

AN EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19 IN A MULTILINGUAL NATION: A CASE STUDY OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Like all other outbreak of pandemics in the history of the world, one of the challenges posed by Corona Virus otherwise known as COVID-19 is that it is very strange to the medical world, with little or no available record for it. In combatting it, especially as precautionary moves, governments of many nations had to embark on sensitization of their citizens using language. However, in Nigeria's context there is a challenge arising from the fact that Nigeria has about 450 languages used distinctly by those that have the languages as their mother tongues. In view of this reality, this study focuses on the role of English language in combating COVID-19 in Nigeria, which is a multiethnic and multilingual country. It aims at evaluating how English broke through the linguistic barrier that would have ordinarily been posed by litany of tens of hundreds of ethnically based languages scattered all over the nation. The work adopted qualitative methods as secondary data were reviewed to form opinion. Hence, the study identifies several important issues regarding the positive influence of English in fighting COVID-19 in Nigeria multiethnic context. The findings are expected to be a useful tool for policy makers in Nigeria and other multilingual countries in forming opinion on why English should be the lingua franca in multi-ethnic nations.

KEYWORDS: *English Language, Role, COVID-19, Multilingual, Nigeria*

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