

## DISRUPTION IN INTERGENERATIONAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TRANSMISSION AS A COMMON ATTRIBUTE OF THE KATAF CLUSTER LANGUAGES

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### Abstract

This paper aims to establish that, all of Kataf cluster languages, a sub-group of Southern Kaduna languages, have as a common attribute disruption in intergenerational language proficiency transmission. Thus, Anghan, Bakulu, Fantsuan, Gworok, Ninkyop, Sholio, Takad, Tyacherak, and Tyap were found to have mostly persons of grandparental age + as the languages' most proficient speakers. This is as adjudged by majority of respondents that represented the focused ethno-linguistic communities during the research process, i.e. 100% of Anghan, 75% of Bakulu, 80% of Fantsuan, 93.8% of Agworok, 90% of Ninkyop, 68% of Asholio, 65.9% of Attakad, 100% of Tyacherak, and 93.3% of Atyap. Jju was found to be slightly exceptional as it was found to have mostly persons of parental age as most proficient speakers, also as adjudged by majority i.e. 53.5% of Bajju community respondents. These findings, therefore, affirm that all of the Kataf cluster languages are endangered species, as far as language endangerment enterprise is concerned. Finally, the paper recommends that no affected speaker-communities should allow the disruption trend to continue so that the languages' vulnerability to extinction could be reduced.

### Introduction

This paper reports a fraction of the findings of a larger research that was set out to assess language endangerment in the Southern Kaduna ethno-linguistic area of Kaduna State, Northwestern Nigeria. Of course, the larger research focuses mainly on the Kataf cluster languages, which is a sub-category of Southern Kaduna languages (see James, 1997, p. 80). Thus, the paper aims to substantiate, via the Kataf cluster languages, one of UNESCO's (2003, p. 2) core claims that, "A language is in danger when its speakers cease to pass it on from one generation to the next", a scenario referred technically as 'disruption in intergenerational language transmission' (see UNESCO, *ibid*, p. 7). The goal of this paper, then, are as follows: to establish the fact that disruption in intergenerational language proficiency transmission is a common attribute of the Kataf cluster languages, which goes further to demonstrate the languages' vulnerability to becoming extinct in the coming years, and suggest way(s) of reversing the trend.

It has to be pointed out *ab initio* that, in the language endangerment enterprise "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 in UNESCO, *ibid*, p. 7) in tandem with linguists'

strong conviction that, consistent intergenerational language transmission, i.e. from great-grandparental generation down to children, guarantees the language's survival (i.e. its vitality) most and any disruption thereof endangers the language most. Thus, it is important to note here that, the disruption does not occur in an abrupt manner. Instead, it is a gradual process, perhaps, beginning with some significant loss of the language's original lexicons and speaking (grammatical) conventions in the speeches of native speakers, a situation that metamorphoses into disruption in intergenerational transmission of proficiency and, eventually, the seizure of passing on the language from one generation (of native speakers) to the next. Looking at whether or not a language is transmitted from one generation to the next, therefore, remains one of the most common and viable parameters used by scholars, especially linguists, to assess the dreadful sociolinguistic phenomenon of language endangerment.

Between 47 and 57 of the languages enlisted on the *Atlas of Nigerian Languages* are in Kaduna State (see Blench, 1998). Apart from Hausa, which genealogically belongs to the Chadic sub-branch of the Afro-Asiatic family of languages (see Greenberg, 1970, p. 46), most if not all of these languages are small/minority languages, majority of which are sparsely

distributed across the Southern Senatorial Zone of the state otherwise referred to as Southern Kaduna. The notion ‘Southern Kaduna’ expresses a geopolitical entity in the Nigerian or, better put, in the Kaduna State polity, in addition to denoting a linguistic area comprising very nearly sixty (ethno-)linguistic groups that have been further sub-categorized into four (ethno-)linguistic clusters, one of which is the Kataf or (A)tyap cluster (see also James, 1997, p. 80).

All the Kataf cluster languages presently show some signs of endangered languages, hence the alarming outcry by, most especially, concerned native speakers and linguists that the generality of languages that make up this cluster are in state of endangerment. On close observation, one is bound to notice that native speakers of these languages are apathetic in speaking the languages, most especially in public domains; quite a number of the languages are undocumented, and in most cases only speakers from particular age-grades, are proficient or fluent speakers in the languages, etc. One could also hear, in both formal and informal contexts, all sorts of unsubstantiated allegations regarding the reason(s) for the endangerment of these languages. The shift to Hausa by speakers of these languages, however, seems to be the most pronounced of all the allegations. These, in addition to some other indicators, have been penciled down in the linguistic literature as the core signs and symptoms of endangered languages, as our review of available relevant literature in the coming section will unfold.

In spite of the aforementioned problem, linguists have made little or no attempts to carry out any dedicated research capable of providing empirically established insights on the status and nature of endangerment of the Kataf cluster languages. This perceived apathy motivated the conduct of the present research. This is predicated on the assumption that if linguists fail to conduct empirical investigation(s) into the phenomenon, discussions on it will only continue to be speculative or impressionistic. Consequently, the supposed ailing languages will continue to degrade by the day, a situation that might lead to their extinction in the coming years. Lamenting the threats languages across the globe face, Ohiri-Aniche (2013), in Usman (2013, p. xv), professes

that, “Most of the world’s languages were in danger of disappearing”, and that “only about 10% of the 6,000 to 7,000 existing languages would survive into the 22<sup>nd</sup> century if nothing was done to prevent such an outcome.” Indeed, this is a worrisome prophecy that calls for prompt action and remedy, as our languages are our God-given heritage that we should not simply sit and watch them disappear.

### **Overview of Kataf Cluster Languages**

It is extremely desirable to give an overview of the Kataf cluster languages before plunging into the kernel of this work. As the nomenclature suggests, this is a cluster of phylogenetically related languages comprising Tyap, Jju, Gworok, Sholio, Takad, Tyacherak, Fantsuan, Ninkyop, Bakulu and Anghan as member languages (see also James, 1997, p. 80). It is not only pertinent but also imperative to state here that, for a very long time now the nomenclatures of all of these languages have been “hausanized” as Kataf, Kaje, Kagoro, Attakar, Marwa, Kafanchan, Kaninkon, Kaceccere, Kamantan and Ikulu respectively.

Tyap (otherwise Kataf) native speakers are found in Zangon Kataf, Kaura, and Jema’a Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Kaduna State. Tyap is treated as having Kafanchan (Fantsuan), Kagoro (Gworok), Kachechere (Tyacherak), Attakar (Takad/t) and Marwa (Sholio) as dialects (see Gordon, 2005), though sometimes each of the supposed dialects is treated as a language of its own right (see Blench, 2012). Jju (otherwise Kaje) language spreads across Zangon Kataf, Jema’a and Kachia LGAs. Gworok (otherwise Kagoro) and Takad (otherwise Attakar) are both predominantly spoken in the present-day Kaura LGA of Kaduna State. Though considered more often as a full pledged language by its native speakers, Gworok is sometimes treated as a dialect of Tyap (Gordon 2005). Note, however, that Gworok and Tyap are mutually intelligible.

Takad (otherwise Attakar), Sholio (otherwise Marwa or Moroa) and Tyacherak (otherwise Kaceccere) are predominantly spoken in the present-day Kaura LGA of Kaduna State. Fantsuan (otherwise Kafanchan) is the closest neighbor of Ninkyop (otherwise Kaninkon), implying that both languages are predominantly

spoken in the present-day Jema'a LGA. Anghan (otherwise Kamantan) and Bakulu (otherwise Ikulu) are, as members of the Kataf cluster, spoken somewhere in the present-day Zangon Kataf LGA.

The number of native speakers for all these languages is negligible, perhaps running to just a few thousand people. And with the exception of Jju and Sholio, the rest of languages does not have any formal writing system. This makes it impossible for them to be used in any official capacities such as in education and mass media. Some publications e.g. *Trial Primers* (1974/5), *Kaje Alphabet Book* (1972), *Kaje Proverbs* (1985) have so far been produced for Jju. Also, through communal efforts, few works especially in the area of literature/folklore have been produced for Sholio.

### **Research Questions**

- a. Is disruption in intergenerational language proficiency transmission a common attribute of the Kataf cluster languages?
- b. If yes, how can the trend be reversed?

### **Research Significance**

The research adds value to the existing body of knowledge on language endangerment by factually establishing that, disruption in intergenerational transmission of proficiency in languages is a common attribute of all the Kataf cluster languages, a finding which also affirms that all of these languages are endangered species.

### **Research Methodology**

Both primary and secondary data have been used in conducting this research, hence the engagement of both primary and secondary sources to obtain the required data. Informants' responses to questions raised in the research's instruments for data collection form the bulk of the primary data, thus making the informants themselves as our major source of primary data. Relevant information on the Southern Kaduna languages and Kataf cluster languages in particular as well as information on language, language endangerment and endangered languages obtained through library research and relevant e-books repositories combine to provide the work the required secondary data. Native speakers of the ten languages that constitute Kataf cluster were the population covered by this research. Authentic numerical size of the

population could not be determined by the research, as this could not be sourced from the Nigeria's National Population Commission (NPC) database. Since it was impossible to cover the entire research population, purposive random sampling was employed to select fifty informants per language, thus making five hundred informants as the total sample tested via questionnaire, which was substantially guided by especially factors 1, 4 and 8 of UNESCO's (2003) model for assessing language endangerment and vitality. Open interviews and observations were also used to source the research's primary data, and tabulation as well as descriptive statistics in form of frequencies and percentages is the approach adopted for the presentation and analysis of these data.

### **Conceptual Framework**

#### **Language Endangerment**

Language endangerment, and by extension language death or extinction, has been in existence as a sociolinguistic phenomenon since antiquity (cf. Lewis, Simons, and Fennig, 2015, p. 1). The conspicuous disappearance of classical languages such as Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, etc. attests to the reality of our argument. That these and many more languages once lived and are now extinct is also suggestive of the fact that languages – even the great ones! – have tested several kinds of threats at certain times in human history, which consequently culminated in their eventual death or extinction. Linguists all over the world accept language endangerment as a global sociolinguistic phenomenon. Though they consider the phenomenon an unpleasant fact, nevertheless linguists generally show concern over it and are currently grappling with it as well. Sarvi (2016, p. 61) holds similar view when he asserts that, "The issue of language endangerment is a global concern that attracted and continues to attract the attention of linguists and researchers in other fields of study."

The notion 'language endangerment', then, entails the (socio-) linguistic situation in which native speakers of a language cease to use it, use it in fewer and fewer domains, and use fewer of its registers and speaking styles, or stop passing it on to the next generation (see Usman, 2013, p. 52). In similar vein, Krauss (1992) opines

that, when languages can no longer survive or thrive in societies due primarily to the alteration of the socio-economic, political, technological, cultural and religious ecologies of the societies, such a scenario is also linguistically referred to as 'language endangerment'. Thus, a language is endangered when it is on the path to extinction or when it is under threats of different kinds such that its chances of survival are put at stake. A language

whose chances of survival are slim or extremely slim is referred to as an endangered language. However, the degree or level of the endangerment depends on the causal factors.

#### **Language Endangerment: The Global Picture**

UNESCO ranks the level or degree of endangerment (and vitality) of the approximately 6000 world's languages thus:

**Table 1:** The Global Outlook of Language Endangerment

Status of Languages	Percentage
Safe or data deficient	10%
Vulnerable	10%
Definitively endangered	11%
Severely endangered	57%
Critically endangered	9%
Extinct	4%
Total	100%

**Source:** Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/culture/en/endangeredlanguages.atlas>

#### **Language Endangerment: The African Picture**

Recall here that, the *Ethnologue* estimates the number of languages in Africa as 2,092 representing 30.3% of the world's languages. This number is slightly at variance with the 2,132 that UNESCO proposes in its statistical account of the state of language endangerment in Africa. Table 2 below presents UNESCO's account of Africa's outlook of language endangerment.

**Table 2:** The Africa's Outlook of Language Endangerment

Status	No. of Languages	%
Relatively safe	336	15.8
Moderately endangered	1,287	60.4
Severely endangered	308	14.4
Extinct or nearly extinct	201	9.4
Total	2,132	100

**Source:** Batibo (2005, p. 155) in Bello (2013, p. 17)

#### **Language Endangerment: The Nigerian Situation**

Some linguists e.g. Crozier and Blench (1992) are of the view that, for a language to attain 'safe status' it should at least have up to 5000 (native) speakers. Using this benchmark as a parameter, therefore, Ugwuoke (1999) as cited in Sarvi (2016, p. 26 – 28) assessed the languages in Nigeria and found out that, no fewer than 152 (Nigerian) languages in some states of the country

are in the danger of disappearing. This, then, is a confirmation that Nigeria is another hotspot of language endangerment and/or endangered languages in the world and in Africa in particular.

Citing Ugwuoke (1999), Blench (2011), and Haruna (2014), Sarvi (2016, pp. 27 – 28) highlights by way of exemplification some endangered languages in some states of Nigeria. Worthy of note in all this exemplification are Mada, Nungu/Rindre, Duya, Gbagyi, Numana,

Nunku, Gbantu, Numbu, Nyankpa, Toro, and Yeskwa, all of which are integral parts of the Southern Kaduna languages. Note, however, that these may not be the only endangered languages (or languages assumed to be endangered) in Southern Kaduna. There might be some other ones with more than 5000 speakers yet are faced with some sorts of threats.

### **Initiatives on Language Endangerment**

Worried over the degrading state of languages all over the world, UNESCO (2003) raises the alarm that, half of the about 6000 languages spoken around the globe today are in danger of disappearing before the century ends. Perhaps, it is in response to UNESCO's outcry that certain global initiatives were launched as pragmatic means towards ensuring a reversal of the ugly and dangerous trend of language endangerment. The commonly known of such initiatives, as cited in Bello (2013, p. 28), are:

- a. The Hans Rausing Endangered Language Project – this particular initiative funds documentation projects, maintains an archive of recordings, transcriptions and metadata, and runs academic programme to train linguists and researchers.
- b. The US National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), National Science Foundation (NSF), and Documenting Endangered Languages Initiative (DEL), which has a new, multi-year effort to preserve records of key languages before they become extinct
- c. The European Science Foundation Better Analyses Based on Endangered Languages programme (Euro BABEL) – the main purpose of this initiative is to promote empirical research on under-described endangered languages, both spoken and signed
- d. The Endangered Languages Fund (ELF) – this fund provides grants for language maintenance and linguistic fieldwork, and the work most likely to be funded from the grants is that which serves both the native community and the field of linguistics.
- e. Volkswagen Stiftung – this initiative funds Documentation projects that use the

DobeS archive for scientific purposes, for example, comparative studies and detection of new research questions connecting documentation linguistics with other branches of linguistics

Beyond these initiatives, which appear to be US/Europe-based and therefore international, there are in Nigeria the 'Yobe Project' and the 'Bible Translation Trust', both primarily concerned with the plight of ailing small/minority languages (in Nigeria).

### **Causes of Language Endangerment**

Scholars working on language endangerment have proposed a number of factors as the likely causes of the phenomenon. The scholars include Wilson (1992), UNESCO (2003), Lyam-Yisa (2012), Hornsby (2013), Grimes (2013), and Sarvi (2016), among others. Wilson (1992), as cited in Bello (2013, p. 35), considers natural (e.g. epidemic, flood), political/military (i.e. warfare, genocide), social, historical, ethno-historical, economic, environmental, cultural, religious, and sociolinguistic factors as possible causes of language endangerment. On her part, Bello (2013, pp. 35 – 48) enumerates and explicates the under listed factors as causes of the phenomenon:

- a. Geographic and geo-demographic factors
- b. Social factor
- c. The size of language speakers
- d. Amount and quality of documentation
- e. Domains of language use
- f. Historical factors
- g. Political factors
- h. Attitude of speakers
- i. Sociolinguistic factors
- j. Socio-economic factors
- k. Intergenerational language transmission
- l. Globalization/modernization and urbanization

UNESCO (2003) posits that:

Language endangerment may be the result of external forces such as military, economic, religious, cultural, or educational subjugation, or it may be caused by internal forces, such as a community's negative attitude towards its own language. Internal

pressures often have source in external ones, and both halt the intergenerational transmission of linguistic and cultural traditions (cf. Sarvi, 2016, p. 35).

Lyam-Yisa (2012), as cited in Sarvi (2016, pp. 40 – 41), sees (a) the movement of people from one region to another, (b) government policies (restrictions), (c) efforts to limit language diversities, and (d) increased contact among formally isolated human societies as the causes for moribund languages. Sarvi (2016, p. 36) also cites Hornsby (2013) attributing language endangerment to factors like (a) intermarriage, (b) market forces, (c) migration, modernization and national education policy, and (d) assimilation and attitudes.

The shift by native speakers of a language to adopt another language to serve their communicative needs is itself a major cause of language endangerment. In the light of this, Sarvi (2016, p. 41) further cites Grimes (2013) proposing the under listed points as causes of language shift. Of course, the same points might be causes for language endangerment:

- a. Parents' pushing of children to learn prestige language
- b. Natural or man-made disaster i.e. sudden shift e.g. war, flood, earthquake
- c. Migration outside of traditional territory i.e. planned shift
- d. Use of second language in school, which causes widespread shift
- e. National language policy, which causes some but not universal shift
- f. Factors working against language shift
- g. Other factors causing language shift e.g. urbanization, industrialization, etc.

Macaulay (2004, p. 3) proposes that, in Africa endangerment of indigenous languages is one of the retrogressive effects of colonialism, and adds that African languages are going into extinction due to the belief of Africans of the inferiority of their indigenous languages and the superiority of former colonial languages.

Discussing on language endangerment in Central Nigeria, Blench (1998, p. 8) argues that, the major factors that may cause language disappearance are:

- a. Assimilation to larger more powerful groups nearby
- b. Assimilation to smaller but culturally dominant groups
- c. Assimilation to English, the national language

Language disappearance, of course, occurs due to the accumulation and long-term effects of a number of factors that cause language endangerment.

It is worthy of note here that, we can go on and on to review the causal factors of language endangerment but, as Bello (2013, p. 35) argues, "We can never exhaust all these factors because of time and space."

### **Assessing Language Endangerment (and Vitality)**

As said UNESCO (2003, p. 7), there is no single factor to be used in assessing language endangerment (and vitality) because communities are complex and diverse and, therefore, even assessing the number of actual speakers of a language is a very difficult task. There is also no single model that can satisfactorily be used as framework to assess language endangerment; perhaps, this is why linguists have attempted to propose different models that could serve as frameworks for assessing language endangerment (and vitality).

The research's goal, then, is assessing the endangerment of member languages of this particular cluster within the framework of UNESCO's (2003) model for assessing and ranking of language endangerment (and vitality).

### **Models for Assessing Language Endangerment (and Vitality)**

Since the beginning of concerns on the degrading state of the world's languages, relatively few models have been proposed by linguists as frameworks for assessing language endangerment. The commonly known of these models are Fishman (1991), UNESCO (2003), and Lewis and Simons (2010), among others.

#### **a. The Fishman's (or GIDS) Model**

As far as extant literature on language endangerment are concerned, Fishman (1991), which gave birth to 'graded intergenerational disruption scale' (or GIDS for short), is the first serious attempt at developing a model towards a

systematic assessment and grading of language endangerment. So crucial to know about Fishman’s GIDS are the following:

- i. GIDS is a foundational and the best assessment model for language endangerment of its time
- ii. GIDS has been used widely for two decades as a reliable evaluative framework of language endangerment (Bello, 2013, p. 23)
- iii. GIDS looks at the intergenerational transmission of language as the key to maintaining a language (Bello, 2013, p. 23)

- iv. GIDS contends that, if parents do not transmit their language to their children, and children also do not learn their native language there will be break in the intergenerational transmission (of the language) (Bello, 2013, p. 23)
- v. GIDS is an 8-level and 8-factor ‘toolbox’ for assessing language endangerment (see Sarvi, 2016, p. 43)
- vi. GIDS focuses only on intergenerational transmission of language (see Bello, 2013, p. 23).

Citing Obiero (2010), Sarvi (2016, p. 44) presents the GIDS model thus:

**Table 3:** The Fishman’s (or GIDS) Model

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 being 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

Note, however, that following later developments in the language endangerment enterprise, newer and more expanded frameworks have come to supplant the GIDS model

**b. The UNESCO Model**

In its determination to address and vigorously pursue the language endangerment phenomenon, UNESCO (2003) proposes a nine-factor model as an alternative (to Fishman’s GIDS) and a more expanded language endangerment evaluative framework. The factors are:

- i. Intergenerational language transmission (as factor 1)
- ii. Absolute number of speakers (as factor 2)
- iii. Proportion of speakers within the total population (as factor 3)
- iv. Trends in existing language domain (as factor 4)

- v. Response to new domains and media (as factor 5)
- vi. Materials for language education and literacy (as factor 6)
- vii. Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies, including official language status and use (as factor 7)
- viii. Community members’ attitudes towards their own language (as factor 8)
- ix. Amount and quality of documentation (as factor 9)  
(cf. Bello, 2013, p. 26; Sarvi, 2016, pp. 45 – 46)

Note that, factors 1 – 6 above are designated for use in assessing or evaluating a language’s vitality and state/degree of endangerment while factors 7 and 8 are for use in assessing language attitudes and policies, and factor 9 for use in evaluating language documentation. When taken together, then, all the nine factors are especially useful as

viable criteria with which the overall sociolinguistic situation or state of language use could be assessed.

**c. The Lewis and Simons (or EGIDS) Model**

The ‘expanded graded intergenerational disruption scale’ (or EGIDS for short) is a 12-factor model formulated by Lewis and Simons (2010) as an alternative (to especially UNESCO’s) evaluative framework for the assessment of language endangerment globally. Like other preceding frameworks, e.g. the GIDS and UNESCO models, the EGIDS also holds the intergenerational transmission of a language as key to assessing the language’s endangerment (and vitality) state. The twelve factors that form EGIDS, as outlined in Lewis, et al. (eds.) (2015, p. 2), are:

- i. The speaker population (as EGIDS factor 1)
- ii. The ethnic population; the number of those who connect their ethnic identity with the language (whether or not they speak the language) (as EGIDS factor 2)
- iii. The stability of and trends in the population size (as EGIDS factor 3)
- iv. Residency and migration patterns of speakers (as EGIDS factor 4)
- v. The use of second languages (as EGIDS factor 5)
- vi. The use of the language by others as a second language (as EGIDS factor 6)
- vii. Language attitudes within the community (as EGIDS factor 7)
- viii. The age range of the speakers (as EGIDS factor 8)
- ix. The domains of use of the language (as EGIDS factor 9)
- x. Official recognition of languages within the nation or region (as EGIDS factor 10)
- xi. Means of transmission (whether children are learning the language at home or being taught the language in schools) (as EGIDS factor 11)
- xii. Non-linguistic factors such as economic opportunity or the lack thereof (as EGIDS factor 12)

The informants’ responses, as collated, are presented and analysed language-wise in table (4) below:

All of the aforementioned factors, as Lewis et al. (eds.) (ibid) note, “interact within a society in dynamic ways that are not entirely predictable but which do follow recognizable patterns and trends.” In addition, we need to be mindful here that, linguists working on the theme of language endangerment generally contend that, of all other factors worthy of consideration when it comes to assessing language endangerment, ‘intergenerational language transmission’ is the most crucial to a language’s survival or extinction.

Furthermore, as Lewis et al. (eds.) (2015, p. 2) caution, “Various schemas have been proposed, each with particular focus. For various reasons, none of these are entirely adequate for a comprehensive global assessment of the state of the world’s languages.” Bearing in mind this caution, then, any of the available models could be used as a viable assessment framework but it should not in any way be seen as one that is capable of providing thorough account of the particular language endangerment situation.

**Data Analysis, Discussion and Findings**

In this section, we analyse informants’ responses to one of the research’s key questions i.e. question 10 that says, for example, “What category of Anghan presently speaks Anghan most proficiently/fluently?” in tandem with one of the research’s set objectives. Such a question was tested on the ten sets of fifty informants that represented the ten ethno-linguistic groups that constitute Kataf cluster, though in all cases the questionnaires were not returned back intact, perhaps, due to the commonly known informants’ apathy to respond to questionnaires. Note that, the question was framed in a way that the nomenclature(s) of the target community and their language was/were fully captured. For some communities, the group and the language bear the same name while for others the group’s name differs from that of the language, as table (4) below demonstrates. In all cases, informants had the following options from which they chose their responses to the aforementioned question:

**Grandparental age + Parental Age + Children**

**Table 4:** Informants' responses regarding the category of their community members that presently speaks their native language most proficiently

<b>Ethno-Linguistic Group</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Freq.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1. Anghan</b>	What category of Aghan presently speaks Anghan most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	49	100
		Parental	-	0
		Children	-	0
		Total	49	100
<b>2. Bakulu</b>	What category of Bakulu presently speaks Bakulu most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	18	75
		Parental	6	25
		Children	-	0
		Total	24	100
<b>3. Fantsuan</b>	What category of Fantsuan presently speaks Fantsuan most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	16	80
		Parental	3	15
		Children	1	5
		Total	20	100
<b>4. Agworok</b>	What category of Agworok presently speaks Gworok most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	30	93.8
		Parental	2	6.2
		Children	-	0
		Total	32	100
<b>5. Bajju</b>	What category of Bajju presently speaks Jju most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	20	46.5
		Parental	23	53.5
		Children	-	0
		Total	43	100
<b>6. Ninkyop</b>		Grandparental age +	18	90
		Parental	2	10

	What category of Ninkyop presently speaks Ninkyop most proficiently?	Children	-	0
		Total	20	100
<b>7. Asholio</b>	What category of Asholio presently speaks Sholio most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	17	68
		Parental	8	32
		Children	-	0
		Total	25	100
<b>8. Attakad</b>	What category of Attakad presently speaks Takad most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	29	65.9
		Parental	11	24
		Children	4	9.1
		Total	44	100
<b>9. Tyacherak</b>	What category of Tyacherak presently speaks Tyacherak most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	49	100
		Parental	-	0
		Children	-	0
		Total	49	100
<b>10. Atyap</b>	What category of Atyap presently speaks Tyap most proficiently?	Grandparental age +	28	93.3
		Parental	2	6.7
		Children	-	0
		Total	30	100

### Discussion and Findings

Recall here that, within the language endangerment enterprise, intergenerational language transmission disruption is a core determinant of language endangerment. Against this backdrop, therefore, it is revealing from the above analysis that, all the Kataf cluster languages share disruption in intergenerational language proficiency transmission as a common attribute. All of these languages, except Jju, have mostly persons of grandparental age + as most proficient speakers as adjudged by majority of the respondents that represented the focused ethno-

linguistic communities, i.e. 100% of Anghan, 75% of Bakulu, 80% of Fantsuan, 93.8% Agworok, 90% of Ninkyop, 68% of Asholio, 65.9 of Attakad, 100% of Tyacherak, and 93.3% of Atyap. Jju is slightly exceptional by having mostly persons of parental age as most proficient speakers, as adjudged by majority i.e. 53.5% of Bajju community respondents.

The implication of these findings is that, undoubtedly the affected languages are gradually losing lots and lots of their original lexicons and grammatical conventions and, consequently, becoming more and more vulnerable to extinction

in years to come, unless the disruption trend is reversed. Such a scenario, as far as the language endangerment enterprise is concerned, is one of the several routes that take languages to extinction, thus an index of language endangerment and, therefore, an affirmation that all of the Kataf cluster languages are endangered species.

### Recommendation

Speaker-communities of all the Kataf cluster languages should henceforth ensure consistent i.e. undisrupted intergenerational transmission of proficiency in the languages, i.e. from great-grandparental generation right down to children's generation, in order to halt the loss of the languages' original lexicons and grammatical conventions and, by extension, reduce the languages vulnerability to disappearance in the coming years.

### Conclusion

This paper aimed to establish that, all of

Kataf cluster languages have as a common attribute disruption in intergenerational language proficiency transmission. Accordingly, Anghan, Bakulu, Fantsuan, Gworok, Ninkyop, Sholio, Takad, Tyacherak, and Tyap were found to have mostly persons of grandparental age + as the languages' most proficient speakers, as adjudged by majority of respondents that represented the respective ethno-linguistic communities during the research process. Jju was found to be slightly exceptional as the language was found to have mostly persons of parental age as most proficient speakers, also as adjudged by majority of Bajju community respondents. Finally, the paper recommended that no affected speaker-communities should allow the disruption trend to continue so that the languages' vulnerability to extinction could be reduced.

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