THE CONTRIBUTION OF NIGERIAN ARABIC LITERATURE IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION (A CASE STUDY OF DESCRIPTIVE POETRY BETWEEN: WAZIR JUNAID AND ALQAHI UMAR)

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Abstract

Nigerian government is currently working hard to make an impact on the lives of its people through a programme called “Transformational Agenda” the programme was meant to introduce positive changes in the areas of agriculture, technology, transport and most importantly education which this paper intends to address. This paper therefore attempts to throw more light on the contribution of Nigeria Arabic literature in Nigerian educational system. Arabic poets and their poetries were discussed with special reference to descriptive poetries. Two important personalities known in Nigeria Arabic poetry ( wazir Junaid and AlQaadhi Umar) were compared on three critical element of criticism, namely Alwahda al udwiyya, Mutabaqatu sshakl bil madhmun and Attaswirul fanni. At the end, the paper established how Nigerian Arabic literature contributed in the National educational system through nomadic education, ‘Almajiri’ system of education. The paper also established that Arabic literature contribute a lot in the areas of reducing the menace of illiteracy and crime. Conclusion recommendations were given at tail end of the paper.

1. Introduction

Nigeria is one of the West African nations and it is considered to be the giant of Africa. The nation is currently facing a lot of challenges, especially the political and security challenges. However, Nigerian government under the leadership of President Good Luck Ebele Jonathan is currently busy with its transformational agenda which was created to develop positive changes in the life of the citizenry economically, politically, socially, and educationally.

The essence of this paper is to assess the importance of Arabic language in Nigeria, and indeed the world at large, as well as the impact of Nigerian literature on language education, especially, in the area of Almajiri system of education, Nomadic education, Adult education and its impact in minimizing the insurgency of Boko Haram.

Arabic literature is as old as Islam in Nigeria, and also the first Linguafranca. Before the arrival of the British Colonial masters, Nigerians were writing official letters, court proceedings and Historical documentation in Arabic( Ajami). It is the language of politics, education, business transaction the social activities. Moreover, the Nigerian Currency is being scripted with Hausa language Arabic alphabets the Ajami write-up indicating the amount of the particular currency, and the Nigerian armed forces caps are also carrying Arabic letters which captures NASRUN MINALLAH designed with Arabic as its logo.

2. Arabic and its literature in Nigeria

As you have read in the introduction of this paper, Arabic has a strong and old history in Nigeria, and the language literature has a gigantic role it is playing in the life of the people of Nigeria. The number of Muslims in Nigeria is highly significant, the number of Nigerians going to Arabian countries for business is high and the magnanimity of Arabic in the Nigerian body politics is an undisputable fact.
Arabic literature was used in solving social, religious and political problems of the general populace of the country. Example of this is: S. A. Musa poetry: wailatul wadani of (1998). The poet was able to mention some social problems that Nigerians were suffering from with the aim of suggesting solution to them. Another example is scholars like Sheikh Usman bn Fodiyo, the leader of Islamic Jihad of 1804, wrote a lot of literature in Arabic in that respect. So also Sheikh Abubakar Mahmood Gummi is another figure worthy of mentioning in this respect, and so many of them. A one- time Presidential aspirant of SDP, Social Democratic Party, who happened to be a Christian, Dr Olu Falaye used Arabic literature to gain popularity in northern part of Nigeria which is muslim dominated area during campaign.

3. Arabic And Its Literature in The International Arena
Arabic is one of the living languages of the world today. Arabic is the language spoken by millions of people in Asian countries and indeed in very large parts of African Continent including, Sudan, Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and the rest of them. It is the language that is spoken by the United Nations organisation, especially by the Security Council of the organisation. Moreover, the language is the language of education, science, technology, communication, administration and religious in those countries mentioned above. The number of people interested in learning the language had dramatically increased in United States, Britain and some other western countries, since the unfortunate attack of America in September, 11- 2001. International Televisions, radios, news papers and magazines are worthy of mentioning, such as; BBC Arabic radio section and BBC Televisions, Chinese Arabic radio section and Chinese Arabic television, Moscow Arabic radio section and Moscow Television and indeed American Arabic section and American Television Arabic.

3.1 The two important poets to be compared are:
   a- Waziri Junaid
   b- Alqadhi Umar

   a- Waziri Junaid:
Waziri Junaid was born in Sokoto in the early period of twenties century in the year 1906. His father was Muhammad the son of Bukhari the son of Ahmad the son of Gidado the son of Lema. That was exactly five years before the British imperialism invaded Sokoto. His father died when he was four, then his uncle Sambo took-over the responsibility of bringing him up, up to the time he dies, then, the responsibility shifted to his brother Wazir Abdulkadir Maccido. This upbringing helped him tremendously, to become highly educated and highly disciplined, that earned him respect and eventually became Waziri of Sokoto. He held so many positions at Sokoto Emirate and indeed at the national level. He died on Thursday, January1997.

b- Alqadhi Umar:
Alqadhi Umar was born in Zaria in the year 1922 during British colonial era. His father was Ibrahim the son of Ahmad the son of Umar Wali the son of Ahmad. His grandfather Umar Wali was a renowned scholar and a poet. His family was a mixed family of Fulani and kanumbu. He grew-up in Zaria, the prominent city of knowledge and scholarship, but he was not enrolled in the western school until when Priest Molar intervened. He travelled a lot during his life time. He died in the year 1977.

The two poets were good in different types of poetry, but were able to bring about an innovation in the field of descriptive poetry, Galadanci (2008). It was against this background that the researcher intends to choose a potion of poetry of each of them for comparism as follows:
3.2 A portion of Wazir Junaid poetry:

These are nine out of nineteen.

3.3 A portion of Alqadhi Umar poetry:

These are nine out thirty one.

These two portions were compared by the researcher using three measurement of comparism used by artistic critics:

1. On alwahda aludwiyya (single theme).
   The Wazir poetry is found not able to maintain single theme in the description, however, he described the aeroplane, Khartoum and the imagined person that he is calling in the poetry, on the other hand, his counterpart Umar, was able to maintain a single theme, in his poetry. Therefore, he is considered the victorious on this measurement.

2. On an artistic imagination. (attaswirul fanni)
   This implies the artistic styles in descriptive poetry that will make the reader and the listener to feel as if he was at the place where the action was taking place. This can be accomplished through the usage of similes, borrowing words and figurative statements. On this element of criticism, the Waziri Junaid is considered to be the victorious on this particular event.

3. On equality between the words and meaning. ( mudabaqatun bainasshakli wal madhmuni)
This implies that what the artistic work contents should be in conformity with the outer meaning that a critic is studying in various angle. The Waziri Junaid is also considered to be victorious on this particular portion again. Therefore at the end of this comparism, the victorious is considered the Waziri Junaid.

4. The contribution of Arabic and its literature on language education.
The following have greatly contributed on language education:
   a. Adult education
   b. Almajiri education
   c. Nomadic education
   d. Reducing the spread of Boko Haram ideology in the north

a – Adult education:
The National Policy on Education (2004) provides for Adult and non-formal education as an instrument per excellence for lifelong education. Section 6 of the policy outlines goals of adult and non-formal education to include providing functional literacy and continuing education for adult and the youths, provide education for different categories of completers of the formal education system to improve their basic knowledge and skills, provide in-service, on-the-job, vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and give adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetics, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment. Ugwuegbu (2003) opined that Adult Education in Nigeria is not just about literacy or remedial education to fill a gap. That it is what is needed and wanted by all as long as they are a live and regardless of previous education. This position is in line with what Nasir (1979) said that Adult Education included many of the subjects learned at school for those who never had the opportunity. Dave (1973) had earlier argued that Adult Education aims at providing lifelong Education that prepares the individual for change and creates dynamic frame of mind in the individual. Adults that were not opportunist to study when they were young were largely from the less privileged societies of northern parts of the country. As you can see the likelihood of using Arabic in their external and domestic need is assured.

b. Almajiri Education:
   Almajiri system of education has a long history that dates back to the 11th century under the leadership of kanem Borno rulers (abdulkadir, 2003) This system of Quranic literacy was aimed at training future scholars for the propagation of Islam and usually refers to a person who migrates from the luxury of his home to other places or to a popular teacher in search of Islamic knowledge. There are estimated nine and half million indigent children on the streets begging for arms, known as almajirai in the northern part of Nigeria. These children constitute an army of helpless minors, lacking adequate care and education. The impact of Arabic literature is overemphasised in the sense that most of those who participate in the programme are Muslims, who are basically good in Arabic language and literature, and any message or information that is written in Arabic will not only be comprehended easily, but also be respected by the people who are participating in the programme. It was in Early April 2012, President Good Luck Jonathan inaugurated a repackaged and rebranded almajiri school in the Gagi area of Sokoto State of Nigeria. The school was built with funds (N 240 million)rawn from the defunct Education Trust Fund now (the Tertiary Education Trust Fund) (Alechenu 2012).

c- Nomadic Education:
   Nomadic education is education designed for nomadic people who are moving from one place to another. Nigerian government established Nigerian National Commission for Nomadic Education
in 1989, to create opportunities for an estimated 9.3 million nomads living in Nigeria for them to acquire literacy skills. Islamiyya schools were involved in the programme. That automatically shows how Arabic literature contributed in nomadic education. This is because most of the nomads are Fulanis who are Muslims. Arabic literature therefore, has tremendous impact in almost all educational programmes.

d- Reducing the menace of Boko Haram in the country:
Booko Haram is a Hausa term meaning: (western education is forbidden). This is because the word boko means book. That is how Hausa people use to change some English words to be easier for them to pronounce. They changed Hospital to Asibiti, Bucket to Bokiti, Bank Banki and cup to kopī. The group was founded in 2002 by its founder mal. Muhammad Yusuf, and it moved to Kanamma, Yobe State where it set up a base called Afganistan. The group launched several attacks on government establishments, including: police stations, army barracks, schools, markets, and motor stations, they also attacked churches, mosques and places where beer is being sold. The group is considered by the international community as terrorist group of the world today.
Arabic literature had great impact in controlling the menace of the boko haram. This is because a lot of scholars came out opposing them in their summons and preaching. Some even went ahead and wrote some pamphlets against them. These opposing acts are tremendously making impact in creating awareness among all segments of people living in the country and therefore, reducing the menace of boko haram insurgency.

5. Conclusion
From what has been stated above in this paper, it is categorically clear that Arabic literature has tremendously contributed to Nigerian language education in various ways positively, such as in Almajiri system of education, Nomadic education, Adult education and indeed in drastic reduction in spread of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The comparative analysis between the two prominent poets, Waziri Junaidu and Qadhi Umar was given as clear testimony to fact that Arabic literature has a profound ground in Nigerian nation.

6. Recommendation:
- The paper recommend that Nigerian government should double its effort in making sure that Almajiri system of education is been fully implemented as designed, without any alteration.
- The Malams who are the teachers in the system should be fully incorporated in the system, so that the real assimilation will manifest in the system.
- Equal opportunity between those who study Arabic and its literature and those who study other areas of knowledge should be given, so that all hands are put on desk in making sure that the nation is progressing in all ramification of life.
- Nigerian government should as a matter of urgency look into possibility of bringing Arabic language back to its former position of second language in the country, for it is more relevant to the country than French.

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