# GLOBALIZATION AND WORD BORROWING AS FOOTSTOOLS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF IGBO VOCABULARIES

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# Abstract

This study is on globalization and word borrowing as footstools for development of Igbo vocabularies. The researcher wants to find out how globalization and word borrowing can be of immense help in the development of Igbo vocabularies. The result of the research shows that globalization brings distant nations close to each other. When distant nations come in contact, exchange of words become possible and easier. That is how languages glow. The research shows that leading languages of the world like English, German, French, and Italian borrowed words from other languages in order to reach the stage they are today. It equally showed evidence of Igbo language borrowing from other languages, even from other dialects of the same, Igbo, language. At last, it became clear that globalization has made the Igbos to come in contact with people from other parts of the world. This has provided a fertile ground for them to get different words to enrich their language.

Keywords: Globalization, word borrowing, development, vocabulary, Igbo

### Introduction

Language has to do with communication; and communication has to be within a context. Combination of words makes up a sentence, and combination of sentences makes up a conversation. Since the aim of conversation is to communicate, conversation has to take place within a language which has to be within an environment. Since language takes place within an environment, it has to be built on the things that exist in the environment, because this is what forms human thought and is expressed in human language.

Besides, no language is greater than the other. Every language is equal because each and every language does the same major function of communication with the rest of other languages. So, it is left on every language and her speakers to make effort to build and improve the language by increasing her vocabularies in different forms. Increment in the number of vocabularies of each language makes the language to grow faster and last longer. Language vocabularies have to do more with those items the language has come across. That is why language has to do more with the environment of the speakers.

Globalization requires as well as produces new channels, networks and practices of communication which are not dependent on geographical proximity. As such, it helps to bring distance places together. So it bridges the gap between nations and societies. This made it possible for different societies to encounter different items which were not originally in their society and which have no name in their language. When such is the case, such society has to give names to those items. In moments of difficulty in naming a foreign product, the last resort is to borrow from the language of origin of the items. Word borrowing is a characteristic of language development. The dynamics of a language is more felt as it comes in contact with other languages.

Igbo language as one of the growing languages of the world has found herself in the world of globalization. This made it possible for Igbo society to encounter different foreign materials which, sometimes, pose challenge to Igbo language because the speakers of Igbo language find it difficult to get Igbo word for those items. This shows that the problem of inadequate vocabularies is facing Igbo language. The question is which way out? Here the writer sees globalization as a watered land for Igbo language to develop her vocabularies through word borrowing. This is because globalization has made it possible for Igbo society to encounter different products which are not of Igbo origin. So they should be challenged to borrow words from the language of origin to those items.

This article sets out to discover how globalization and word borrowing will help the Igbo language to solve the problem of inadequate vocabularies. The writer will look at globalization and its benefits to language development, concept of word borrowing, and evidence of word borrowing in English language as one of the major languages of the world, types of word borrowing, and the need for Igbo language to borrow from foreign languages.

# **Conceptual Studies**

In order to carry out this work successfully, there are some basic concepts which need to be defined for proper understanding. Such words are: globalization, language, and word borrowing

### Globalization

A lot of writers have seen globalization from different perspectives. According to Giddens (1990), globalization is the intensification of the worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. This definition saw globalization as a continuous process. Besides, Giddens (1991) sees globalization as a dialectical phenomenon in which events at one pole of a distanced relation often produce divergent or even contrary occurrences in another. This definition points to the fact that the effects of globalization differ from place to place; and no matter the outcome of globalization, no one can opt out of the transformation brought about by modernity as the child of globalization.

Okwudishu (2003) sees globalization as the system which requires as well as produces channels, networks and practices of communication which are not dependent on geographical proximity. This definition shows that globalization affects communication by bringing together distance nations to have contact with each other.

Nsibami (2001) defines globalization as a process of advancement and increase in interaction among the countries of the world and people facilitated by progressive technological changes in locomotion, communication, political and military powers, knowledge and skills as well as interfacing of cultural values, systems and practices. Nsibami's definition points to the fact that globalization brings people from different nations together; and communication is one of the forces that facilitate the coming together of the people from different nations of the world.

Furthermore, Ugochukwu (2020) sees globalization as the process of increasing economic, political, social and cultural relationships across international boundaries. This definition

points to the fact that globalization boosts healthy relationship among different nations of the world.

The definitions above threw more light on the concept of globalization. As it concerns this paper, the author defines globalization as the process of bridging the geographical, social, economic and linguistic gap in order to give access to communication between different nations of the world and to bring the people of different nations together to intensify development in different facets of life.

# Language

Language is variously understood from different perspectives. As such, different authors have defined it with different terms. Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010) defines language as means which human beings have devised for communicating ideas, feelings, emotions, desires, etc. through complex vocal or written symbols.

On the other hand, Campbell (2004) gave a definition of language as a formal system of signs governed by grammatical rules of combination of utterances to communicate meaning. This shows that language is meant to pass message. Every statement in a language is meant to communicate something. So, language is a close structural system which consists of rules relating a particular sign to a particular meaning. It means that Campbell is stressing the fact that every language differs from the other through different signs that means different things.

Furthermore, Hauser and Fitch (2003) define language as a system of communication that enables humans to exchange verbal or symbolic utterances. Their definition emphasizes the social function of language. People in society use language to interact among themselves and to express their intentions. It means that a language must have vocabularies which are signs relating to different meanings.

As it concerns this work, the researcher defines language as the formal system of communication used by a particular language community to communicate and exchange ideas. It grows as the owners and speakers come in contact with other people of the world and other items which are foreign to the environment of its owners.

### Word Borrowing

Different authors define word borrowing with different concepts, but with the same meaning. According to McGregor (2009), word borrowing is the process of incorporating into one language words from another language. Words that have been borrowed are called loan words.

Besides, Thomason and Kaufman (1988) see word borrowing as the incorporation of foreign words/features into a group's native language by speakers of that language. The native language is maintained but is changed by the addition of incorporated words/features. In addition, Haugen (1950) defines borrowing as the attempted reproduction in one language of the patterns previously found in another language.

Haspelmath (2009) sees loan word as a word that at some point in the history of a language entered its lexicon as a result of borrowing (or transfer or copying). According to him, the term borrowing has been used in two different senses:

1) As a general term for all kinds of transfer or copying process, whether they are due to native speakers adopting elements from other languages into recipient language or whether they result from non-native speakers imposing properties of their native language into a recipient language.

1) In a restricted sense to refer to the incorporation of foreign words/elements into speakers' native language.

In this paper, the author uses the concept to describe a situation in which a language gets a word which it does not have from another language where the word exists.

# **Empirical Studies**

Researches had been conducted, in the past, on different headings on how globalization affects language development. It has been generally observed that globalization has both positive and negative impact on language development. If it is well managed, it leads to development of the language or languages involved; on the other hand, if it is ill managed, it may impede the progress of the language or languages involved.

Delhumeau (2011), conducted a survey research on the influence of globalization on language development. The result showed that globalization affects language in two ways. One is favourable effect; the second is adverse effect. In the favourable effect, globalization helps language to grow and develop in different aspects. The adverse effect, on the other hand, causes a language or group of languages to be swallowed up by other outstanding languages. So, the research showed that globalization is a two edged sword to language; if it is well managed by a language, it helps that language to grow and develop; but if a language fails to manage it properly, that language will be swallowed up by the surrounding languages. Delhumeau's research resembles this research in the sense that both are dealing with effects of globalization on language development. However, they differ from each other, because Delhumeau's research is on globalization and word borrowing as tools for development of Igbo vocabularies. It means Delhumeau's research did not solve the problem of this research. As such, there is still need to go on with the research.

In the same way, Ugochukwu (2019), in her research on language and development as it concerns Igbo language, noted that in the era of globalization, every language has the ability to develop. This is because globalization provides fertile ground for different nations and languages to come in contact with one another. This paves way for language development. At the same time, any language that does not put in enough effort to grow may be retarded by the influence of other languages.

This idea supports Ugochukwu (2018) who says that the development of any language depends, largely, on the efforts put in by the owners and speakers of that language and the maximum support of government. She noted that every language has the potentiality of developing to the global standard, once the support needed is provided to the language in question.

Ugochukwu's work centered on the need for the owners and speakers of every language, especially Igbo language, to make effort to uplift the standard of their language in order to withstand the wave of globalization. Her work resembles this work because both of them centered on language and globalization. However, they differ from each other since Ugochukwu's work is concerned with language and development in the era of globalization; whereas this work is on how globalization and word borrowing will help in the development of Igbo language vocabularies. So Ugochukwu's work did not fill the gap which this work is trying to fill.

In addition, Leonard (2005) carried out a research on how globalization threatens world's indigenous languages. He says that since globalization touches every language, and since no language can escape the wave of globalization, the owners of different languages have to protect their language from extinction. They have to do this by constant use of the language in their daily activities and official purposes. In his view, globalization is a threat to weak languages. As such, owners of such languages should put their heads to strengthen their languages in order to withstand the wave of globalization. Leonard's research is relevance to linguists because it made known the negative influence of globalization on language. This will shine their eyes to a great extent to know the strategies to adopt to give boost to their languages. It resembles this work because both of them are referring to the influence of globalization on language development. However, they differ from each other in sense that Leonard's work sees globalization as a threat to the survival of weak languages; where by the owners and speakers of such languages have to put in more effort to keep their languages alive. On the other hand, this work brings to light the good aspect of globalization and how it provides a fertile ground for the development of Igbo language vocabularies. As such, Leonard's research did not fill the gap which this research is striving to fill.

Besides, Ugochukwu (2020) in her research on Igbo language amidst globalization, noted that it is the duty of the owners and speakers of Igbo language to protect their language against the negative wave of globalization. Her research shows that for any language to survive, that language has to be a language of the internet. Ugochukwu's research is of good help to the Igbos because it reminds them of the need to put in more effort in protecting and promoting the Igbo language at every cost. Her research resembles this one because both of them are referring to how to improve the quality of Igbo language. On the other hand, they differ from each other because Ugochukwu's work is calling on the owners and speakers of Igbo language to put in more effort to protect their language from destructive influence of globalization. On the other hand, this work is trying to call the attention of the speakers and the owners of Igbo language to see globalization and word borrowing as better access to the development of Igbo language vocabularies. As such, Ugochukwu's research did not solve the problem of this research.

# Benefits of Globalization to the Development of Igbo Language

It may sound negative if an African let alone an Igbo man sees globalization as a positive factor towards language development. A lot of Africans had argued on the point that globalization is a negative phenomenon from African linguistic perspective. This is because some see it as a strategy of foreign domination of African languages. As such, it is associated with linguistic imperialism. Is that true? Whatever be the case, what concerns us here is globalization as a helper to Igbo language development.

Globalization has helped in Igbo language development in the following ways:

- 1) Empowerment of Igbo language as one of the ethnic and national languages in Nigeria.
- 2) Research and development in Igbo language studies
- 3) Igbo language enrichment

# 1) Empowerment of Igbo language as one of the ethnic and national languages in Nigeria.

There are many ethnic groups in Nigeria with their different ethnic languages. Above all, there are three major ethnic languages in Nigeria, namely, Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. Empowerment of Igbo language as one of the major ethnic languages in Nigeria came as a result of globalization through the hands of the British colonial masters. Igbo language is as old as Igbo nation and Igbo people. The language has existed even before the trace of globalization in 15<sup>th</sup> century.

As a matter of fact, there are two major levels of language development namely, oral level and written level. The oral level is made up of speaking and hearing (understanding) and the written level is made up of writing and reading. Originally, Igbo language, just like every other virgin languages of the world, was at the first stage till in 17<sup>th</sup> century during the period of slave trade. It was as a result of globalization that Igbo alphabet was developed through the slave masters. That was the genesis of the development of Igbo orthography which came to its present stage in 1961.

Today, Igbo language is a spoken and written language. Thanks to globalization. So Igbo language has been empowered as one of the official languages for wider communication in education, commerce, religion and everyday interaction at local, regional and national level. This is the fruit of globalization.

# 2) Research and development in Igbo language studies

As a result of globalization, development of Igbo language has passed ordinary level of oral and written stages. Igbo language is now competing with other international languages of the world in research and development. The study of which according to Akwanya (1999), is conventionally zoned out to (a) Syntax (b) Semantics (c) pragmatics

Syntax: This is the determination of the rules for the combination of linguistic elements

**Semantics:** The determination of the rules for interpreting linguistic structures, beginning at the word level and ending at the sentence level, where linguistics traditionally sets its limit or ending to most complex text.

**Pragmatics:** The determination of the interactive context, the inter-relationship between the user and his/her language and the cultural environment and between the persons among whom the language is exchanged as message-bearing actions.

Furthermore, globalization has led the study of Igbo language to other aspects and areas of language study namely, literature and culture. The study of Igbo literature spanned from the encounter of Igbo language with other languages of the globe. Today, different aspect of literature namely, prose, poetry and drama are studied in Igbo language as in other major

languages of the world. In addition, this study has led to the study of the world view of the Igbo people as the owners of Igbo language. This is termed the study of Igbo culture. The three major aspects of study of Igbo language (language, literature and culture) exist in higher institutions of learning. This is the fruit of globalization.

## 3) Igbo language enrichment

Language is like human being who grows and develops through encounter with his/her fellow human beings. With the help of globalization, Igbo language made contact with other languages of the world. This encounter enriched the language from different directions. As a result of struggle for survival which every language is faced with in the face of globalization, Igbo language has moved from its close door position, where different dialects of Igbo language hold to their dialects without any effort, to develop a unified standard Igbo tongue. Now the language has many vocabularies at standard level. Igbo language has more vocabularies now than it has before the emergence of globalization. As the language makes contact with other languages, a lot of foreign materials are given names in Igbo language as soon as they arrive Igbo land. Besides, rules guiding the semantics, pragmatics and syntactic aspect of Igbo language are enriched from global encounter with other languages. Words also emerge from different dialects of Igbo language forming standard Igbo vocabularies.

# **Types/Classification of Word Borrowing**

Bloomfield (1933) distinguishes between dialectical borrowing, where the borrowed words/features come from within the same speech area; and cultural borrowing where the borrowed words/features come from a different language. In other words, there are two major types of word borrowing. Namely, intra language word borrowing and inter language word borrowing.

- 1) **Intra language word borrowing:** this occurs when the standard language borrows a word from one of the dialects of the same language. The borrowed word now passes from dialect level to standard word of the language.
- 2) **Inter language word borrowing**: this is a situation where a language borrows words from another language to make up its vocabularies.

### Evidence of word borrowing in major languages of the world

Historically, there are three major classical languages of the world. Namely: Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Among these three, Latin is the most recent and it has current letters of the alphabet of the universal languages of the world.

As we have already stated that languages borrow from each other in order to grow and develop. Major languages of the world are known for that. English, French, Spanish, Italian, German etc. borrow mainly from Latin, Hebrew and Greek. As it concerns us in this article we have to see how English borrowed from Latin Language. In this sense we have direct loaning of words and derivative borrowing.

#### **Direct loaning of words**

This is otherwise known as loan words. It is directly taken some words from parent language and using it in another language without modification. Many of the words used in English language today is loaned from Latin. Some of them are

Latin	English
Cum	Cum
Labor	labor
Filia	filia
Victor	victor
Rumor	rumor
Campus	campus
Animal	animal
Africa	Africa
Color	color
Clamor	clamor
Consul	consul
Exterior	exterior
Extra	extra
Forum	forum
Inferior	inferior
Intra	intra
Inter	inter
Interior	interior
Infelix	infelix

These are examples of loan words in English which are of Latin origin.

#### **Derivative Borrowing**

This has to do with refining a crude word from the parent language to have a related meaning in the beneficiary language. Most of English words are of Latin origin based on this form. Some of them are

<b>Latin</b> Convoco	Meaning call together	English Derivative convocation	<b>Synonym</b> Assembly
Mortus	dead	mortuary	place for dead bodies
Multus	many	multiply	increase
Timidus	fear	timid	fearful
Servus	slave	servant	helper
Avidus	greed	avarice	greediness
Notus	known	notice	information
Culpo	blame	culpable	blamable
Itineris	journey	itinerant	wanderer
Vulnero	wound	vulnerable	harmful
Contra	against	contrary	opposite
Firmus	strong	firm	unshaken

Defendo	protect	defend	guide
Supremus	highest	supreme	highest
Oratio	speech	oration	talk
Cantus	song	cantor	singer
Medicus	doctor	medicine	drug
Alter	another	alternative	option
Avis	bird	aviation	flight
Avis	bird	aviation	flight
Credo	believe	credible	believable
Custodia	keeping	custody	protection
Initium	beginning	initial	starting
Vita	life	vitamin	life-giving
Agricola	farmer	agriculture	farming
Similes	like	similar	alike
Vigil	watchman	vigil	awake
Liber-libri	book	library	book place
Malum	evil	malicious	evil
Manus	hand	manual	handy
Pugnat	fight	pugnacious	fighting
Laudo	praise	laudable	praise worthy
Domus	house	domicile	living

This evidence of word borrowing shows that no language is fully independent of other languages. For any language to grow, it has to extend its hands to borrow words from others languages which have enough vocabularies; otherwise such language will remain stagnant.

# Evidence of Insufficiency of Igbo words to compete with other Languages of the world in this era of Globalization

It is very obvious that the existing Igbo vocabularies are insufficient to compete with other languages in the global society. Some words are not of Igbo origin because the objects they refer to have no place in Igbo environment. Such words like parts of computer system like: central processing unit (CPU), monitor, mouse, keyboard, computer data storage system, graphics card, sound card, speakers, motherboard; as well science laboratory equipment and the likes have no generally accepted names in Igbo language. As things stands, for any language to excel in this computer age, the vocabularies of such language need to be equipped in such a way that such language can be used to address different areas of human endeavour at ease.

Furthermore, insufficient vocabularies in Igbo language is also noticed in other areas such as generalization of Igbo words in opposition to particularization that is witnessed in English or other advanced languages of the world.

Examples:	
Igbo	English
Akwukwo	book, paper, leave,
Akwa	cloth, trousers, shirt, gown
Akpukpoukwu	Shoe, sandal, pun, slippers, boot
Ųgboala	car, lorry, bus

Oche	chair, bench, stool, form, desk
Mmanya	wine, malt, mineral, beer
<u> Ok</u> u	light, fire
Qwa	Gutter, channel, tunnel

In the words above, it is made manifest that Igbo language uses one word to denote different things with different features; which in other languages like English, denotes different things. It is evidence that Igbo language lacks enough vocabularies to compete with other advanced languages of the world.

### Phrase words (double word) vocabularies

Igbo language also manifests lack of vocabularies by combination of two words in order to get a vocabulary. This is referred to as phrase-word (double word) vocabularies. Below is the example of that.

Igbo	English
Oche ogologo	Bench
Ųlo elu	Duplex
Ųlo ala	Bungalow
Ųlọ akwụkwọ	School
Ųlọ mgbasa ozi	Studio
Akwukwo nri	Vegetable

In the vocabularies above, it shows that Igbo language use two words to make a word. One word serving as an adjective qualifying the other word. Example *oche ogologo* which, in English language, is a single word, 'bench'. Here *ogologo* which in other circumstances can serve as a noun, serves as an adjective to describe the type of seat being referred to. *Ulo elu* and *ulo ala* are other examples. *Elu* and *ala* which suppose to be nouns serve as adjectives qualifying *ulo*. It indicates the type of building being referred to. Looking at the English equivalent, one word each is used to express the different types of building. It shows that Igbo language is still battling with lack of vocabularies. So there is still need to borrow vocabularies to fill the existing gap.

# Word borrowing as a way forward in building of Igbo Vocabularies

The fact remains that languages face challenges of survival of the fittest in the face of globalization. As such, survival and extinction are the opposing fate facing each language depending on the level of effort put in place by the owners and speakers of any language. English language has been the nursing language of Igbo language right from the time of colonial era till Nigerian independent in 1960, even till the emergence of the present Igbo orthography in 1961. As one of popular Igbo proverb says, *uzu amaghi akpu ogene, ya lewe egbe anya n'odu*."A blacksmith who does not know how to make a wooden gong, he should look at the tail of a kite." Since English language which is a maid language of Igbo language is one of the leading languages of the world today borrowed a lot of her words from Latin and other classical languages of the world, Igbo language should take the same direction in order to succeed. Taiwo (2004) noted that English language keeps on improving from old words to new ones through borrowing from other languages of the world. This made Emenanjo (2005) to remark that one of the great facts of human language is its ability to expand its lexicon to

cope with new realities in time and space. Based on this, Igbo language has to toe the line of English language by borrowing words from other languages of the world to make up where it is lacking.

However, there are evidences of word borrowing in Igbo language; but there is a call for more effort to be put in. Igbo language has to borrow especially vocabularies that are not of Igbo origin. Example: 'ball' in English language is 'boolu' in Igbo language. Language is about communication. Since science and technology have made it possible for new things to emerge every time, there is need to borrow from the language of origin of those things.

### **Evidence of Word Borrowing in Igbo Language**

As it stands now, Igbo language has borrowed words from other languages to reach the stage in which they are today. The words are borrowed both from the local and foreign languages. Examples abound.

Igbo	English
Foto	photo
Redio	Radio
Foonu	Phone
Buutu	boot
Gota	gutter

There are equally evidence of Igbo language borrowing words from other Nigerian Languages.

Igbo	Housa	English Equivalent
Agboro	agboro	tout
Banza	banza	rubbish
Koboko	koboko	whip
Ichafu	ichafu	headtie

Igbo	Yoruba	English Equivalent
Qga	oga	master
Wuruwuru	wuruwuru	deception
Akpati	akpati	box
Wahala	wahala	trouble

The above shows that Igbo language has equally borrowed words from other languages in Nigeria. Despite these borrowings, the language still lacks enough vocabularies to compete with international languages in this era of globalization. It shows that there is need for the language to continue to borrow.

### Summary

Globalization has succeeded in bridging the gap between nations and languages. As such, nations have encountered nations and languages have encountered languages. When such is the case, people of different nations encounter different things that were not in their

environment and which have no name in their language. This encounter has posed a great challenge to different languages as some languages try to swallow others.

When different nations encounter objects that have no name in their local languages, the tendency is to tag a name to each of those items. Sometimes, it becomes difficult. One of the easiest means of tagging names to such items is by borrowing words from the language of origin of those items.

The research manifested lack of adequate vocabularies in Igbo language when compared with other leading languages of the world. As such, for Igbo language to grow and compete with other languages of the globe, there is need for word borrowing. This can be done in two different ways, namely: inter language word borrowing, which involved borrowing words from foreign languages and intra language word borrowing, which is borrowing from different dialects of the same language.

Some of the leading languages of the world like English, German, French, Italian etc. built their vocabularies by borrowing words from other languages. Since globalization has made it possible for Igbo language to come in contact with other languages of the world. So for Igbo language to grow and develop, it has to expand her vocabularies to accommodate those items which are of foreign origin; and the easiest possible way of doing this is through word borrowing. As such, globalization and word borrowing have now become the footstool for development of Igbo vocabularies.

Although, the research shows there is evidence of Igbo language borrowing words from other languages, especially English language and other Nigerian languages, there is still need for the language to borrow more words even from her local dialects. This is the major way to improve her vocabularies in order to withstand the wave of globalization.

### Conclusion

The writer has succeeded in making it known that globalization has made Igbo language to encounter other languages of the world. As such, the strength of the language has been weighed along the line, and it has been discovered that the language lacked vocabularies enough to compete with other languages in the global state. As such, there is need to build up the vocabularies to the standard, and the only possible way of doing this is by borrowing words from other languages of the world.

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