

## Language of Nigerian Arabic Theatre and Play in Nigeria Society

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### Abstract

This paper shall look into Nigeria languages and Arabic theatre. The official language and must – widely spoken Lingual Franca in English. Which was the Language of Colonial Nigeria? It is most widely spoken language, although English is not the official language of Nigeria. In addition to English, Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo According to Ethnologue 512 languages are spoken in Nigeria. Although Arab theatre in the sense of stage play did not develop until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the religion has the other dramatic traditions. Arabic theatre working group ATWG exist to broaden international understanding of the theatre and performance culture of the Arabic – Islamic world, in 2009 the group voted to retain the application Arabic in recognition of the historically unifying role of the Arabic language. This recognition notwithstanding the group is neither meant to be exclusive nor promote any nationalist or religious based agenda rather it seek to maintain its scholarly mission by holding up its key definitional terms to ongoing critical subjects can be draw from all areas of theatre activity as well from performance work that outside the traditional European concept of theatre methodological approaches from the field of (theatre) translation, cultural and postcolonial studies will be represented in the work of the group, but all approaches that will provides a better understanding of this large field of studies are welcome. The Arabic theatre working international federation for theatre research invites proposal for contribution and Arabic theatre.

**Key words:** Arabic; Language; Methodological religion; Recognition; Scholarly; Theatre

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### INTRODUCTION

According to ethnologue, we have 512 languages spoken in Nigeria but however there is different opinion between the dialect and languages which means that this number is not correct. According to social political views on classification of languages “a language is a dialect with an army and a navy “ speaker of many dialect. ; language are very prestigious, official and written whereas “dialect” are mostly spoken, unofficial and looked down upon.

Nigeria is Africa’s most popularly country and most blessed with diverse cultures tribes and traditions. There are about 520 local languages in Nigeria of which nine of them are extinct. Some of the largest include Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Fulfulde, Ibibio, Edo, kanuri

#### Abia State

Abia is a state in the south eastern part of Nigeria with an administrative capital in the city of umuahia

They speak an Igbo language .

#### Adamawa Atate

In Adamawa state the capital is well known as Yola, in the state they speak Hausa, Fulfulde, when we go back to Akwa ibon state, the major language spoken is Ibibio, Igala, are major language spoken. In Bauchi state the major language spoken is Hausa, Fulani, warji, Bolewa and Butaw. But when we go Bayelsa state the major language is Biseni, Ekpeye, and Ijo. But in Benue state the major language spoken is Idoma, Igede, and Tiv. But in borno state the major language spoken are Shuwa, arab, kanuri, and hausa.

Language spoken in Kaduna are hausa, abagyi, akumi, and adara, but when we look into kano state the major language is hausa language, but in katsina state the major language spoken is hausa language and Fulfulde. But in kogi there are three main ethnic group and languages in kogi state, igala, ebira, and okun, and other languages like in Lokoja nupe, kakanda, Yoruba, ogorimangongo, basa komu, egbira koto, and basange.

When you go to a town called Achara in kogi LGA koton karfe the major language spoken are Ganagana, hausa, and basa komu still in the said LGA an ancient town; ADANGERE the overwhelming spoken language is egbira koto consequently hausa and other languages are not that strong in use.

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## NIGERIA OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

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The official language of Nigeria as a result of British colonial rules is English language, the English language has been spoken in the urban regions and less among those with lower levels of educational attainment. The language is spoken in education and by the government of Nigeria.

However, it was not frequently spoken as first language throughout the country.

When we look into northeast is only few people that speak English language, while the majority see it as the second language, other language that has been around more than thousands of years are the major language in Nigeria in terms of the population of native speakers. Some of the most widely used by Nigerian is known as a pidgin English language.

### Arabic Theatre

Arabic theatre, its origin, and the reasons, the division is still coming between the above, the subject. Arab studies written to reflect this issue are many, nearly as many as theatrical texts there are or at least nearly as much as what has been made to develop the Arab theatre.

The scholars has been categorized into some categories. The first group or the first categories viewed some phenomena in the aspect of Arabic heritage and it has been considered them as special type of theatre. The second category is well known as an original part of Arab cultural heritage. rather it was for this group a foreign arts that came along with French campaign to Egypt in 1998, and those Arab aware of that, but they were not aware of the Arabic theatre.

The first scholar they believed that the European greek model of theatre is not the only one so there are another theatre, so the scholar point out Arabic literary seasons during the pre-Islamic era (that is before the advent of Islam which came along with the pilgrimage) season and literary market, a popular market during the Islamic era, such as SUKK AL-UKAZ dumah AL-JANDAL majanna, and DUH'L-MAJAZ.

## Some factor that delayed Arabic theatre

### a) Social factor

They believed that the Bedouin social state that the Arab lived through Jahiliyyah and the following eras did not grant them an opportunity for stability and urbanization. Arabs know their personalities through the tribe. A person known as Tawfia AL- Hakim stood up with his own personal ideal and explained it in the preface of his play "king Oedipus".

### b) Religious Factor

The Followers of this idea see that the Religion be for the advent of Islam is paganism, after the advent of Islam Arabs believed in oneness of God, while Greeek plays were filled with many gods and their problem with each one another.

### c) The status of civilization

In this aspect Arabs dose not anthing about Arabic theatre, because they were at the stage of primitive Idea, which is the stage of civilization. According to Tolimat, that the status of Arabs civilization didn't reasons for evolution.

### d) Artistic linguistic

Arabic language doesn't suit the vitality and good language for Arabic Theater. The belived that Arabic is a language of kings and princes, not of common peoples. According to the French orientalist Jacques Berque, Arab traditions suffered from incompatibility with internal requirements of dramatic language when it comes to the aspect of theatre.

In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century , the theatre finally arrived or emerged from some place it was hiding. It came as an answer to a and cultural need that the Arab society found itself in. Foreigners, However, introduced theatre in this early stage did not incite Arabs to reap arts until they felt they needed it.

### e) Trends of play in Arabic Theatre

Lebanese diva fairuz performs in Syria for the first time in two decades at a place known as Damscus opera House in 28th of January, 20080 Fairuz go a long with his Rahbani brothers musical play 'Sah EL- NOMth' which was hisly performed in Lebanon and Jordan over the past two years.

The writers started to read into historical events with fresh eyes. Salah al-Din before this phase was an hero, but in this aspect, the people were in they play Bab Al-Futuh by mahmoud Diab, This writer declared his play as a trial for an official history and its hired historians.

### f) Experimental Theatre in Arabic

The term experimental theatre in Arabic started during the post- colonial period as a fusion of western theatrical traditions such as a local performance cultural.

The Arab spring, the major role to be performed by a woman in Arabic environment or Arabic society and region, such matters are often default with using humor. Throughout the period, experimental theatre in the Arab world has been changed into a synonymous and

underground art movement in the area of artists are always involving and the breaking down conventional markers between an actors and spectators.

The script combines the appropriation and dis-appropriation of western models and as usually organic, or more improvisational and also self-reflexive when we look at the late 2000s, improvisation theatre which takes the way of coming of comedy which shows the aspect of emerged around the Arab world.

Arabic traditional performances that were usually seen in the area of public squares, and market places to theatre buildings.

Experimental theatre in the Arab world has been historically taken place of group theatre by using audience participation as a way to resolve conflict, and also social tension that normally occurred between Itaman beings.

#### **g) History of Arabic Theatre**

When we look at this history, it can be traced back to 2007 as the Arabic theatre working Group A T W G exist to explain in an international understanding of the term Arabic Theatre and its performances culture of the Arabo-Islamic world in 2009, the group of such peoples voted to retain the word Arabic in recognition of the historically unifying the method and the role of Arabic Language. This recognition not withstanding the group is neither meant to be exclusive nor to promote any nationalist.

The group contain Arabic Theatre and performances material used from the member states of the league of Arab states and any organization of the Islamic conference but Arabic and Islamic should understood that the demarcate, primarily, as a general culture area of scholarly exploration and negotiation, investigations of material used from many and different of non-Arab and non Muslims communities located within the Arab and Muslims world are welcome development in the Area of Arabic Theatre, by looking at Arabic Theatre some subjects can be drawn activity as well as from performances work that can lead to Arabic Theatre.

An European meaning of Arabic Theatre methodological approaches from the field and area of theatre translation, cultural and post-colonial studies will be highly represented in the work of the group but all approaches that will provide a better and meaningful understanding of this large and wide area of the studies.

#### **h) Elements of Arabic Theatre**

Despite Arabic Theatre in different countries, it has commonly Elements and features and smaller elements that make the Arabic Theatre, leaned about historical sources. The writers drew from history books and Arabics heritage, and their resort to history as eventually based on the elements.

Arab history is real based on connected episodes and events. The history is at the same period of the Islamic

history that is embraced by the overwhelming majority of Arabs therefore, all Arabs considered the history of Islam to be their history.

Throughout the century and a half, which is the period of Arabic Theatre, all the country lived in one situation which the Arabic theatre came during its evolution, all Arabic countries they were under Uthman rule when the rule ended. Western colonialism started. In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century all Arab countries started to set their independence.

Another element is that Arabic Theatre was an emergent arts with not origin in the ancient Arab social and cultural life. In its birth stage. The Arabic Theatre suffered from a single problem in alc Arab countries, as it was met with discouragement. At the same period Arab dramatists were still practices the basics of Arabic theatre.

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### **TRENDS IN PLAYS IN ARABIC THEATRE**

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Enlightenment and political rise to fight the colonialist since it emergence after the era of the first pioneers and till the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term historical plays followed the good step and directed against the Turks, collection of short plays published in 1972, for the celebration of World Theatre Day in 2000, Kafkaesque one – act play by the polish playwright Slawomir mrozek, in which two men, an intellectual and activities are imprisoned for unknown reasons and are eventually forced to strip. Mahfouz later adapted the play.

#### **Play in Nigeria Society**

Play is a natural and universal drive in childhood, it is very important element and factor to support our children to involve in play, we should not disallowed our children not involve in play in our society, physical and emotional well – being, growth, learning and development. Play of children in our society is to create cultural and emotional awareness play can be structured, non – structured, formal and non – formal. Through play children explore world around them and learn to know their responsibility for their own choices.

When we look at the word play is very important for our children, because we can use play way method to teach our children in our society, so through play way method our children learn, a good teacher must adopt a play way method in the classroom, to enable our children to understand the lesson. The new children in Nigeria society recognizes that the enjoyment of play and leisure is a key outcome that the Executive wish to deliver in order to improve the well – being of our children in our society. The play aimed to ensure that policy markers, practitioners and parents to understand that play have played a vital role in our society.

Play is one of the essential aspect of childhood, But it, is not just about a fun type to pass the time, play is how

a young children learn and develop, playing a football or jumping like a kangaroo, when children involve in play way method it will create a social and emotional skills a boost, but however it is very important to remember that every child is different type. Every child can develop and play at their own. Play in everything helps a child to have knowledge about what they are to have knowledge about what they are teaching them play.

### **The stages play**

There are many stages of play in Nigeria society

#### **a) Unoccupied play**

This is type of stage of play that starts or begins from the time of birth to three months of age, Unoccupied play doesn't even look like play at all aspect of a child, but but it is an absolutely the foundation of future play. It is something that our babies or our children do instinctively, so as a parent you don't need or wish to do it.

#### **b) Solitary play**

Solitary play is the type of play that a child or a baby plays alone without partnership with other child, solitary play usually occurred when your child reached the age of 2 years or 3 years old.

#### **c) Onlooker play**

Onlooker play is also known as a spectator play, is talking about a child watching other children and adults play without joining them in the play. So if someone see his child involves in onlooker type of play, he suppose to know that it is a normal stage, and all part of child development and achievement in our Nigeria society.

#### **d) Parallel play**

When you see you see your children playing next to each other, but they are not together, this known as parallel play, but this type of play usually occurred between the age of 2 years to 4 years of age.

#### **e) Associative Play**

On this regard you can see a children of 3 years to 4 years involve in this type of play, they start to engage in Associative play in their environment.

An Associative play is often unstructured, children may be playing their own games or with their own toys, such as in parallel play.

#### **f) Cooperative play**

This type of play normally take place between 4years to 5 years associative play or cooperative play is more organized each child has a vital role to play, and this type of play has a rule and regulation that Governing the play.

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## **HISTORY OF ARABIC THEATRE**

Sa'dallah wannous, who was born in 1941, near Tartous, Syria and died in 1997, is widely considered to be one most popular playwright from the Arab world of the twentieth century. He was a playwright, cultural critic, and

a Journalist, founder and the director of the High Dramatic Institute in Damascus, and Dramatic theorist, He wrote over twenty plays including an Evening's Entertainment for the Fifth of June, the Adventure of the king is the king and Rituals of signs and Transformation.

NJ Agwuna is a Freelance theatre and film director, hailing from the burbs of central Maryland. Performing from a young age, NJ found herself drawn more to the directorial and technical side of the Arabic Theatre in 2009, she pursued her passion for theatre, at Binghamton university, where she majored in Arabic theatre Directing and cinema, some of NJ'S Credits include Garbage Director Town.

Sava Rademacher is the CO founders and former Arabic theatre Collective, whose Mission. Is to bring about professional quality of Arabic theatre free of charge to audiences with limited access, sara is dedicated and devoted to creating Arabic theatre to engage her community both locally and globally. She holds an Mfa in theatre divesting from Columbia university in Nigeria society. Before forming an Element, she studied theatre in south Africa, and earned her BA, in dramatic Arts at UCSB, she has worked in Casting, Assistant directing, dramaturgy, and other Internships Regional theatre including the Guthrie, Seattle Repertory, Sara currently works for the National theatre Conference.

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## **SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

The Researcher suggested the following.

- Government should supply enough material to Anabe peoples to practice to Arabic theater and play in Nigeria.
- Parents should develop fell interest in standing Arabic theatre in Nigeria.
- People should also pay serious attention in standing Arabic theatre in Nigeria.
- Societers should pay fall attention in the aspect of Arabic theatre.

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## **FINDING**

The Researcher discovered the following

- People are not ready to study Arabic language.
- Parents attitude towards Arabic theatre is too poor.
- People are not ready to learn languages of Nigeria.
- Government attitude towards study and learning Arabic theatre in Nigeria is too poor.
- No motivation in studying Arabic theatre and play.

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## **CONCLUSION**

The official language of Nigeria as a result of British colonial rule is English language, you can see that English language has been spoken in urban regions and less in the lower Levels of education attainment, when you go



to urban Areas you can see many people are speaking English language as an official language, but when you go down to rural Areas you can see children and Adults are speaking Hausa language.

When you go to north you find out many or majority of people are speaking Hausa; Hausa man valued Hausa language than English language.

Experimental theatre in Arabic began during the era of post-colonial period as a result of western theatrical tradition.

The Arab spring to be performed by women in Arabic environment or Arabic society.

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