

MULTILINGUALISM AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD: THE CASE OF THE IGBO LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Multilingualism is linguistic situation where there is the existence of more two languages in a community. The Igbo language is one of the three major languages spoken in Nigeria where there is the existence of more four hundred languages. In Nigeria, the Igbo language is spoken in the following south-eastern states: Abia, Anambara, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. It is also spoken in some parts of: Delta, Rivers, and Edo states in the south-south region of the country. The major objective of this paper is to suggest ways of preserving the Igbo language in a globalized multilingual world. The theoretical framework that is used is the Ethnolinguistic theory. The reason for the adoption of this theory for this paper, is because it encourages competence in all the cultural aspects of a language. The data for this paper were collected by interviewing four native speakers of the Igbo language who are literate and have lived consistently in Igbo land for fifteen years. Some of the findings of the paper are: that some of the ways to sustaining the Igbo language in a globalized multilingual world is to encourage vital uses of the language in speech, writing, phatic, ludic and the internet. This paper recommends further research into the linguistic status of the Igbo language in a globalized multilingual world.

Keywords: globalization, Igbo, language, linguistic vitality and multilingualism.

Introduction

The preservation of every language is of relevance to the linguist and to the users of a language. Languages are bound to shift or die completely where a global language like: English, Spanish or French has a strong pull on the work force and life style of many people. cf. Holmes (2008, p. 69). According to Essien (2010, p.48), “When your language dies, your people also die as a people with a distinct culture and heritage”. This simply implies that when a language dies, an integral aspect of the existence of the people equally dies, because such culture will cease to be functional or even remembered in the world. Thus, the objective of this paper is to suggest ways of preserving the Igbo language in order to preserve their identity for posterity. In the subsections of this paper, a review of some concepts will be briefly discussed. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the theoretical framework, the methodology, the Igbo people, some Igbo cultures, and finally ways of preserving the identity of the Igbo people in a globalized world.

Conceptual Review

Globalization

Globalization is a social situation where different cultures and economic systems around the world are becoming connected and similar to each other as a result of the influence of large multinational companies and improved communication systems. cf. Hornby (2010, P. 636). Globalisation is also referred to as international co-operation. In globalization, countries share common ideologies, goals and many other expectations among countries in the world. cf. Odewale and Egotanwa (2019, p.186). This implies that in globalizations, countries in the world will move in the same direction, in their economies, politics, technology, religion, language and so on. Ezeani (2013, p. 73), notes that globalization results in the production of a global citizen who is learned and can work in any part of the world. This means that in globalization, people will have same language, same educational ideologies, same industrial skills and many other shared views in the world. From <https://www.pile.com> (2025, p.1), “Globalization describes the growing interdependence of the world’s economies, cultures, and populations, brought about by cross-border trade in goods and services, technology, and flows of investments, people, and information”. This implies that globalization aims at sharing or partnering with every country in the world enhanced by transportation of goods and persons across the globe and the easy communication of messages. From, <https://www.britannica.com> (2025, p.1), “... globalization can be defined as the stretching of economic, political, and social relationships in space and time”. Here one can see that globalization means the spread of an idea, concept, or goods across the globe. This internet source goes on to mention that, “A manufacturer assembling a product for a distant market, a country submitting to international law, and a language adopting foreign loanwords are all examples of globalization”. These all show instances of shared interests among member nations of the world. From, <https://www.vedantu.com> (2025, p. 1), “Globalisation is the process by which economies, societies, and cultures have become integrated through increased communication, trade, investment, and technology transfer”. Here, the definitions look at the factors that help to bring people together into a common fold as trade, cultures, communication, investments, economic ideals and shared technologies. Thus, what is seen in country A, is seen in country B. **Language**

Sapir. (1921, p.8) writes that language is a “... purely human and non-instinctive method of communication of ideas, emotions and desires by voluntarily produced symbols”. This means that

the human language is not an automatic act which starts at birth but that it is a behavior that is acquired over a period of time which enables man to express his likes and dislikes to one another.

Cameron (1990, p. 3) refers to language as: “cultural edifice whose norms are laid down in things like: grammars, style books, and other glossaries- all of which have historically been compiled by men and conservative men at that”. From this definition, cultural structures like: houses, arts, crafts, pottery and the general lifestyle of a particular group of people constitute the language of such a group of persons. Cameron in this definition also sees language as a created and controlled thing by men, since the world is a male dominated place.

Nutsukpo (1990, p.1), notes that language is “a tool or a code system used for human communication. It is made up of sounds and graphic symbols that the speakers of a particular language have accepted to use as units of communication”. Thus, language is a device that is made up of phonetic units which are the substance that can be translated into forms (morphological, lexical, phrasal or sentential) used by human beings to pass on information to themselves.

Ndimele (2001, p. 1), defines language as “... a semiotic system, because it entails the use of certain agreed-upon symbols or signals to convey meaning from one person to another within a given speech community”. This means that every does have language verbal, or non-verbal accepted means of transferring information from one person to another. The non-verbal forms could be graphic or symbolic in nature.

Agbedo (2003, p. 15) notes that “language is generally seen as a human system of communication that uses arbitrary signals such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols”. Agbedo here, like other scholars that have been discussed above, describes language as a conventional device for the transference of information amongst persons of identical code which could be by oral, gestural, or graphic mode. According to Agbedo (2003, p. 27) “language as a means of human communication, is carried out through two basic human activities: speaking and listening”. Thus, language involves oral productions and auditory perceptions for it to have meaning. Speech and auditory organs are positioned in the head, and in the head is the brain which is the central control system of all human activities.

Essien (2010, p. 12), defines language as “a system of structural arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which human beings make meaning, communicate and interact with each other in a given community. Put more simply, language is a system of rules and principles in which sound,

structure and meaning are integrated for communication”. From this definition, one can see that language is ordered and spoken by the use of meaningful sounds accepted by convention to convey a particular meaning. It is by convention because a particular sound, morpheme or word in one language could mean a different thing in another language.

In this work, one can equally add that language is a behavioural activity that can be expressed by the use of sounds, body movements, or by the use of graphic forms. Some of the functions of language are: informational, expressive, phatic, directive, ideational, performative, and ludic. cf. Ndimele (2001, p. 4-5). One thing that must be mentioned in this paper is that every language is spoken in a given or specific geographic location and languages of the world are typified according to shared features. cf. Yul-Ifode (2001, p. 6). From the various definitions given above on language, one can see that the definitions of *language* are numerous and cannot be exhausted in a single paper like this. However, each of the definitions has made an inlet as to what language is.

Multilingualism

A multilingual, is a person that has equal control of more than two native languages. Robins (1989, p. 402), notes that: “... multilingual communities are an extreme form of the multidialectal communities found in many of the large cities of the world, wherein dialect differences reinforce the solidarity of groups, but also mark social class differences and aspirations among speakers of the same language”. This means that language is used as a social index in a multilingual society, creating social bonds amongst users of the same linguistic variety, with context determining the language to be used at various occasions. Multilingualism on the other hand, refers to a community or situation where more than two languages co-exist as native languages. cf. Matthews (2007, p. 255). Yul-Ifode, (2008, pp. 168-169), notes that multilingualism is a situation where “... there are communities of widely different cultural and linguistic background with the people all living in close proximity. Such communities comprise a number of sub-societies, each speaking a different native language, but are all subject to the same political authority, attend the same schools, and interact with each other in different co-operative ways”. This means that in a multilingual community, many languages co-exist in the same environment, with each language serving different social roles such as: official, international, religious, educational, regional, in-group and out-group roles. cf. Yul-Ifode (2008, pp176-181). Essien (2010, p. 42), notes that multilingualism is a situation where many languages are spoken with the language of the community, socially differentiated. In such communities, there may be linguistic clash arising from education, wealth,

royalty or political dominance invested on a particular language. Holmes (2008, p. 74), notes that in multilingual communities, different linguistic varieties or codes are often distinguished. This stresses further that many languages and dialects of different languages do co-exist in a multilingual community. From: <https://en.wikipedia.org>, (2025, p1), “Multilingualism ... refers to the skill of speaking, comprehending, reading, or writing in multiple languages with degrees of proficiency varying widely from basic phrases to full fluency. People who are multilingual are often called polyglots, while those who speak exactly two are bilinguals. Multilingualism promotes cross-cultural understanding, improves cognitive abilities, and is essential for globalization”. In other words, in a multilingual society, the linguistic competence of individuals do vary from one language to another which all depends on their exposure to them, or their social relevance to the user. In the subsection that follows, the word *Igbo* will be briefly discussed.

Culture

According to Lyons, (1981, p. 302), “Culture may be described as a socially acquired knowledge that is the knowledge that someone has by virtue of his being a member of a particular society”. This means that culture is acquired by one’s membership of a society which directly checks his social behaviour. Emana (2001, p.43), notes that: “Culture is the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempt to meet the challenges of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic, and religious norms and modes of organization, thus distinguishing them from their neighbours”. In other words, a person’s culture is an index of distinction between him and others. Omego, (2007, p. 169), refers to culture as: “That complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society”. Thus, culture is an acquired behaviour of the social or linguistic norms of a society in which a person lives. Odewale and Egotanwa (2019, p. 33), note that: “Culture is the whole way of life of the people of a society. It includes the totality of peoples’ beliefs, their modes of worship, their works of art and craft, language, religion, technology, dressing, ways of thinking, dancing, greeting etc”. From the definition by Odewale and Egotanwa, culture, is the totality of everything that a people are known for. From the internet source of Wikipedia.org. n.p. (2019, p.1), “culture refers to the arts, and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively in anthropology, encompassing the range of phenomena that are transmitted through social learning in human societies”. This would mean that art includes the food, architecture, clothing, festival, type of

marriage, agriculture, taboos, religion, type of medication and so on, all of which is consciously acquired by a person over a period of time since such knowledge is not instinctively acquired. Another internet source <dictionary.cambridge.org>... n.p. (2019, p.1), “culture is the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people at a particular time”. From the above assertion, one can see that culture is a pattern of existence by a specific group of people which varies from place to place. From: [livescience.Com](https://livescience.com/2...)>2...(2017, p.1), “culture is the characteristic and knowledge of a particular group, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts”. One can see that culture involves the totality of all that makeup a person: from religion to music, dance, paintings, crafts, language, marriage, birth, death, name giving, taboos, and so on and this is the view that this paper adopts.

Igbo

The word *Igbo*, stands for the language and the people. *Igbo* is a language in the Niger-Congo language family under the new Benue-Congo. cf. Williamson (1989, p. 21). Igbo is a language spoken in Nigeria, in the Eastern states of Abia, Anambara, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo and in some parts of Delta, Edo and Rivers states. It is one of the three major languages that are spoken in Nigeria. The other two major languages in Nigeria are: Hausa and Yoruba. The Igbo language has a standard variety called *Ìgbò Ìzùgbé*. This standard variety is taught in schools, used in writing text books and in the media houses. The standard variety is also internationally recognized. In spite of the fact that it has a standard variety, the Igbo language has many dialects such as: Abiriba, Arochukwu, Enuani, Etche, Ikwerre, Mbaize, Mbaano, Ndoki, Ngwa, Ohofia, Onitsha, Owere, Umuahia and so on, all which are mutually intelligible to the users of the language. Linguistically, the Igbo language is classified as a Niger-Congo language under Kordofanian. cf. Williamson (1989, p. 21). From the historical perspective, the Igbos are said to be descendants of the Jewish tribe who were displaced from their original homeland during the Babylonian Conquest. cf. Alaezi (2011, p. 16-22). According to Emengini, (2025, p. 2), “... the Igbo people stand out as one the most dynamic and widely dispersed, noted for trade, migration, and cultural resilience”. This means that the people are a very hardworking group of people ever ready to leave home in search of greener pastures. The Igbo people have and social system sustained by kinship, extended family network, age grades and a common religious system. Their political system is plural where every man ruled his household, however, there are Obis, Ezes, and Igwes for a higher social cohesion. cf. Emengini (2025, p.1). The focus of this paper is on the general stand of the Igbo language in a

globalized village. The next section of this paper is on the methodology used for the collection of data that is used in this work.

Methodology

The data for this paper were collected by interviewing four native speakers of the Igbo language who are literate and have lived consistently in Igbo land for fifteen years. On the two meetings held with the informants, writing instruments such as: pen, paper, and voice recorders were used. In the interview, data was collected of some Igbo cultures, which they mentioned may die if they were not revitalized through active use by the native speakers. The subsection below discusses the theoretical framework that is considered in this paper.

Ethnolinguistic Theory

The theoretical framework used in this paper is Ethnography of Communication. According to Okeke (2017, p. 160). “The Sociolinguistic approach to language study known as Ethnography of Communication was developed by Dell Hymes. Ethnographic study is not concerned simply with the structure of language used in communication, but with its use, paying extra attention to underlying socio-cultural rules that form the basis of the language used”. This means that context, and indigenous knowledge system all have a part to play in the use of every language. In Ethnolinguistic study, *Communicative Language Teaching* holds that during language acquisition or learning, what is learnt is not just the linguistic forms, but beyond the linguistic forms are social-cultural forms which show to how to properly use language so as to perform the kind of social functions that people in the society do, using language. cf. Okeke (2017, p. 162). Ethnography of Communication, evaluates the place of culture in predicting the behaviours of individuals in a particular cultural setting in line with the taboos of that society. Thus, one of the premise on which Ethnography of Communication is established is that, the expression and understanding of a behaviour is mainly entrenched in the socio-cultural system of a society of which language is a part of. Ethnography of Communication, describes the forms and functions of verbal and non-verbal behaviours within the cultural settings of a people. It is within this framework that every information in this paper on, *multilingualism and cultural identity in a globalized world* will be considered. From the internet source: <https://en.wikipedia.org>, (2025, p. 1), notes that: “Ethnolinguistic theory, explores the relationship between language and cultural or ethnic identity, focusing on how language use reflects and shapes social and ethnic identities”. This means that

Ethnolinguistic theory is a framework concerned with the study of how a person's language shapes his social behavior as a result of the cultural norms that embedded in his language. Two sub areas of Ethnolinguistic theory are: Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory, (ELIT), which examines how individuals use language to affiliate with or distinguish themselves from social groups, and Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT), which investigates the factors that help a language maintain its strength and status over time. In this paper, Ethnolinguistic vitality will be briefly discussed here, since it gives an insight to how the Igbo language can be sustained in a globalized world.

This theory was developed by: Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor in 1977. Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT), is a social –psychological method used for examining the role of socio-structural variable in intergroup relations, cross-cultural communication, second language learning, mother tongue maintenance, language shift and loss. In Ethnolinguistic Vitality, the idea is that the more a language is in a vitality linguistic group, the more functional it will be and the more the language has the chances of survival. Ethnolinguistic Vitality is thus, a linguistic framework that seeks to restore the vitality of a speech form through: language empowerment, language maintenance, language development, text development and capacity building. cf. Umeodinka (2017, p. 149). Umeodinka further explains that language empowerment, language maintenance, language development, text development and capacity building, arise as a result of the increasing phenomenon of multilingualism amidst linguistic diversity. Some of the factors according to Umeodinka (2017, p. 150), that enhance vitality are: status, demography, and institutional support because these factors help to give the classification of a language into ethnolinguistic groups of low, medium, and high vitality in order to tell the strengths and weaknesses of a group. Under this note it is possible for low vitality groups to go through linguistic assimilation and not to be taken as a distinct collective group. For instance, the Fulani language in the Northern part of Nigeria can be assimilated or dropped for the Hausa language since the Hausa language has high linguistic vitality in the North with a greater number of its users. On the contrary, it is possible for high vitality groups to preserve or maintain their language and distinctive cultural traits in multilingual environments. For instance, in Nigeria: the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba language speakers have very high chances of maintaining their language and cultural institutions than the speakers of Ogoni or Nembe languages.

In Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT), the variable *status*, is all about a community's social prestige, its socio-historical status, and the prestige of its language and culture within its

mainstream community. The implication of this is that the more prestigious status a group or language has, the more vitality it will have and the more desirable and functional such a linguistic group will have. The economic status variable has to do with the extent to which a linguistic form has control over the material and financial goods in the community. The social status variable is about the image this group has, both its own view and the view of other groups it relates with. The socio-historical status variable pertains to the amount of shared cultural history a group has. Such as: a battle that was won or a famous person. The demographic variable refers to the number and distributional patterns of ethnolinguistic group members throughout a particular region or national territory. Institutional support group variable relates to the degree to which a language group enjoys support or recognition from the mass media, education, government services, industry, religion, culture and politics. According to Umeodinka (2017, p. 151), "Giving a language some support in the areas of research, education policies and the use of the language in both the print and the electronic media, is also a sort of institutional support". This means that when a language has such support, it will enhance use and development of such a language. For instance in Nigeria, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba have more: social, historical, demographic, economic and institutional support than any other language groups. This means that minority languages in the country may be constrained to shift to any of the dominant languages depending on the locality of the minority language. Some of the uses of Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory are:

- a. provision of direction,
- b. shaping of ethnic groups' attitudes,
- c. influencing the language behaviour of succeeding generations,
- d. determining the integrative attitudes of ethnic groups,
- e. serving as a tool for language-attitudes investigative issues. cf. Ugorji, (2020, pp.517-527).

Having introduced the background on which this paper will be discussed, one will then present some of the Igbo cultures and how to preserve them in a multilingual globalized world.

Some Cultural Identities of the Igbo People

Recall, that Lyons (1981, p. 302), asserts that: "Culture may be described as a socially acquired knowledge, that is the knowledge that someone has by virtue of his being a member of a particular society". This means that culture is acquired by one's membership of a society which directly checks his social behavior. In this subsection of the paper, some cultural identity of the Igbo people will be presented.

The Igbo Language

The most striking culture about the Igbo people is the culture of speaking the Igbo language. In a multilingual world in which it co-exists with other languages of the world, every effort should be made by its users to preserve the continuous existence of the language in both the oral and written forms. For example, use should be made of the language in greeting, singing, writing, storytelling/writing, praying, running errands, internet uses, radio, television, newspaper, drama, schools, buying, selling, worship (sermons), interpersonal conversations, letter writing, minutes, in local meetings and so on. This will help in the preservation and active use of this precious language of the Igbo people.

The Igbo Attire

An immediate striking feature of a people is the dress they put on. The Igbo man is known for tying a piece of wrapper on a pair of shorts, with a long or short sleeved shirt with or without cufflinks. The Igbo woman is known by tying two pieces of wrapper, with a blouse and headtie. The attires above mark the Igbo man and woman out where ever they are.

The Igbo Food

The food of the Igbo people is part of their culture. The Igbo man is known for his love of bitter leaf soup and fermented cassava flour. Other food taken by the Igbo man are: bread fruit, tapioca, yam (boiled, roasted, fried, pounded), three leaves yam, cocoyam, plantain (boiled, roasted, fried), cowpea, oil bean, and so on. These foods are healthy and nutritious for consumption.

The Igbo Religion

The religion of a people marks them out where ever they are. The Igbos are traditional worshippers. Every community in Igbo land has god, 'chi', that is venerated such as: *àlà*, 'the earth goddess', *àmàdịghà*, 'god of thunder and lightning/justice', *ányánwụ*, 'the goddess of sun/fortune/wisdom/wellbeing', *ńjòkú*, 'god of yam/productivity', and so on. Thus, the Igbo people serve many gods depending on what they want.

The Post-natal Culture

The Igbo people have a strong postnatal culture, where a woman who puts to bed is tenderly cared for, for a minimum of six weeks. At this instance, the mother of the bride or groom comes to take

care of the new born baby and his mother. During this period, the woman who has just put to bed, is bathed and rubbed with a oily cream, eat and rest. She does nothing at all except to eat and breast feed her baby. At night even when the baby cries, it is the female adult close relation, that comes to carry the baby. At the end of the post-natal care, the adult female person who comes to stay with the new mother and the new born, is appreciated with tokens of wrapper, blouse, head tie, milk, sugar, chocolate, bread soap, cream and so on. The father of the bride is given a bottle of alcohol and some money for allowing his leave home. cf. Ugorji (2019, pp. 30-44).

The Igbo Festivals

The Igbo people have a culture of observing many festivals such as: the new yam festival, ekpe festival, mmanwu (masquerade) festival, iwa akwa (clothing) festival, ede (coco yam) festival and so on. At these festivals, the gods are venerated by throwing pieces of kolanuts and pouring palm wine on the ground to them and ancestors.

The Culture of Hard work

In the Igbo belief system, nobody is expected to be lazy or depend much on others as an adult. They believe that if one does not work, then one should not eat. This philosophy pushes the Igbo man to be daring and very determined to excel in anything he does.

The Culture of Taboos

The Igbo culture is embellished with a lot of taboos. The essence of this is to check the behavioural dispositions of the people, with the intent to retain their social values. Some these taboos are: treating the yam crop with disdain, giving or taking of things from an elderly person with a left hand, having carnal knowledge of one's biological relation, committing suicide, blessing the kolanut by a woman, climbing the palm tree/raffia tree by a woman, a king seeing dead body, burying of a witch and so on. cf. Ugorji (2019, pp. 118-128).

The Culture of Cleanliness

In Igbo land, every home and place is expected to be clean. This culture is so enshrined in the life of the people that when a man is looking for a woman take as a wife, he asks around of her hygienic character. Thus, if the woman has a poor disposition to being clean a potential suitor may withdraw.

The Culture of Hospitality

The Igbo man is known to be a very hospitable person. When a visitor comes to an Igbo man's place, he is welcomed with all joy and warmth. The visitor is given a drink of palmwine and the choicest meal. If the person were to sleep, he is given a clean room with bed to sleep on, where the man is poor, he gives his bed to the visitor.

There are so many other cultures in Igbo land, but for the purpose of this paper, the discussions on the Igbo culture will stop here, since some of the rich features/identities of the Igbo man has been briefly mentioned. The next section of the paper will discuss ways the Igbo language, which is part of its culture can be sustained in a globalized world.

Sustaining the Igbo Language in a Globalized World

Recall, that one of the definitions given on language in this paper is that, "Language is generally seen as a human system of communication that uses arbitrary signals such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols". cf. Agbedo (2003, p. 15). This means that language is a conventional device for the transference of information amongst persons of identical code which could be by oral, gestural, or graphic mode. Recall too, that, "globalization has been defined as "... international co-operation. In globalization, countries share common ideologies, goals and many other expectations among countries in the world. cf. Odewale and Egotanwa (2019, p.186). This implies that in globalizations, countries in the world will move in the same direction, in their economies, politics, technology, religion, language and so on. In doing this, a shift to the detectives of the super powers result, with a loss in language, philosophy, culture and so on, of the lesser countries in the world. Thus, with this in mind, the next section of the paper attempts to make suggestions on how the Igbo language can be preserved in a globalized world bearing the ideas of linguistic vitality as a reference point.

Verbal use of the Igbo Language

One of the ways of sustaining the vitality of the Igbo language is to encourage the oral use of the language, at home, school, work, church, mosque, market, and so on. Where a language is not used in oral conversations, the language is likely to die over a long period of time.

Protection of the Igbo Orthography

Without an orthography, a language cannot have rules guiding its phonetic forms for higher grammatical development. It is true that the Igbo language has a standard orthography, this orthography should be sustained by avoiding the intrusions of foreign phonemes from entering into it.

Development of Primers

Basic primers that project simple words in the language should be developed. This is support the acquisition or learning of the language in a simple natural form. This will also help non-native speakers who are interested in the language to have a material to assist them do so.

Development of Dictionaries

Dictionaries are books that contain many words in a language arranged in alphabetical order. A dictionary gives the meaning of a word, the phonetic form, and its syntactic use. Having many Igbo dictionaries will help to capture many words in the Igbo language, towards the sustenance of the language in a multilingual globalized world.

Use of the Igbo Language in the Mass Media

An encouragement of the Igbo language in media of mass communication like: the television, radio, newspaper, will help in saving the identity of the Igbo language in our multilingual globalized. This is because broadcast in these modes of communication reach many people at different places thereby reinforcing the oral, written and hearing forms of the language.

Avoidance of Code-Mixing

Code-mixing is a sociolinguistic act of using two languages in a single of utterance. This sociolinguistic behaviour distorts languages in contact, such that overtime, some lexicons in a language may cease to be functional in speech. For instance, in the Igbo language, many of its native speakers seldom use the conjunction *màrà/màlà* ‘and’. Thus, it is under used and may eventually die off in the language.

Involvement of the Government

The principal leaders in the Igbo communities should be involved in the encouragement of the use and the development of the Igbo language. This is because they will serve as role models in the preservation of the language and the entire Igbo culture.

Encouragement of Conferences on the Igbo Language

Igbo language scholars should, from time to time be able to hold conferences where papers of different aspects of the language are presented and discussed before the publication of such article/

Use of the Igbo Language in Education

Use, should be made of the Igbo language for the teaching of pupils in primary schools, secondary school and a subject at the tertiary level. This is to help entrench the features of the language in the minds of its users early in the lives of t

Use of the Igbo Language in the Internet

The internet is a new arrival in the Igbo world, but it is an avenue for the spread of the Igbo language. If one will use the language in writing or sending or receiving messages in the Igbo messages in the language. This will help in the vital use of the language.

Use of the Igbo Language in the Family

Many families where Igbo is spoken should be encouraged to use the Igbo language with their children and wards. This because the home which is a primary place of education where the children are nurtured for proper social behaviours.

Transference of the History of the Igbo People from Generation to Generation

Oral history of the Igbo people should be handed down to the young Igbo children. This is to help them know who they are and what their expectations will be.

Creation of an Igbo Language Day

The setting apart a day to celebrate the Igbo people and their language of Igbo is to pronounce the continuation of all that the Igbo people are known for. Thus, value will be given to the language and its users.

Encouragement of Igbo Festivals

Igbo festivals, such as the *íri jí* ‘new yam festival’, *èkpè*, ‘the masquerade festival’, *Òdò*, ‘festival remembrance of the ancestors in Igbo land’, *òfálá* ‘festival of the appearance of the king’, *Íwá ákwà*, ‘festival initiation into adulthood’ and so on. These festivals are opportunities for individuals to be acquainted with the various aspects of the language.

Encouragement of the Use of the Igbo Counting System

Igbo, as a language and people, have a counting system, which is not used in the teaching of calculations in schools. If this is not looked into by the education sector, it will die off. Therefore, users of the language should develop this important aspect of the language to prevent its death. It will also help to allay fear in the study of mathematics, physics, chemistry and other science subjects. It will also help to balance literacy and numeracy in the language.

Use of the Igbo Language by the Igbos in the Diaspora

Igbos in the diaspora refers to Igbo speaking persons living outside Igbo homeland. Persons living outside their homeland often are bilingual or multilingual as a result of the force to meet different linguistic needs. Overtime, such persons may use less of his native language and if may even unlearn the language. thus, culminating to a shift to another language. However, the suggestion here, is that the Igbo language should be used by Igbos living outside the Igbo land area to enhance the vital existence of the language. The next subsection of this paper presents the findings of the paper.

Encouragement of the Use of Igbo Names

The use of Igbo names by the native speakers may look irrelevant to the existence of the language, but it is a reminder to the users of the language of who they are and the language they speak.

Encouragement in the Proper Spelling of Names

In the Igbo language, there are some names that are incorrectly spelt. For instance, names such as: **Ádákù*, ‘first daughter of wealth’, **Nwámàrà*, ‘A child of grace’, **Tóchí*, ‘praise God’. Are wrongly spelt and should be spelt respectively as, *Ádákú*, ‘First daughter of wealth’, *Nwámárá*, ‘a child of grace’, *Tóochí*, ‘praise Good’. The full articulation and graphic representation of the sounds will help in sustaining the phonetic forms of the language irrespective of any phonological

process that may occur. In the subsection that follows, a brief account of the findings in the paper are presented.

Conclusion

The paper has attempted to suggest ways by which the vitality of the Igbo language can be preserved in a multilingual globalized world. In doing this, it was discovered that globalization is a social process in which the world moves towards the unification of; the economy, politics, commerce, trade, language, religion, food, technology, science and so on, in all countries of the world. The paper also disclosed that the Igbos have many cultures which the magnitude of this paper cannot exhaust, some of which are: the culture of hardwork, cleanliness, taboos, post-natal culture, festivals and so on. Finally, the paper suggested many ways by which the vitality of the language can be maintained through: the oral use of the Igbo language, study of the Igbo language, development of many Igbo dictionaries, encouragement of the use of the language in praying, greeting, buying, selling, writing of minutes, telling of the history of the people, use of the Igbo language in the mass media, use of the Igbo counting system in the teaching of mathematics, physics, chemistry and other science subjects, development of primers, use of the language in the internet, encouragement of Igbos in the diaspora to use and also pass on the Igbo language to their children, involvement of the government or organizations to support the development of the Igbo language and so on. This paper, recommends for further research in other various Igbo cultures of the Igbo people, in order to find out how they can help to sustain the identity of the Igbo people in a multilingual globalized world.

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