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**JOURNAL OF THE LINGUISTIC
ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (JOLAN)**

SUPPLEMENT V

on

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR THE LANGUAGE
POLICY IN NIGERIA**

in memory of

PROFESSOR ISMAIL JUNAIDU

(1953 – 2024)

Immediate Past Executive Director of the
Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)
(2015 – 2024)

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PROFESSOR ISMAIL JUNAIDU
(1953 – 2024)



**NATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY CRITIQUE WORKSHOP TEAM AT THE
NERDC CONFERENCE CENTRE, AGIDINGBE, IKEJA, LAGOS
29TH MARCH – 3RD APRIL, 2021**

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IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR THE LANGUAGE POLICY IN NIGERIA

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Preface

The *Journal of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria* (JOLAN) publishes occasional volumes to supplement its regular issues, each dedicated to a specific theme. Four such volumes have been published to date, and this is the fifth in the JOLAN Supplement series.

This fifth supplement is dedicated to the memory of **Professor Ismail Junaidu, FLAN**, a distinguished linguist who passed away in 2024. As Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), he made invaluable contributions to the development of frameworks that guide the use and growth of Nigerian languages. A major achievement during his tenure was the development and approval of the *National Language Policy* (NLP) for Nigeria. The policy was approved by the Federal Executive Council (FEC) on 30 November 2022 and presented to the public on 25 May 2023. With its 199 declarations, the NLP represents a deliberate and strategic plan to regulate the coexistence, development, and use of all Nigerian languages for national development.

The **35th Conference of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria (CLAN-AUK 2024)**, themed “*From Policy to Practice: Implementation Strategies for the Language Policy in Nigeria*”, explored approaches to putting the NLP into practice. The conference, held at the Al-Qalam University, Katsina in 2024, was a platform to exchange ideas and strategize on policy implementation. Professor Junaidu is remembered as a fine linguist, deeply passionate about the advancement of Nigerian languages. He championed the development of the *National Language Policy* and insisted on producing an accompanying implementation guide - the *National Language Policy Implementation Guideline* (NLPIG). He had willingly agreed to deliver the keynote address at the 35th CLAN conference, where he planned to present some of these strategies. Sadly, he passed away before the event. In recognition of his legacy, the 35th CLAN-AUK 2024 was dedicated to him. At the Association’s Annual General Meeting (AGM), it was further resolved, in line with the LAN Constitution, that *JOLAN Supplement V* be published in his honour in 2025, under the theme: “*Implementation Strategies for the Language Policy in Nigeria.*”

This edition features twenty-two articles, beginning with “From policy to practice: Implementation strategies for the *National Language Policy* in Nigeria” by Magaret Taiwo Lawani. The paper highlights strategies for implementing the NLP and stresses that its success depends on sustained collaboration, adequate resourcing, and strong stakeholder

commitment. Lawani also underscores the policy's goals of safeguarding Nigeria's linguistic heritage, promoting national unity, strengthening participatory governance, fostering socio-economic growth, and preserving cultural identity.

The second article, by Francis O. Egbokhare, "Transcending implementation challenges in the *Nigerian Language Policy*" examines the transformative philosophy of the new policy, reflects on past challenges, presents existing implementation efforts, and proposes strategies for inclusive and sustainable outcomes.

The third article, "The role of teachers in *National Language Policy* implementation in Nigeria through digital technology and social media" by Lami Mukolu Musa, Aisha Abubakar Giwa, and Sule Tani, investigates the role of teachers in policy implementation, with particular focus on digital tools and social media as innovative means of overcoming persistent challenges.

The fourth article, "Syntactic structure in Hausa film discourse: A change of phase" by Zahra'u Ibrahim Waya, offers a syntactic analysis of Hausa film discourse, with emphasis on sentence structure and change.

The fifth contribution, "A contrastive analysis of deletion, insertion, and voicing as variants in Gudi and Yaya dialects of the Ngamo language" by Hassan Usman Gadaka and Hassan Bulama, explores phonological processes in two dialects of Ngamo, spoken in parts of Bauchi, Gombe, and Yobe States.

The sixth article, "A morphological analysis of Ngamo place names" by Hassan Usman Gadaka and Ibrahim Gambo, examines the derivation and compounding of Ngamo place names within the framework of lexical morphology.

The seventh paper, "A critical discourse analysis of statutory silencing of indigenous languages in Nigeria's *National Language Policy*" by Ifeyinwa Chukwuokoro, Roseline O. Egwu, and Edith A. Anyanwu, argues that the NLP exhibits statutory silencing of indigenous languages and uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to explore this phenomenon.

The eighth article, "Translation and the *National Language Policy*: A strategic framework for enhancing literacy in Nigeria" by Halima Umar Sani, highlights the vital role of translation in advancing literacy, making government policies accessible, and addressing challenges in educational material translation.

The ninth contribution, “A descriptive analysis of linguistic change in Adamawa Fulfulde in Nigeria” by Idris Muhammad Bello, analyses phonological, morpho-phonological, and morpho-syntactic changes in Adamawa Fulfulde, showing their impact on both form and function.

The tenth paper, “The study of suffixation in Waja language plural formation” by Abdullahi U. Garko, Ibrahim Husaini, and Ahmed Lamido, investigates plural formation in Waja, a language spoken predominantly in Balanga LGA, Gombe State.

The eleventh paper, “The social context for language policy implementation in Nigeria: A neglected situation?” by Abubakar Kadiri Ali and Yahuza Usman Musa, examines Nigeria’s linguistic diversity in relation to the social realities that shape policy implementation, highlighting reasons for its neglect in many regions.

The twelfth article, “Structural case assignment in Gbagyi language: A government-binding analysis of nominative and accusative patterns” by Isah Muhammad, applies Government and Binding Theory to investigate structural case assignment in Gbagyi, a Niger-Congo language of north-central Nigeria.

The thirteenth contribution, “An analysis of lexically ambiguous words in Hausa” by Saifullahi D. Usman and Rabi Y. Adamu, explores lexical ambiguities in Hausa, focusing on word-level variations.

The fourteenth paper, “A proposal for Zaar orthography and spelling reform” by Christopher John, reviews earlier attempts at Zaar orthography, identifies gaps, and proposes a clearer, more learner-friendly alphabet.

The fifteenth article, “A survey of language diversity and vitality in Edo State” by Victor Ekwukoma and S. I. Odiagbe, investigates Edo State’s linguistic landscape within the NLP framework, emphasizing the importance of mother tongue instruction in early education.

The sixteenth contribution, “Exploring pragmatic implications of artificial intelligence on language, learning, and knowledge construction: The case of Hausa” by Salisu Ahmad Yakasai and Jamilu Ibrahim Mukoshy, examines the implications of AI for language and education, offering insights into how AI can empower Hausa and support knowledge construction.

The seventeenth article, “Creating new forms from existing ones: An investigation of morphological processes in selected WhatsApp group chats” by Kolawole Mathew Ogundipe, analyses common word-formation strategies in WhatsApp communication.

The eighteenth paper, “The sociolinguistic implications of English–Yoruba translation: An example of Adichie’s *Zikora*” by Karimat Omonike Mustapha, explores cultural and linguistic influences in translation, and examines how translation challenges are addressed through appropriate typologies.

The nineteenth contribution, “A study of consonant distribution in Abureni phonology” by Daniami Etire, describes the consonant system of the endangered Abureni language.

The twentieth article, “Shigar giza-gizan kalmomin amsa-kama cikin rukunan nahawun” by Fauziyya Muhammad Hassan, written in Hausa, analyses the integration of ideophonic words into Hausa grammatical categories.

The twenty-first paper, “Inflectional processes in Hausa: Grade and reduplication” by Almustapha Sambo Wali and Hafsat Abubakar Kofar Kaura, examines two inflectional processes - grade and reduplication - used in Hausa verb formation.

The twenty-second and closing paper, “Indigenous Nigerian languages as instruments for sustainable development” by Imelda Udoh examines the role of linguistic diversity in sustainable development and evaluates how the NLP can be implemented to strengthen documentation, development, and utilisation of Nigerian languages across all domains, thereby securing their viability as tools for national progress.

We express our profound gratitude to the LAN Governing Board, LAN Advisory Board, LAN members, NERDC, Al-Qalam University, Katsina, and DIPATO Capability Management Consultants Ltd, Nigeria, for their overwhelming support in the production of this special edition. We also thank the reviewers for their critical inputs and the authors for their valuable contributions. Above all, we give thanks to God for the grace to bring this volume to completion.

Imelda Udoh, FLAN, FNAL
Professor of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages
President, Linguistic Association of Nigeria (LAN)

September 12, 2025

Tribute to Professor Ismail Junaidu

It is with deep sorrow that the President, Prof Imelda Udoh, FLAN, FNAL, the EXCO, Fellows and Members of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria (LAN) remember and honor the life of Professor Ismail Junaidu, the late Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, Abuja, whose sudden death occurred on July 25, 2024 after a brief illness.

Professor Junaidu was an excellent linguist, a prominent member and Fellow of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria (FLAN), illustrious scholar, educator, and leader who dedicated his life to the advancement of education and linguistics in Nigeria and beyond. Born on June 3rd, 1953, in the city of Katsina, Professor Junaidu's journey was one marked by an unwavering commitment to knowledge, culture, and the betterment of society. Professor Junaidu was not just a man of letters but a beacon of wisdom, whose contributions to linguistics, language education, and educational development have left an indelible mark on the academic world.

His educational journey began with foundational Islamic education in his family's tradition, followed by his attendance at Rafindadi Primary School and Government Secondary School, Katsina. His thirst for knowledge led him to Ahmadu Bello University, where he earned a B.A. in Hausa, and subsequently to the University of York, England, and Indiana University, USA, where he completed his M.A. in Language and Ph.D. in Linguistics, respectively.

His academic exploits were vast and varied. From his early days as an Assistant Lecturer at Bayero University, Kano, to his rise to the position of Senior Lecturer, Professor Junaidu was a guiding light for many students and colleagues. His expertise in linguistics, especially in Hausa syntax and phonology, made him a sought-after lecturer and external examiner across several Nigerian universities. His supervision of numerous Ph.D. and M.A. theses reflected his deep understanding and passion for the intricate dynamics of language.

Beyond the classroom, Professor Junaidu's impact was felt in various leadership roles. As the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) from 2015 to 2025, he steered the organization towards new heights of educational research and curriculum development. His tenure as Director of the Curriculum Development Centre and the Language Development Centre at NERDC was marked by significant contributions to the educational landscape of Nigeria. His involvement in numerous national and international committees and organizations underscored his dedication to educational assessment, language development, and policy formulation. He steered to a logical conclusion, the development of the 2022 National Language Policy for Nigeria.

Professor Junaidu was not just an academic but also a prolific author, editor, and researcher. His publications spanned across books, journal articles, and conference papers that have been instrumental in shaping language policy, educational management, and curriculum development in Nigeria. His works on Hausa language and culture are particularly noteworthy, reflecting his deep love and commitment to preserving and promoting Nigerian languages.

His membership in several learned societies and his participation in international conferences highlighted his stature as a respected scholar on the global stage. His contributions were recognized with numerous awards and honors, including the Award of Excellence by the Historical Society of Nigeria and the National Association of Teachers of Technology.

As we bid farewell to Professor Ismail Junaidu, we celebrate a life well-lived, a life that has inspired countless individuals and made significant contributions to the field of education and linguistics. His legacy will continue to live on in the hearts and minds of those he touched, and in the institutions and policies he helped to shape.

Professor Ismail Junaidu willingly accepted to give the keynote address of the 35th CLAN-AUK 2024 Conference. Unfortunately, even though he was not there physically with us, his works still remain with us. The National Language Policy of Nigeria which we discussed extensively at the conference is a fruit of his labour. The Linguistic Association of Nigeria therefore dedicated the 35th CLAN-AUK 2024 Conference to the memory of Professor Ismail Junaidu. The *JOLAN SUPPLEMENT V*, is published in his memory.

May his soul rest in eternal peace, and may his contributions continue to guide and inspire future generations.

Prof Greg Obiamalu, FLAN, MNAL
Secretary, Linguistic Association of Nigeria