

## **Pidgin English as an Effective Language for Broadcasting to Multi-lingual Society by Correct FM, Calabar**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examines the extent to which Pidgin English is employed as an effective language for broadcasting for multi-lingual society with focus on Correct FM-an all-pidgin radio station in Calabar. The paper amongst other things set out to ascertain the importance of the use of Pidgin English as a means of communicating to the semi-literate persons in Cross River State. It sought to determine whether the station's audience engage with the station's programming based on its prioritization of Pidgin English and the linguistic identity. The paper provided a cursory look at the concept of Pidgin English, its origin, growth, benefits as well as advantages. The article equally torchlight the concept of rural broadcasting, rural broadcasting landscape as well as Correct FM, Calabar as a concept and as an institution. The paper is anchored on the individual difference theory as well as the information processing theory. The researchers are convinced that Pidgin English is an effective language of broadcasting as it is widely accepted amongst the less educated audience members. It is therefore, recommended that the language should be given a national recognition by government and policy makers. This will help make it the second official lingua franca in Nigeria.

**Key Words:** Pidgin English, Language, Rural Broadcasting, Multilingual, Semi-literate Society, Correct FM

### **Introduction**

Man's ability to communicate sets him apart from other primates. People interact with the aid of a language, which is an arbitrary code or symbol for

expressing thoughts, ideas and emotions. Pidgin is a restricted language which arises for the purpose of communication between two social groups of which the one which is a more dominant group is the one which develops the pidgin. One of the basic elements of communication is feedback and this enhances effective communication. As such, for any presenter be it on radio or television, to achieve their purpose, he or she must communicate in a language that is generally understood by their audience members.

Historically, pidgin arose in colonial situation where the representative of a particular colonial power, official tradesman, sailors etc. came in contact with natives. The latter developed a jargon when communicating with the former. This resulted in a language on the basis of the colonial language in question and the language or languages of the natives. Such a language was restricted in the range as it served a definite purpose, namely basic communication with the colonists. Pidgin is a language on its own and not just a supplementary tongue as some people claim it to be, since it serves as an unlimited instrument of social communication especially in a multi-lingual community as Calabar. Pidgin English is later re-enforced by the nation's high illiteracy level that vary from one section of the country to another and even within each section of the society. Language experts say that Pidgin English had for a longtime been viewed as an effective medium of unhindered self-expression in the Inter-expression, inter-personal communication especially in a Multilanguage environment like Nigeria (JOWITH, 2000).

The existence of Pidgin English started as a result of the coming of colonial masters to Nigeria. According to Akinfeleye (2008, there is no language that is an island, meaning that a language can develop from an already existing one. The existence of Pidgin English was through the English language which the colonial masters brought to Nigeria. Because it was necessary for the people to understand the language of the white man, a lot of them attempted to fit in and through this process adopted the Pidgin English.

According to Ndolo (2005, the term Pidgin English refers to a language that is developed in a situation where the speakers of another language have to communicate but does not have a common language to share with another. Pidgin is a mixture of English and local languages which enables individuals who do not share a mutual language to communicate. Akinfeleye (2008) added that the Nigerian Pidgin English accommodates fun and creativity and as such it has been able to fill significant actual space of communication. The language has been adopted

in some States as a general lingua franca that is used in some broadcast stations like Correct FM and Wazobia FM and TV to broadcast news and other programs in their stations. Even some formal English stations like Hit FM have some programs that are aired using Pidgin English.

Today, one of the most popular FM radio stations in Calabar, Cross River State, Correct FM runs all its programs in Pidgin. Many Nigerian musicians do their songs in pidgin, comedy and diverse social functions are carried out in pidgin but in spite of its popularity and significance, some scholars are skeptical about the use of Pidgin English, especially in official environments, insisting that it does not deserve much recognition and lacks prestige. They maintain their argument on the fact that Pidgin could adulterate individual capacities in written and spoken English but linguist observed that pidgin could come to play when there is need for better understanding in discussions involving a wider society where the choice of English language as a medium of communication may hinder audience participation especially in a multi-lingual environment like Cross River State.

An all-Pidgin radio station correct FM 97.3 opened in Calabar, Cross River State capital, located at Federal Housing Estate Calabar.

### **The Correct FM Calabar**

Correct FM which has a wide coverage even to neighboring Akwa Ibom State (Ilesanmi, cited in McAnderson, 2013) Now local language is getting sort of popular, but before they were used on AM radio, FM is basically music and queens English station but now you can see pidgin English as their content"... those are the things that correct FM have been able to do.

Radio is particularly relevant to the needs of rural marginalized and disadvantaged poor (Soola, 2002). It has thus been used as a tool for development across Nigeria, similar to its use among developing nations with large illiterate population (Larkin, 2008). Pidgin English radio station, which developed in Calabar a city originally populated by the Efik speaking Nigerians, caters for the needs of the non-Efik speaking indigene in the metropolitan city. They also address people from different ethnic groups in Nigeria, who are necessarily educated.

Ihemere (2006) stated that Pidgin English flourishes better being an inter-ethnic medium of communication. In recent times, there are job opportunities within the Nollywood Movie industry, Print media such as Newspapers and Magazines that are published in Pidgin, as well as Radio and Television stations that broadcast using Pidgin English. The language is

proposed as a possible replacement to the Standard English broadcasting in the country so that the uneducated people are able to survive in the society knowing fully well that the language appeals to a wider audience drawn across all segments of the society. (Deuber, 2005)

Jourith (2013) declared that “Pidgin flourishes as a medium of inter-ethnic communication. It is considered important enough for some broadcasting services to give news in it”. It is generally believed to be a useful language of broadcasting. For instance, among other ways, Pidgin English helps in broadcasting in the following ways:

- Pidgin English ensures proper information dissemination to the people or target audience.
- It helps the less educated people in a community to be aware and glow with the recent happenings in the country.
- It also serves as a forum for information.
- It also serves as a medium of entertainment.
- These days, job opportunities come for those that are really fluent in the language. For instance, job opportunities in the movie industry and magazines are published in Nigeria pidgin.

Consequently, the language has since mostly been used in informal conversations and has not been assigned an official status so far, but the language has taken a solid stand in an informal conversation. The reason is not far-fetched. It solves to the immediate need for communication in an informal setting. Since communication stands as a “life wire” of every society at all spheres of study; educational, cultural, even at rural level, the farmer, trader and labourer require dosage of information to function optimally. For instance, expressions like these are found and understood among different strata of Nigeria society with their meaning easily discernable irrespective of one's educational qualification:

NIGERIA PIDGIN ENGLISH	STANDARD BRITISH ENGLISH
Make I come?	Should I come?
I wan go	I want to leave
You wan fight?	Do you want to fight?
Make I see person	I want to visit someone
I wan chop	I want to eat
Hunger dey catch me	Am hungry
Your head no correct	You are mad

The problem necessitating this paper is that it is obvious that Nigeria is a third world country which implies that education is not at its best as the larger part of the population is highly uneducated and depends on local dialect and vernacular to communicate to one another especially in the rural areas and even urban centers. For communication to be effective, there must be mutual understanding between the presenter and the receiver. A station like Correct FM, Calabar that presents all their programs using Pidgin English faces the challenge of wider appeal among generality of her targeted audience due to the diverse nature of these audience members.

However, over time there has been several misinterpretation of radio messages by the audience who interprets messages received especially in Pidgin English differently. Some persons usually do not understand such messages and as such tend to ignore or stop listening to certain programs aired on radio. As a result of this, they develop negative attitudes towards such messages as they find it difficult to give satisfactory and accurate meaning to the messages aired on such stations.

Even though Pidgin English is perceived to be accepted by many listeners of radio, the language is not generally accepted in most formal settings and it is perceived and interpreted differently by various segments of the audience. In evaluating the effectiveness of Pidgin English as a means of communication on radio, issues such as understanding, meaning placement, spread, appeal and acceptability by the generality of the people become the bone of contention.

A question therefore, arises, why is Pidgin English generally acceptable in informal setting but not acceptable in a formal setting? It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to determine whether Pidgin English on radio is a means of effective communication among multilingual audience or not.

The objective of the paper is to make a strong case for the use of Pidgin English in Broadcasting. The paper argues that Pidgin English should be accorded more recognition by the broadcast media by dedicating some of their programs to be aired in Pidgin to accommodate the less educated target audience. It is hoped that the language should be recognized as a national one since it is spoken by virtually all segments of people in the Nigerian society.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the Individual Differences and the Information Processing Theories

### **The Individual Differences Theory:**

The Individual Differences Theory was propounded in 1970 by Melvin De Fleur. The basic assumption of the theory is that members of the mass media audience are made up of different people in terms of psychographic characteristics and members of this audience react to the same media message in different ways. This is because of the differences in their psychographic characteristics. Individuals differ in their personal psychological make-up. Attitudes, values and beliefs are often learnt through experiences and this will result in differences in perception and cognition. Therefore, the psychological processes – selective retention, selective attention, selective perception and selective exposure help an individual decide what to pay attention to, what he or she sees or perceives from that which he or she attends to. What this means is that differences in individuals will make them react differently to mass media messages in this case radio messages. For instance those who are less educated will prefer to listen to programs aired using Pidgin English.

According to Raymond (1972) the individual difference theory sees an individual as behaviourally and centrally figures as a unit of judgment, and learning takes place on a stimulus response basis. Each individual audience member is affected differently in terms of the personal psychological make-up he brings from his past experiences. Also human beings, because of their different learning orientations, vary one's cognitive field of selective perception and attention.

Pidgin English is widely understood by majority of individuals especially those in the rural areas and since according to the individual difference theory, “learning takes place on a stimulus response basis; communication will be made easy by using a common language understood by all the individuals of the community both literate and illiterate because, communication is never complete until the message communicated is understood by the audience.

The theory is applicable to this study in the sense that there are different audience members who listen to Correct FM and these people react differently to programs aired on the station due to their individual differences. While some understand the language very well and can interpret it to their own level, others find it difficult to interpret and as a result misunderstand information disseminated through the station. Therefore, there is need for the station to strike a balance in ensuring that all segments of their audience members are carried along in their quest to inform, educate and enlighten the populace.

### **The Information Processing Theory**

The Information Processing Theory was propounded in 1963 by Williams J. McGuire. The theory suggests that attitude involves six steps with each step being a necessary precedent for the next. The steps are as follows:

- The persuasive message must be communicated.
- The receiver will attend to the message.
- The receiver will comprehend the message.
- The receiver yields to and is convinced by the arguments presented.
- The newly adopted position is retained.
- The desired behavior takes place.

According to McGuire, any independent variable in the communication situation like a radio broadcast can have an effect on any one or more of the six steps. A variable such as intelligence might lead to less yielding, attitudinal change because the more intelligent person is better able to detect flaws in an argument and is more willing to maintain an opinion not held by others. But it might lead to more attention because the more intelligent person has a greater interest in the outside world. In this context, a more educated and highly intelligent audience member or listener is better able to detect flaws in the argument raised by radio presenters and is more willing to hold an opinion that differs from that which is held by others. McGuire equally posits that it is typical for independent variables to affect one step in a positive way and another step in a negative way. A fear appeal for instance, might increase attention to the message, but interfere with yielding to the argument presented.

McGuire (1976) presented eight steps in the information processing theory: exposure, perception, comprehension, agreement, retention, retrieval, decision-making and action. In 1989, McGuire again presented twelve steps in the output or dependent variable size of the persuasion process. These include:

- ❖ Exposure to communication.
- ❖ Attending to it.
- ❖ Liking or becoming interested in it.
- ❖ Comprehending it (learning what)
- ❖ Skill acquisition (learning how)
- ❖ Yielding to it (attitude change).
- ❖ Memory stage of content and agreement.
- ❖ Information search and retrieval.

- ❖ Deciding on basis of retrieval.
- ❖ Behaving in accord with decision.
- ❖ Reinforcement of desired acts and
- ❖ Post-behavioural consolidating.

The information processing theory gives an overview of the attitude-change, reminding us that it involves a number of components.

The informational meaning approach is focused on how effortlessly listeners or potential consumers may understand and respond to information presented in a specific language (Dada 2012). According to this theory, a radio program presented in English language may be less effective as the targeted consumers or audiences, who are from different ethnic groups may not understand or interpret the message being shared. Additionally, using English language on a radio program that focuses on illiterates or semi-literate consumers who only understand the Pidgin English or a minority (indigenous) language may result to be effective. (Efuk, 2013) confirms this statement when he maintained that “for an effective radio program, considering the audience is the first priority; their social, educational, political and religious background.” It has to also consider the subject that would be appealing to the audience and the things to be avoided.

Additionally, it should avoid alienating audiences by selecting subjects that will prove to be too high for the audience level of satisfaction or understanding and this is also very important, mostly where the level of illiteracy is known to be very high.

### **Conceptual Classification**

#### **The Concept of Pidgin English**

Many scholars have attempted to define the concept of Pidgin English. According to Whinnom (1971) a pidgin crops up from a situation involving a target language and two or more substrate languages, but the socially superior target language is usually inaccessible to the substrate speakers. This means that the development of a true Pidgin requires more than two languages in contact. It consists of a base language, which continues to be modified by other languages termed as substrate. This substrate vary from place to place according to Whinnom. For instance in Calabar, the major substrate is Efik while in Akwalbom, it is Ibibio.

Pidgin English is an English-based pidgin and creole language spoken as a lingua franca across Nigeria. It is commonly referred to as

pidgin or broken. Pidgin English is a simplified version of a language that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups that do not have a language in common. When people need to communicate but speak different native languages, they may combine their own language to create a new “pidgin language”. It is commonly employed in situations such as trade or where both groups speak languages different from the language of the country in which they reside. For instance; An illiterate Efik man trying to purchase goods from an illiterate Fulani man, Pidgin English would be adopted by both parties to make this transaction a success.

According to Crystal (1988), Pidgin is a language which has been striped-off everything but bare essentials necessary for communication. This means that Pidgin unlike English Language is a more simplified means of communication.

Fundamentally, a pidgin is a simplified means of linguistic communication as it is constructed impromptu or by convention between individuals or groups of people. It is the major language and means of communication in rural area. Pidgin is nobody's mother tongue and it is not a real Language at all; it has no elaborate grammar.

“Many pidgin languages survive today in territories which formerly belonged to the European colonial nations and act as lingua franca. For example, West African pidgin in English is used extensively between several ethnic groups along the west African coast” (Crystal, 2003).

According to Ithemere (2006) Pidgin English is derived partly from Edo-Delta area of the Country, but varies among the speakers. He posited that dialect of pidgin exists including that of Warri, Sapele, Benin, Port Harcourt, Lagos and Onitsha noting that pidgin has gained more popularity for dealings in the nation's socio-economic activities. Pidgin English is seen as corrupt, mixed, reduced, marginal and bastardized versions of existing languages. This notion has led many to think that pidgin is a debased form of standardized language and not a language of its own, which was used as substitute of this standardized language by those who were incapable of or at least had not the opportunity of learning the latter. Pidgin english commonly used as a lingua franca among educated and illiterate Nigerians for better understanding.

Pidgin English used to be seen generally as the code of the non-illiterate as well as a bastardization of English and use was, therefore considered a mark of the level of one's proficiency in English. For instance, Agheyise (1971) claims that the typical user of Pidgin English is those that

have little or no formal education. However, as Akande (2008) noted, the sociolinguistic reality in Nigeria today is such that Pidgin English is spoken by university graduates, professors, lawyers and journalists.

It has been demonstrated that Pidgin English is not only used in informal settings but also in offices and other formal setting (Akande, 2008). Without doubt, language usage is a very powerful tool in producing a radio program and it has been evidently observed that radio presentation language is very unique in terms of usage, (Dada, 2012). No other communication medium can be seen to be able to meet up with radio. The ardent desire to catch audience attention and persuade them to go for a product or service, the use of language through the right medium is of great importance.

#### **The Use of Pidgin English in Broadcasting**

Jowith (2015) declared that “Pidgin English flourishes as a medium of inter-ethnic communication and it is considered important enough for some rural broadcasting services to give the news in it”. Pidgin English is generally believed to be a useful language of broadcasting. For instance, among other ways Pidgin English helps in broadcasting are as follows;

- Pidgin English ensures that the less educated people in rural communities, States etc. are aware and glow with the recent happenings in the country.
- Pidgin English serves as a medium of entertainment.
- Pidgin English serves as a forum for information.

These days, the less educated can get a job in broadcasting companies, as Pidgin English does require someone to be educated before acquiring the knowledge once the pidgin English fluency is smooth (Udeajah 2003).

In all, Pidgin English will gradually take over standard British English in broadcasting in Nigeria presently in order for the minority and uneducated people to be able to survive in the country knowing well enough that Pidgin English has gained a larger audience from all parts of the society.

Indigenous radio station offers the government the opportunity to communicate their actions and policies to the grassroots, the uneducated and the semi-urban population outside the capital cities in their languages. Pidgin English radio stations are the closest to their indigenous language radio station which intra-national migrant population can access and identify with (Atoyebi, 2002).

Pidgin English has become a generally accepted language amongst different people in various walks of life like students, farmers, business people, civil servants, public servants, among others. Its usage cuts across people of different linguistic backgrounds, social status and ages. As captured by Adekunle (1972, P. 198), “It is the language most frequently used as a means of inter-ethnic communication at shopping centers, informal discussions, in offices and in linguistically heterogeneous cities”.

The language is common in most homes across the country. This is largely attributed to inter-tribal marriages, which seem to be more common now than before. Pidgin has become the dominant language spoken by parents, their children and other domestic staff. Even in higher institutions of learning, the language is heard everywhere. According to Adetugbo (1970), even among the highly educated Teachers of English language there is often recourse to Pidgin English as the vehicle of informal education. The mass media are not left out in the use of Pidgin as it has penetrated both the print, electronic as well as new media. As stated by Alabi (1999, P. 83) it appears that many Nigerian novelists, playwrights, advertising agents, trade unionists, and even politicians realized and have begun to exploit the great potentialities of the language as a medium of mass communication. For instance, the various broadcasting organs in Nigeria have in recent years done so much to make Pidgin English popular by allowing its use in advertisements and comedies. The mass media use Nigerian Pidgin to pass messages across to people. Radio and Television stations air a lot of programs in Pidgin. Some cartoonists and columnists also use Nigerian Pidgin in some Nigerian newspapers. The use of Pidgin English in Correct FM, Calabar in dissemination information will reduce the misconception and misunderstanding of uneducated people or lay men in the community.

The story is the same in the work environment across various sectors of the economy as the use of Pidgin English in communicating among workers has been on the increase over time. The language is mostly used in informal conversations in offices. According to Akinluyi (1977, p 45) as cited by Kisob (20-- ) “Pidgin English is the workers' language in West Africa's industrial towns where labour is drawn from various tribal groups. It is therefore an industrial language of great economic importance, an indispensable raw material in any scheme of industrialization. Nigerian Pidgin English because of its use in diverse circumstances and business places, employs technical language”.

### **The Growth of Nigerian Pidgin**

According to scholars, Nigerian Pidgin developed from a rudimentary speech which was strongly assisted by gestures to a more elaborate form that we have today. As Elugbe and Omamor (1991) captured it, at first it was used between the visiting English men and their Nigerian host. Later, the Nigerians who had no common language of their own began to use this form of language for communicating among themselves. The continued use of the language in Nigeria made the number and interest of its speakers to continue to expand and by extension encouraged the growth of Nigerian Pidgin.

When the white men arrived Nigeria, they needed to transact business with the local dwellers and most of them did not understand the sophisticated English language spoken by the Whites. As a result there was need for a common ground and the Nigerian Pidgin breached the gap as the people tend to communicate better in it and even though the Whites did not adequately understand them but it enhanced the communication process to a large extent. However, the growth of English did not affect the usefulness of Pidgin as not everyone has access to quality education. Some of those who have no privilege of acquiring formal education depend largely on the Pidgin English as a means of communication, especially when interacting with those who speak different dialect from them. Speakers of the Nigerian Pidgin use it at ease and with creativity too.

Also in the days of colonial government, due to the influence of the missionaries they were able to boost the use of Nigerian Pidgin as it was seen as adopting a mother-tongue approach to evangelism where people are preached to in a language they understand and can relate with. As a result, they played dual roles of being missionaries as well as linguists who studied the language of the people and committing them to writing and translating the Bible into various languages including Pidgin. They were also colonial administrators who doubled as civil servants and linguists. As such the colonial government had to grant some recognition to the indigenous languages of the people leaving out the Nigerian Pidgin English. Even those who help to sustain the Pidgin English today by constantly speaking it have refused to recognize it as an official language for communication among the people. It is therefore obvious that the Nigerian Pidgin has flourished and survived by generally being readily useful and handy as a communication tool among the Nigerian populace especially the less educated ones.

### **The Advantages and Benefits of Pidgin English as a Means of Communication**

There are various benefits that have accrued to the use of Pidgin English as a means of communication especially in the broadcast media. Though the language has not gained the desired acceptability as desired by some of its frequent users, it is still very much a major source of communication especially amongst the less educated populace who form the bulk of our population. Due to its widespread acceptability and appeal, it has become imperative that the language is incorporated into the planning process by government at all levels and given the due attention it deserves. The language happens to be a major asset as it shares with official English language unique feature of being the only ethnically neutral language in Nigeria.

Pidgin English is equally of immense benefits as a means of communication as it today serves as a National language. According to Elugbe (1999, p.10), a language may be national by being spoken all over the country, being indigenous and being declared 'National'. The Nigerian Pidgin appear to be a national language as it meets two of these requirements. First, it is an indigenous language to Nigerians because it originated from here, it is being sustained and is expanding or spreading across the nation on daily basis. Also, the language is geographically spread across Nigeria and spoken by Nigerians of diverse ethnic nationalities. While the Standard English is only spoken across the nation in most cases, it is not an indigenous language. In our educational system, it is recommended that an indigenous language like Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba be taught especially at the Primary and secondary levels, the same way English Language is being taught though it is not our indigenous language but borrowed from the Whites. In Nigeria there are areas such as Sapele in Delta State where Pidgin has acquired the mother tongue status and there are Nigerians that acquired Pidgin as their first language spoken to them from birth as these set of people speak it the same way they speak their mother tongues, thereby making them bilingual in nature. This goes to show that Pidgin English can be used in teaching many Nigerians especially in areas where the local language would have been required. This will help the children who have adopted Pidgin as their official language to learn better because it will enhance understanding. Our language policy should therefore be reviewed to include Nigerian Pidgin as an official medium for teaching in our schools.

Also, the Nigerian Pidgin as a means of interaction and

communication bridges the gap between the mother tongue and Standard English. As stated by Faraclas (1990), “Nigerian Pidgin has most of the linguistic features of Nigerian Standard English and those that typify many other Nigerian languages. Therefore, as long as Nigerian Pidgin is not accorded the place it deserves in Nigerian education, an invaluable tool for the teaching of English will continue to lie wasted and unused”. He concluded by recommending that “official recognition should be extended to Nigerian pidgin as a major Nigerian language”. Taking this step will give the language a national status.

Nigerian Pidgin is easier to learn as its lexicon takes words from both the Standard English as well as other Nigerian languages. What this means is that its speakers take words from their own local languages where they think that the Nigerian Pidgin form should be strengthened. As suggested by Elugbe and Omamor (1991), such creativity is reflected in the ease with which songs are composed and sung in Nigerian Pidgin. The language is equally adopted in cracking jokes by popular comedians in Nigeria.

### **Pidgin English and Rural Broadcasting**

Rural broadcasting is a powerful and effective medium for widespread education in rural areas. Rural broadcasting can be used to bring positive attitudinal change among the rural areas. Rural broadcasting contributes towards the development of rural dwellers by educating them about banking, child health and government policies, among other issues. Thus, Iyer (2011) says that rural communication imparts knowledge of new technologies to rural dwellers to help them improve their earning and increase development. Access to timely information by rural dwellers can result in enhanced economic and social development. The importance of rural broadcasting as a vehicle for bringing national development has widely been held among communication experts. This concern was given expression by United Nations development programme (UNDP) and World Bank report recognizing the importance of community media as tools for the promotion of democratization and development.

Motivated by the realization, several countries began experiencing the effect of radio in mobilizing their people to embrace government policies and programs geared towards development. Countries like Kenya, India, South Africa, Ghana have reaped tremendous benefits from establishing chains of community media in their respective countries Rural development of any kind in any place can only be meaningfully

achieved through a well planned and executed complex interaction of many economic and non-economic variables. Correct FM usually examine problem and issue that need to be understood and tackled, to achieve rural development using Pidgin English language; it is easy to reach out to the rural dwellers.

Most of the people living in the rural areas did not attend schools where they were taught to speak simple and correct English, but with the use of pidgin English in broadcasting, communication would be maintained between the poor or marginalized rural dwellers and the urban cities. It is contestable that when media one properly approved, communication can work together with a nexus of other social variables to facilitate social change that includes rural development experts or practitioners in Africa who have been engaged in search for method approaches, device techniques and strategies which help them to put communication to the fullest and most effectively used.

Radio is the dominant medium and main source of information in Nigeria. (Akoh and Jagun,2012) It is considered the most effective means of mass communication in Nigeria because of the immediacy of its impact (Akoh and Jagun, 2012). In the past few decades, people have relied on radio as their main mode of media consumption compared to visual or print media. A recent survey indicated that three quarters of household in Calabar own radio sets. (Itu, 20--) cited in Akoh and Jagun, 2012) while a 2010 survey indicated that 43.5% of households in urban and semi urban areas own radio sets (Akoh and Jagun, 2008). A radio listening culture is prevalent in Calabar perhaps because it is most accessible and available to the ordinary, non-illiterate Cross Riverians living in rural areas with unreliable electricity access.

### **Conclusion**

Evaluating the use of Pidgin English as an effective language in rural broadcasting with a focus on an all-pidgin radio station, Correct FM, Calabar has clearly shown that the Nigerian Pidgin English deserves to be given a national recognition due to its indigenous nature, wider appeal and acceptability amongst the diverse populace especially those in the rural areas who are less educated to speak fluently the Standard English Language but rely heavily on Pidgin as their major language after their mother tongue. Various broadcasting organs in Nigeria have in recent years done so much to make Pidgin English popular by allowing its use in advertisements and comedies.

The mass media use Nigerian Pidgin to pass messages across to people. Radio and Television stations air a lot of programs in Pidgin. Some cartoonists and columnists also use Nigerian Pidgin in some Nigerian newspapers. The use of Pidgin English in Correct FM, Calabar in broadcasting information has reduced the misconception and misunderstanding of uneducated people or lay men in the community.

Due to the fact that most of the listeners of Correct FM understand the issues that are communicated to them through the numerous programs which are aired using the Nigerian Pidgin English, it can be concluded that the language enjoys acceptability and appeal by audience members, therefore one can say that pidgin English usage is very effective in broadcasting.

Again, as a result of the fact that it is easier to learn the Nigerian Pidgin as it is a blend of the indigenous language of the people and the standard English, the language bridges the gap between the Standard English and mother tongue. This makes it easier for anyone who is willing to learn to easily flow as long as he or she can speak their mother tongue. The creativity of Nigerian Pidgin can therefore be linked to the relative ease with which it is acquired, thereby making it an invaluable medium of communication to diverse audience members.

In all, Pidgin English may gradually take over standard British English in broadcasting in Nigeria presently in order for the minority and uneducated people to be able to survive in the country knowing well enough that Pidgin English has gained a large audience from all parts of the society.

Indigenous radio stations like Correct FM, Calabar offer the government the opportunity to communicate their actions and policies to the grassroots, the uneducated and the semi-urban population outside the capital cities in their languages. Pidgin English radio stations are the closest to their indigenous language radio station which intra-national migrant population can access and identify with (Atoyebi, 2002).

#### **Recommendations**

This article has attempted to examine Pidgin English as an effective language in broadcasting especially as it pertains to the rural dwellers. Arising from the foregoing, it has become pertinent to make the following recommendations:

- ❖ Pidgin English should be given national recognition as an indigenous language due to its widespread appeal and acceptability by a generality of Nigerians from all walks of life.
- ❖ Broadcast stations - Television and Radio who still consider Pidgin

English as an unofficial language should accord more recognition to the language by dedicating some of their programs to be aired in Pidgin to accommodate the less-educated target audience,

- ❖ All-Pidgin stations like Correct FM should train their presenters to master the Nigerian Pidgin English as some of them appear unprofessional in the language. The language should not be modernized as is the case in some of the stations in which Pidgin English is used.
- ❖ Pidgin English should be incorporated into the Nigerian educational curriculum and taught as an official language in our schools especially Primary and Secondary levels.

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