalization programmes and example of revitalized endangered languages. In the end, general observation on the review and the ground for the present study are provided.

Chapter three has dealt with the methodology of data collection which focuses on various procedures such as library activities, observation, questionnaire administration, and verbal interviews. The chapter also contains the samples of the study such as area sample and population sample, the theoretical framework of the study and its evaluation, justification for using the framework in the present study and, in the end the findings of the study are presented.

Chapter four contains the main work of the study in five main sections such as the endangerment of the Eggon language, the degree of endangerment, the factors for the endangerment, the intergenerational use of the language and the reversibility of the language endangerment. The data collected from the questionnaire and interview and yet presented have been analysed together in which the results of the interview have been used to support the analyses on the questionnaire. It discusses the answers to the

research questions and the proof of the basic assumptions already formed as covered in the five points above. Then chapter five provides the summary, concluding remarks and some recommendations.

5.3 Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this study has been concerned with language endangerment. It has singled out Eggon language of Nasarawa State for investigation. The study has already formed some assumptions that have geared the study to the appropriate channels of securing justifiable and reliable findings. The proof ultimately provides the answers to the research questions of the study. Therefore the results verify the strength or weakness of the assumptions. It is pertinent disclosing the fact that fortunately enough, among the five assumptions formed, only one has not been proved right as follows:

In the first assumption, the study has claimed that Eggon language of Nasarawa State is endangered. This assumption, which has been formed out of the first research question, has been proved right as the endangerment of the language has been confirmed by the findings

The second assumption which has slightly been disproved is the claim that the degree of the Eggon language endangerment is of critical proportion. This claim that originated from the second research question has not absolutely been confirmed, as the degree of the endangerment is of severe proportion rather than critical proportion.

However, the other three assumptions have been proved to be right of the Eggon language thus:

In relation to the third assumption, which claims that the Eggon language has been endangered through various factors, which has been formed out of the third research question, has been proved right, thus the language has really been endangered through various factors. It has been discovered and uncovered that various factors lead to language endangerment and those factors that have, specifically, led to the endangerment of the Eggon language include economic forces, language and education policies, modernization that introduces and stably roots entirely new domains which have been found to be beyond the accommodation of the Eggon language etc. However, the bedrock of the Eggon language incapacity to fall within the category of safe languages has been discovered to be the negative attitude of the native speakers towards the heritage language (Eggon). Definitely, the Eggon language is not adequately taught, transmitted, learnt and used in both formal and informal situations. Similarly, it has been unfolded that migration and exogamous tradition of the Eggon community have contributed immensely towards the endangerment of the language. This is in addition to the socio-political linguistic situation that usually employs the service and use of dominant language (language of wider communication) at the detriment of small languages such as Eggon.

So also the assumption which claims that the Eggon language is not adequately used and not formally learnt, which has been formed out of the fourth research question has been proved right, as it is not adequately learnt and used, and importantly, it has lost intergenerational transmission capacity. This has gone along the line of the hypothesis formed in Sarvi (2005:34-35) that if the situation of Eggon continues the way it were, thus not adequately documented, no functional orthography, not taught and learnt formally, and the speakers remain interspersed with negative attitude towards the language, the language might fall a victim of endangerment. The hypothesis has been disclosed in the general study on the influence of Hausa on some indigenous languages of Nasarawa State, namely Eggon, Gwandara and Migili.

Finally, the assumption that claims the reversibility of the endangerment of the Eggon language, which has been initiated from the fifth research question, has also been proved right. It will be recalled that, although the Eggon language is endangered, it is so fortunate, as the findings of the study ascertained, that the endangerment of the Eggon language is found to be reversible through effective and implementable language revitalization procedures. In the end, based on the findings and the data analysis, the following findings have been discovered by the study:

a) It has been established by the study that the Eggon language of Nasarawa State is endangered.

b) It has also been established that the endangerment of the Eggon language is not of critical proportion, but of severe proportion.

c) It has been established as well that Eggon has been endangered through various factors such as economic, socio-political, religious factors and the negative attitude of the speakers towards their language etc.

d) Since the Eggon language is not extinct, not even critically endangered, the endangerment is reversible through revitalization programmes such as documentation, standardization and provision of pedagogical materials etc.

5.4 Recommendations

a) If there is need to revitalized, maintain and develop the Eggon language, then there is urgent need to fully document and standardize the language so that it has an accepted orthography. This will make it fully enhanced and the lexical capacity of the speakers improved.

b) The language should be taught in schools especially in the environs of the native speakers. This will stimulate interest in the native speakers and improve their socio-cognitive power.

c) Language centre and/or board should be established in Nasarawa State and be charged with the responsibility of lexical development in Eggon and other

native languages. This will enhance the language ability to maintain its communicative domains and respond positively to new domains.

d) The National Language Policy which allows and encourages the teaching and learning of mother tongue should be adhered to for proper utilization of opportunity in the injunction of the policy.

e) Pedagogical, grammatical and literary materials should be provided adequately for the smooth flow of teaching-learning programmes especially for adults and evening classes for youths and other interested clients etc.

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Appendix 1

Sample of the Research Questionnaire

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA
P. M. B. 1045, SAMARU ZARIA, NIGERIA

EGGON COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondents,
I am a postgraduate student in the department of African Languages and Cultures, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. I am undergoing Ph.D. programme specializing in sociolinguistics. My research topic is: Language Endangerment: A Study of Eggon Language of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. I wish to assure you that all information given by you will be treated confidentially and will be used strictly for academic purpose.

This questionnaire contains two (2) sections, (A) bio-data of respondent, and (B) questionnaire.

Section A: Bio-data
Age
Sex M ☐ F ☐
L. G. of origin.....
Town.....
State.....
Residence.....
Level of education.....
Speech community.....
First language spoken.....
Other languages spoken.....

SECTION B: QUESTIONNAIRE
Please endeavour to fill this questionnaire appropriately. Indicate your opinion by making a tick (✓) in the appropriate column:

1. What is the current identity function of the Eggon language
Historical Heritage Home Vehicular

2. What is the level of official use of the Eggon language?
International National Regional Not official

3. Are all parents transmitting the language to their children?
YES N0

4. What is the literary status of the Eggon language?
Institutional Incipient/written None

5. What is the youngest generation of Eggon *proficient* speakers?
Great grand-parent Grand-parent Parent Children

6. Do members of Eggon community migrate outside Eggon speaking areas?
YES N0

7. If yes, what is the possible degree of the migration?
Low Medium High Very high

8. Do members of Eggon community marry members of other communities?
YES N0

9. If yes, how many Eggons marry from/to members of other communities?
Most Eggon many Eggons Some Eggons Few Eggons

10. How many children of Eggon intermarriage speak Eggon language at all?
Most children Many children Some children No children

11. Is Eggon language used in new domains such as Internet, ICT, etc?
YES N0

12. Indicate the language you use most in each of the following domains

Domain	Eggon	English	Hausa	Others	Undecided
Home					
School					
Market					
Education					
Politics					
Work place					
Internet					
ICT					
Mosque/Church					

Appendix 11

Samfurin Ganawa/Tattaunawa (Sample of the Interview)

Bayan gaisuwa da gabatarwa (after greeting and introduction):

Faxi qabilarka/ki. (Speech community)

A ina kake/kike zaune? (Residence)

1) Tsakanin kai/ke da mahaifanka/ki, wane ne ya fi iya magana da harshen Eggon?

   (Between you and your parent, who is more proficient in the Eggon language?)

   a. Su ne suka fi iyawa (They are more proficient)

   b. Ni ne na fi iyawa (I am more proficient)

2) Tsakanin kai/ke da ‘ya’yanka/ki, wane ne ya fi iya magana da harshen Eggon?

(Between you and your children, who is more proficient in the Eggon language?)

a. Ni ne na fi iyawa (I am more proficient)

b. Su ne suka fi iyawa (They are more proficient)

3) Shin dukkan al’ummar Eggon suna koya wa ‘ya’yansu harshen Eggon?

(Are all parents transmitting the Eggon language to their children?)

a. Ee, dukkansu (Yes, all of them)

b. A’a, ba dukkansu ba (No, not all of them)

4) Shin al’ummar Eggon suna yin qaura su zauna wuraren da ba a magana da harshensu?

(Do members of the Eggon community migrate outside Eggon speaking areas?)

a. Ee, suna yi (Yes, they do)

b. A’a, ba sa yi (No, they don’t)

5) Shin al’ummar Eggon suna auren wasu al’ummu (waxanda ba Eggon ba)?

(Do members of the Eggon community marry members of other communities?)

a. Ee, suna yi (Yes, they do)

b. A’a, ba sa yi (No, they don’t)

6) A ganinka, yaran da aka haifa ta hanyar auratayya da al'ummar Eggon, suna iya magana da harshen Eggon?

(Are the children of the Eggon intermarriage able to speak the Eggon language at all?)

a. A'a, ba sa iyawa (Not, at all.)

b. Ee, wasu suna iyawa (Yes, some of them can)

c. Ee, yawanci suna iyawa (Yes, most of them can)

7) Wane harshe ka/kika fi amfani da shi a waxannan muhallan magana?

Muhallin magana	Eggon	Ingilishi	Hausa
Gida			
Tashar mota			
Kasuwa			
Masallaci/Coci			
Harkokin siyasa			
Wayar hannu			
Tafiye-tafiye			
Bukukuwa			

7) (Indicate the language you use *most* in each of the following domains)

Domain	Eggon	English	Hausa
Home			
Motor station			

Market			
Mosque/Church			
Politics			
Handset			
Travels			
Ceremonies			

Appendix 111

Samfurin Ganawa/Tattaunawa a Kan Auratayya (Sample of Interview on Exogamy)

Bayan gaisuwa da gabatarwa (after greeting and introduction):

Faxi qabilarka (Speech community)

A ina kake zaune? (Residence)

1) Ka auri Eggon, mata nawa? (Have you married Eggon wife/wives?)
2) A gidanka, da wane harshe take/suke magana? (Which language do they use in your house?)
3) 'Ya'ya nawa kuka haifa da ita/su? (How many children do you have with her/them?)
4) Da wane harshe xan/'yar/'ya'yan suke Magana? (Which language do the children speak?)

Appendix 1V: Locations of Eggon and Genetic Classification

Eggon people are located at Lafia, Agyaragu, Kayarda, Bukan Sidi, Bukan Alu, Adogi, Aridi, Akunagba, Bad, Ombi, Obin 1, Arieki, Rafin Kuxi, Madogba, Agyaragun Tofa, Bakin Rijiya, Takpa Lizzi, Akura, Ashangwa, and Mai Akuya under Lafia Local Government; Nasarawa Eggon, Kagbu, Mada Station, Burum-Burum, Lambaga Amkpa, Arikpa, Wakama, Ahyu, Gudi, Alogam, Bassa, Akpata, Aloce, Anguegba, Lizzen Keffi, Alushi, Ambaga, Walko, Galle Agbagi and Alogani South, under Nasarawa Eggon Local Government; Akwanga, Gwarje, Angwa Kpadem under Akwanga Local Gonernment; Keana, Kadarko, Sarkin Noma, Aloshi, Gba, Kpayo and Giza under Keana Local Government; Kokona, Gidi-gidi, Moroa, Moria, Akwan Mayo and Garaku under Kokona; Awe, Burkano, Ribi, Tunga and Azara under Awe; Doma, Ruttu, Damba, Alagye, Kuyanzari and Dogo Karmi under Doma Local Government; Keffi, Angwan Eggon, Bagayi and Kawo under Keffi Local government; Nasarawa, Lamiga, Odege under Nasarawa Local Government; Obi, Jenkwe, Ome, Musha, Tudun Adabu and Deddere under Obi Local Government; Karu, Masaka and Gunduma under Karu; Toto Katakpa, Gadabuke under Toto; Asakio under Lafia East; Awuma under Lafia North; and Wamba under Wamba Local Government. Population: 50,000/52,000. *Alternate Names:* Egon, Hill Mada, Mada Dutse, Mada Eggon, Mo Egon. *Dialects:* 25 dialects locally recognized, but their status is unclear. *Classification:* Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Plateau, Western, Southwestern, B.