

**LANGUAGE VITALITY IN IKA DIALECT: A CASE STUDY OF
IGBANKE COMMUNITY IN EDO STATE**

BY

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS
STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY,
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A) DEGREE IN LINGUISTICS
STUDIES.**

DECEMBER, 2022

CERTIFICATION

I Akpevwe Gloria OMOKRI a student of the Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Benin, with Matriculation Number ART1701367 has completed the requirements for course work and research for the Bachelor of Art Degree of the University of Benin. The work embodied in this Project is original and has not been submitted in part or whole for any other degree or diploma programme of this or any other university or institution.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for sparing my life throughout my stay in school. I also dedicate this work to my friends and family, and to my fiancé for their support and encouragement throughout.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To God Almighty, who is the source of every good thing, I render my unreserved gratitude, for his blessings, providence, security, health and stability throughout this academic pursuit. My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Dr. (Mrs.) R.O. Osewa for her patience, encouragement, concern, and supervision during the course of this project.

My profound gratitude goes to my parents Mr and Mrs Omokri Johnbull, and my siblings for their love, care, provision of all the basic requirements and financial support, which made my academic journey simple and successful.

To my fiancé Ilawe blessing, for his unconditional love, support and encouragement towards my academics.

I appreciate the market women, entrepreneurs, residents of Igbanke community where the questionnaires were administered.

Finally I appreciate all authors whose work I consulted for this research.

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Abstract

Language contact as a socio-linguistic phenomenon has been discovered to have brought about several Implications ranging from language choice, language attitude, linguistics borrowing, Code-switching, bi/multilingualism, language endangerment to language loss and death. This study examines the language vitality of Ika dialect, and the endangered language condition of Ika dialect. It investigates the Several factors that have been responsible for this unfortunate language condition. Using the ethno-linguistic Vitality theory, the study delves into the field with the use of structured questionnaires as a tool for ascertaining the endangerment of the Ika dialect. The results of the data analysis suggest that the Ika dialect Is gravely endangered and requires urgent and drastic rescue action to save if from outright loss and eventual death in lgbanke community in Edo state.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Background to the Study

Language as a tool for human communication and National development is quite indispensable since all activities of man in the society revolve around it. The co- existence of different languages in a community is an inevitable development because in most nations of the world, different languages come to exist and are for different functions even without the presence of their native speakers. In the event of language contact which comes about as a result of the coming together of different ethno-linguistic groups for any reason to live in a particular place thereby making way for the languages they speak to inter play, different linguistic implications are bound to result. These languages compete with one another for particular functions and consequently, some languages in the same community assume the high status while others are accorded low status. It is in this direction that Omeje (2008:51) holds that "...languages compete unfavourably with themselves. For any language to serve its primary function of communication, and also be preserved, it must be taken to heart by its owners who must be deliberately speaking it so that it will not be endangered. Even though there are some languages that are been used by the owners but are not codified or committed to writing. Such

languages still remain valid and are estimably valued by their owners and are well protected and as such they maintain their validity. It is therefore the duty of the owners of a language to maintain it and safeguard it jealously to forestall its endangerment.

Language vitality is the ability of a language to survive. It is an indicator of a language's sustainability, and of the extent to which intervention is needed for its maintenance (Stanford & Whaley, 2010). Boltokova (2004) in agreement with the above statement summarily posits that language or linguistic vitality is used to indicate the ability of a minority language to endure as an individual language in a multilingual environment.

Linguistic vitality is demonstrated by the extent to which the language is used as a means of communication in various social contexts for specific purposes.

The most significant indicator of a language's vitality according to SIL International is the daily use at home. A language with high vitality would be one that is used extensively both inside and outside the home, by all generations and for most if not all topics. For language development, the study of language vitality is important for determining the likelihood that a language will continue to be used into the foreseeable future and that all efforts to develop the language are likely to be sustainable.

According to SIL-International (2019) state that, language assessment experts study language vitality by exploring the functions (Domains of use), acquisition (transmission across generations), motivation for use and governmental policy regarding language use, particular contexts where the language is used as these factors foster the ongoing use of a language. By identifying people's motivations, for using a given language we learn of their interest and desire to continue to use one language or to acquire a new language. The vitality of a language within a speech community is also further assessed by asking for the specific purposes, social contexts, opportunities and frequency that a certain language is been used.

It is against this backdrop that this study examines the language vitality in Ika dialect using a case-study of Igbanke Community in Edo State.

1.1 Igbanke People and Language

The Ika dialect has about 2400,00 speakers in Delta state, Nigeria (2016 census). They occupy a land area of 117.45 square kilometers, the boundary between the Edo and Delta State. Geographically, Ika North east and Ika south local government areas occupy the North-west of Delta State. Linguistically, in the west of the Ika speakers are the Edo speakers, north are the Ishan speakers, east are the Aniocha language speakers and in the south are the Ukwuani speakers (Onyeche, 2002).

Today, Ika dialect is spoken not only in the two Ika geo-political areas known as Ika Northeast and Ika South local government areas but also in villages in the north in Edo State.

The Ika community consists of eleven clans. They speak a common language known as the Ika dialect, except for Ozara, Alisor and Alilehan who speaks the Ozara dialect which is part of the Edoid language (Onyeche, 2002), but they are culturally and politically considered Ika. The Ika dialect is regarded as a cluster of dialects (Williamson 1968). This is similar to the Igbo language which is also a cluster of dialects. There are however, no serious differences between these Ika dialects, which affects mutual intelligibility, but for slight phonological and lexical difference. The Ika group does not have any shared physical characteristics which distinguishing them from other tribes or groups.

1.2 Methodology

This study adopts the qualitative research method, which is appropriate for this study. The researcher embarked on an extensive personal interaction in order to actualize the objectives of this research. This personal interaction ensured the primary source of data. The researcher asked questions through a well structured questionnaire as a survey instrument. A structured or fixed response questionnaire was administered to collect data for analysis. The questionnaire comprised

questions about the attitudes of the speakers of Ika dialect towards their language and the choice of language use. By this means, more light was thrown on the language vitality. The ages of the respondents range from eighteen to forty six years. Most of them were farmers, market traders and unemployed youths. The choice of this group of people is to ensure competence and originality. Also secondary data were gotten from published and unpublished materials on language vitality. These include journals, articles, books, online materials, monographs.

1.2.1 Data presentation

A One hundred (100) structured questionnaires were randomly administered in Igbanke community, specifically to people of Ika dialect. The questionnaire was presented, showing the questions and the evaluated responses to the questions. The data collected from these questionnaires was also presented in terms of gender, age, and occupational distribution of the data.

1.2.2 Data Analysis

This study is adopting the qualitative research methods, the use of questionnaires and personal interviews. The following research questions are to be answered with this research method and by this means, analyzing the ethno-linguistic vitality theory (EVT) on the language vitality of the Ika dialect.

1. What are the attitudes of the Igbankes towards their dialect in their Community?
2. What is the language choice of the Igbankes in their Community?
3. What is the level of code-mixing and code-switching among the Ika speaking people in Igbanke Community?
4. What is the language vitality rate of the Ika dialect in Igbanke Community in Edo State?

1.2.3 Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on the framework of ethno-linguistic vitality (E.V) as proposed by Giles, Bourhis & Taylor(1977). The concept of ethno-linguistic vitality is viewed in different lights. Giles and Johnson opines that ethno-linguistic vitality is either objective or subjective. Objective meaning that measures are accessible through demographic characteristics , social status of the measures and the degree of Institutional support for the group that speaks the language. While Subjective Ethno-linguistic vitality (SEV), stands for the subjective assessment of a group's vitality by the group members.

Fishman (1989) is of the opinion that the interaction network that employs the language for one or more vital language functions is an important indicator of ethno-linguistic vitality. The more speakers of a language variety, the higher their

status, and the greater the group language vitality, the greater their chance for linguistic survival.

The framework of ethno-linguistic vitality (E.V) is relevant to this study as it helps in explaining this fact, “that the more the speakers of a language variety, the higher their status; and the greater the group Language vitality, the greater their chances for linguistic survival” Fishman (1989). This theory helps to determine the fact that language vitality is the ability of a language to survive. It is an indicator of a language's sustainability, and of the extent to which intervention is needed for its maintenance (Stanford and Whaley, 2010)

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Minority language vitality studies is becoming a recurring decimal in most language conferences and symposia around the world, various linguistics gathering of scholars and academies such as the 19th Interim Conference of the African Languages Association of Southern Africa & 7th International Conference on Bantu Languages Cape Town, South Africa, July, 2018; 12th International Conference on Minority Languages Linthicum, Maryland, USA, December, 2009; 16th International Conference on Minority in Jyväskylä & Närpes, Finland, August, 3rd International Conference on Documentary Linguistics - Asian Perspectives Nakhon-Pathom, Thailand July, 2018; 49th Annual Conference on African

Linguistics, Michigan, USA March, 2018 and a host of other conferences have all been centred on a way forward for the revitalization of minority languages in Africa as the language institutes of the First Language Speakers of the world's Majority languages are through international diplomacy speedily killing the use of minority languages globally.

The status of minority languages in Edo state appears to dwindling gradually with time. These languages such as Ika yearn for survival so as to prevent it from consequent death and extinction. Studies on the survival of minority languages have being conducted almost all over the world giving an assessment to the linguistic vitality of endangered languages for the sake of knowing their status.

Programmes have been put up in places where such studies were conducted such as in Cambodia and Venezuela and a host of other places. This study shall therefore give an account of the patterns of use of the Ika dialect in Edo state, Nigeria with a view of stating the domains of use of the Ika dialect within the study area for the purpose of assessing the linguistic vitality of the Ika dialect of Igbanke Community in Edo State.

1.4. Aims and Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine language vitality in Ika dialect using a case-study of the Igbanke Community in Edo State. The objectives are:

- To examine language vitality in the Ika dialect among the Igbanke people in Edo State
- To provide an understanding of the usage of Ika dialect by people in Igbanke community in Edo State.

1.5. Significance of the study

Language assessment experts study language vitality by exploring the functions (Domains of use), acquisition (transmission across generations), motivation for use and governmental policy regarding language use, particular contexts where the language is used as these factors foster the ongoing use of a language, SIL-International (2019).

This study of language vitality in the Ika dialect determines the probability of the dialect continuing to be used in the future by generations to come (transmission across generation) or if it is on its path to extinction. This study will contribute and bring fresh insights to the understanding in the field of language vitality and sociolinguistics. The study will add to existing literature in this area and serve as a reference material for students and scholars in the field of sociolinguistics and ethnolinguistics. The study is equally significant for linguists and language teachers as it will mark a significant addition to whatever they already had in the area of language vitality and endangerment documentation. The research will

further contribute to scholarship and will serve as a reference material for future researches in the field of sociolinguistics and ethnolinguistics, especially in the Ika dialect.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews a range of related literatures on the subject matter of language vitality. People attitude towards language is a major cause for the rate of language vitality and endangerment. There are growing numbers of literature that investigate the place of people attitude towards their language and the danger such attitude and this informed this research study on language vitality in Ika dialect: a case study of Igbanke community in Edo state. This chapter is divided into three (3) sections which will help to examine the research;

* Conceptual Review

*Previous Study

*Concern of the Present Study

2.2 Conceptual Review

A conceptual framework represents the researcher's synthesis of literature on how to explain a phenomenon. A conceptual framework is used to illustrate what you expect to find through your research, including how the variables that are being

considered might relate to each other. The conceptual review will focus on language vitality, language endangerment, code switching and code mixing.

Studies in sociolinguistics have revealed that language influences society and society influences language. The perception of a speech community about who they are determines their ethno-linguistic vitality. In stressing various status that serve as reinforcement to ethno-linguistic vitality, Bourhis, Giles & Rosenthal (1981) point out that how well a group is perceived by outsiders depends on their varied attachment to their language. It is a measure of language community's social perception both internally and externally. Given the economic and socio-political backwardness of the Ika, particularly in the face of their host - the Benin, Ika themselves do not seem to stand tall in their own little way. They seem to have surrendered both their socio-cultural and linguistic independence to their host. As a matter of fact, the Edo State Government has recognized the existence of every language in the state no matter how small, hence, the absence of the Ika language slot in the news broadcast on the state owned Radio Station where state news is translated and cast in Edo language. With this neglect, one would expect the Ika to encourage themselves and devise ways of protecting their language so, in the nearest future there will be able to listen to the news in Ika language in Edo State.

2.2.1 Language Vitality

Language vitality is the ability of a language to survive. It is an indicator of a language's sustainability, and of the extent to which intervention is needed for its maintenance (Stanford & Whaley, 2010). Boltokova (2004) in agreement with the above statement summarily posits that language or linguistic vitality is used to indicate the ability of a minority language to endure as an individual language in a multilingual environment.

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The status of minority languages in Edo state appears to be dwindling gradually with time. Studies on the survival of minority languages have being conducted

almost all over the world giving an assessment to the linguistic vitality of endangered languages for the sake of knowing their status

2.2.2 Language Endangerment

The increased awareness among linguists of the danger which linguistic diversity in our planet faces nowadays has resulted in numerous studies on the issue of language endangerment. Some of these studies focus on surveys of endangerment in different areas of the world.

It is therefore difficult to pinpoint death of language. If we only focus on the language system itself, this could conceivably be preserved in recordings and manuscripts. But since languages in use by humans are constantly altering, a language preserved solely in records is frozen and cannot be considered alive.

Languages, therefore, rely on the speakers and addressees. We may find instances where a language only exists imperfectly in the mind of non-native speakers such as researchers or a younger generation which hardly remembers scattered phrases of the lexicon (Tsunoda 2005). Are these languages considered dead? Maybe not, yet the death blow for that language had already come when the last fluent, native speaker died. Once a language is no longer needed as a system of communication between speakers, it is on the road to extinction (Crystal 2000).

In order to address this issue of language death, linguists must first identify endangered languages and secondly assess their condition. Only with such data can a linguist support communities in planning language revitalization.

Michael Krauss (1992) pioneered the classification of language endangerment based on age of current speakers. He noted that a language must be learned as a mother-tongue by children in order to continue to remain viable in the next generation. Languages not being transmitted to children are thus -moribund! because the language community is no longer self-sustainable. There is also a large range of languages that are endangered but not moribund. These languages are disadvantaged in terms of size and support by their local government. Because there is pressure for younger generations to assimilate to languages that are practical in the modern world, disadvantaged languages are in danger of becoming moribund, or -endangered. Lastly, languages that are -safe are spoken by over a million people, have strong support by governments, and are used in media and to educate children. The latter two factors ensure language learning and give it legitimacy in the eyes of the younger generation- a language used online or in schools can be transmitted to children even if parents fail to do so in the home.

This study recognizes that language death is an effect of disuse by speakers. This can happen when a speaker population is completely wiped out, taking their

language with them, but it is seen more often when the language's ethnic group shifts to a more dominant language (Tsunoda 2005). Therefore, language death is not merely a linguistic phenomenon- it is a sociological and ethnological process arising from the changing culture of a population. A language shift is directly correlated with either a voluntary or involuntary shift to a different way of life.

2.2.3 Code switching/ Code mixing

Code-switching is likely and almost inevitable in a multilingual setting. This is due to the influence of a dominant language on the smaller one. This occurs when speakers use form from one language (the embedded language) in an inference that is primarily composed of another language (matrix language) within the same conversation. The stretches may be inter sentential where the switch occur between thought grammatically indicated as sentences or intra-sentential where the switch occur within a thought. This depends to a large extent on the attitude of speakers towards their language. From the study carried out, it is not farfetched that the Igbanke people perception of their language is primarily responsible for the frequent code-switching to Bini language even when communication is taking place among them.

Code-switching is a linguistic behaviour that arises as a result of languages coming into contact with each other and the need for individuals to effectively

communicate. Generally, it simply means mixing of words, phrases or smaller units of one language into the structure of another language in order to effectively communicate. Hymes (1962) defines code-switching as a common term for alternative use of two or more languages, varieties of a language or even speech styles. Code-switching which is often times referred to as 'code-mixing', 'code-shifting' or 'code-changing' has also been defined as the act of "alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent" (Poplack, 2008) While Bokamba (2009) defines code mixing and shifting as the mixing of words, phrases and sentences from two distinct grammatical (sub) systems across sentence boundaries within the same speech event... code-mixing is the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes (bound morphemes), words (unbound morphemes), phrases and clauses from a co-operative activity where the participants, in order to infer what is intended, must reconcile what they hear with what they understand. Other phenomena that could result from languages being exposed to one another are bilingualism, borrowing, pidginization and creolization. However, some people have used the term 'code-switching' and 'code-mixing' to distinguish two types of alternation in the use of two languages. Code-switching is said to be the alternate use of sentences from two languages in a single discourse, while code-mixing refers to the alternate use of constituents from two languages within a sentence, in this case Ika dialect and Bini language

2.3 Previous Studies

Mogara, Kari, Kadenge & Molefhi (2017) investigated a linguistic vitality of some parts of north eastern Botswana with the main objective of investigating the level of language vitality in Botswana on the basis of patterns of language use, transgenerational language transmission, language attitudes and ethno-cultural identity. Their findings confirm previous impressionistic observations that Setswana dominates public, official and social domains while the ethno-linguistic vitality of community languages is very low because they have no official status, have limited intergenerational transmission and remain restricted to private domains like the home and cultural activities.

Gao (2015) measured the linguistic vitality of Mique, an endangered Central Ngwi/Yi language of Yunnan, China, and identifies the social factors contributing show there are varying degrees of language endangerment, with intermarriage and access to a major road as primary indicators of shift. This paper evaluates different tools for assessing linguistic vitality and uses the Language Endangerment Index (Lee & Van Way in press) to assess Mique language endangerment at the village level. Language shift information is essential in the description and documentation of a language, especially because the contexts in which the language is spoken may disappear faster than the language itself.

Also, Noriah & Hashim (2012) investigated the language vitality of the Sihans using a field survey, observation and interviews. The output of the field survey was analysed using the nine criteria of language vitality, outlined in the UNESCO Expert Meeting in March, 2003 (Lewis 2006, Brenzinger et al. 2003). The data from the survey were supported by the data obtained from observation and interviews. The findings of the study reveal that the Sihan language is under threat as it does not fulfil UNESCO's nine criteria of language vitality.

Mbapuun & Jones (2020), examine the minority languages in Nigeria which are amongst the most understudied in the world, this has made most of the languages that are almost all endangered to suffer from low vitality; this study looks at the patterns of Etulo language use with a view of identifying the domains of use for the singular purpose of assessing the linguistic vitality of the Etulo language of Benue State. It employed the sociolinguistic questionnaire, focus groups interviews, face-to-face personal interviews and observations for data collection. UNESCO's nine factors of linguistic vitality were used in the measurement of the linguistic vitality of the Etulo language. The findings show that the Etulo language is used across all informal domains such as the home, the river banks, festivals, ceremonies, village meetings and discussion. The English and Tiv languages are used in the all official domains such as schools, offices and clinics. The Etulo language therefore, has a very low vitality.

2.4 Concern of the Present Study

This study is sets out to examine language vitality in Ika dialect in Igbanke community. The chosen framework analyzes language vitality by collecting data and describing the nature of the data using terms mostly from ethno-linguistic vitality (E.V.), through this meaning, It was discovered that language vitality helps in explaining how the level of speakers of a language variety, the higher their status, and the greater the group language vitality, and the greater their chance for linguistic survival. This theory helps to determine that language vitality is the ability of a language to survive. It is an indicator of a language's sustainability and of the extent to which intervention is needed for its maintenance.

This study endeavours to contribute to the body of knowledge on language vitality with particular interest on Ika people. This study critically examines Ika dialect in Igbanke community of Edo State in order to establish an understanding on how the Ika dialect is used in Igbanke community. The study investigates how the level of language vitality is used by the Ika speaking people in Igbanke community of Edo State.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA PRESENTATION

3.0 Introduction

This chapter involves the presentation of the data collected from the one hundred (100) questionnaires that were randomly administered in Igbanke community, specifically to speakers of the Ika dialect in the market place and individuals that the researcher came in contact with. The data is presented in terms of gender, age and occupational distribution. The result of the analysis of the available data are also presented in the following sections. The ages of the respondent ranges from eighteen to fifty-six years. Most of them are traders, farmers and students. The choice of this group of people is to ensure competence and originality.

3.1 Data Presentation

This section presents the data collected from the primary source (questionnaire). A total of One hundred (100) questionnaires consisting of two (2) sections with a total of thirteen (13) questions each was administer specifically to the speakers of the Ika dialect in Igbanke community, This was also complemented by personal interaction by the researcher to few individuals. The first section which covers the personal data of the respondents are made up of three (3) questions, while the

second section which covers the research problem of language vitality in Ika: a case study of Igbanke community in Edo state is made up of ten (10) questions.

Table I: Questionnaire

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE ITEM		
		YES (%)	NO (%)	TOTAL (%)
1	Is it true that many Igbanke bear Bini names?	70%	30%	100%
2	Can young people (15-20) speak Ika fluently without code- switching?	45%	55%	100%
3	Can every Igbanke person speak Bini fluently in the community?	45%	55%	100%
4	In the market, is Ika dialect generally spoken more than Bini language?	68%	32%	100%
5	Is any book written in Ika dialect in Edo State?	20%	80%	100%

6	Igbanke people have their own language distinct from Bini language?	78%	22%	100%
7	Bini language is also widely spoken among Igbanke people in the community?	69%	31%	100%
8	Can you say that every Igbanke child living within the community can speak Ika fluently?	52%	48%	100%
9	Is Ika dialect taught in any school at any level in Igbanke?	10%	90%	100%
10	Is it true that Ika is spoken at home freely more than outside home in Igbanke community?	75%	25%	100%

The above table I shows the questionnaire administered by the researcher to the speakers of the Ika dialect in Igbanke community and the collated responses from the questionnaires.

Table II: Gender Distribution

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	43	43%
Female	57	57%
Total	100	100%

From the above Table II, the data collated shows that, the major respondents were female with over 57%, and male are 43%. This tally with the 2016 Census Report that Female is more than Male in Edo State, and Nigeria in general.

Table III: Age Distribution

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-29	33	33%
30-49	48	48%
50-Above	19	19%
Total	100	100%

Table III, gives the age distribution of respondents to the questionnaires, the data shows that the age bracket of respondents 18-29 (33%), 30-49 (48%) and 50-Above (19%). From the questionnaires distributed, according to the National Youth Policy (2019) that pegs the youth age from 15-35, shows that the people in Igbanke community are more of youthful population.

Table IV: Occupational Distribution

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Students	33	33%
Farmers	10	10%
Traders	57	57%
Total	100	100%

The above Table IV, gives a statistical occupational distribution of respondents, the traders made up the highest percentage of about 57%, followed by students 33% and farmers 10%

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter analyzes and discusses the data collected from the primary and secondary sources, and discuss the findings. The sources are important in qualitative research method which is appropriate for this study, because the information collected relates to understanding of language vitality.

Primary source of data entails the use of questionnaire which is adopted for collection of data from the native speakers of the Ika dialect.

The secondary data for this study were sourced from previous works on language vitality which is of the focus of this work. Such previous efforts were concern with the endangerment of African languages and critical attention on Nigerian socio-cultural structure of languages.

4.1 Research Question

The following research questions will be analysed with the various available data collated

1. What are the attitudes of the Igbankes towards their dialect in their Community?

2. What is the language choice of the Igbankers in their Community?
3. What is the level of code-mixing and code-switching among the Ika speaking people in Igbanke Community?
4. What is the language vitality rate of the Ika dialect in Igbanke Community in Edo State?

4.2.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: WHAT ARE THE ATTITUDES OF THE IGBANKERS TOWARDS THEIR DIALECT IN THEIR COMMUNITY?

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE ITEM		
		YES (%)	NO (%)	TOTAL (%)
1	Is it true that many Igbanke bear Bini names?	70%	30%	100%
2	Can young people (15-20) speak Ika fluently without code- switching?	45%	55%	100%

3	Can every Igbanke person speak Bini fluently in the community?	45%	55%	100%
4	In the market, is Ika dialect generally spoken more than Bini language?	68%	32%	100%
5	Is any book written in Ika dialect in Edo State?	20%	80%	100%

The above table reveals that the attitudes of the Igbanke people themselves towards their language is not encouraging. This can be seen in the way they relinquish their language rights and allow it to be completely assimilated into the Bini language which is the larger language. It has also revealed that the young people In igbanke are beginning to prefer the dominant language to Ika dialect in agreement with the five levels of language endangerment classified by Wurm (2003) in Nwadike (2006:2) “.....when children of a cultural area start preferring the dominant language and learn the obsolescing language imperfectly...” The blunder of deciding to arbitrarily give their children Bini names is an attitude that is quite unfavourable and detrimental to their language. The attitude of the adult Igbanke deciding to become fluent Bini speakers as revealed in the table above is clearly a

source of the code-switching effect on the Ika dialect. These attitudes put together have deteriorated the condition of Ika dialect.

4.2.2. RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: WHAT IS THE LANGUAGE CHOICE OF THE IGBANKES IN THEIR COMMUNITY?

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE ITEM		
		YES (%)	NO (%)	TOTAL (%)
6	Igbanke people have their own language distinct from Bini language?	78%	22%	100%
7	Bini language is also widely spoken among Igbanke people in the community?	69%	31%	100%
8	Can you say that every Igbanke child living within the community can speak Ika fluently?	52%	48%	100%
9	Is Ika dialect taught in any school at any level in Igbanke?	10%	90%	100%

10	Is it true that Ika is spoken at home freely more than outside home in Igbanke community?	75%	25%	100%
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As shown in the Table above, the Igbanke have their distinct dialect separate from the Bini language Which has come to gain more prominence among them. Also, a greater percentage has admitted that Bini language is also widely spoken among the Igbankes' alongside their own dialect. The table also shows that the Ika dialect is not taught in any school from primary to tertiary since the percentage that claims that it is taught is quite negligible. However, one factor that determines a language's ethno-linguistic vitality is its ability to be taught in schools at least at the primary level. On the table again, that Ika dialect is only spoken at home freely more than outside the home. Finally on the table, the percentage of respondents admitting that Igbanke children can speak their dialect fluently, tallies with those saying the opposite.

4.2.3 RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF CODE-MIXING AND CODE-SWITCHING AMONG THE IKA SPEAKING PEOPLE IN IGBANKE COMMUNITY?

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE ITEM		
		YES (%)	NO (%)	TOTAL (%)

2	Can young people (15-20) speak Ika fluently without code- switching?	45%	55%	100%
3	Can every Igbanke person speak Bini fluently in the community?	45%	55%	100%
10	Is it true that Ika is spoken at home freely more than outside home in Igbanke community?	75%	25%	100%

Using questions 2, 3 and 10 in the distributed questionnaire to ascertain the Level of code-mixing and code-switching, the researcher used her observational method and deduces from the collated data that many Igbanke children are fond of code-switching/mixing even while communicating among themselves especially in public places, and the immediate language into which they frequently code-switch is the Bini language.

4.2.4 RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: WHAT IS THE LANGUAGE VITALITY RATE OF THE PEOPLE IN IGBANKE COMMUNITY IN EDO STATE?

S/N	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE ITEM		
		YES (%)	NO (%)	TOTAL (%)
3	Can every Igbanke person speak Bini fluently in the community?	45%	55%	100%
4	In the market, is Ika dialect generally spoken more than Bini language?	68%	32%	100%
5	Is any book written in Ika dialect in Edo State?	20%	80%	100%
7	Bini language is also widely spoken among Igbanke people in the community?	69%	31%	100%
8	Can you say that every Igbanke child living within the community can speak Ika fluently?	52%	48%	100%
9	Is Ika dialect taught in any school at any level in Igbanke?	10%	90%	100%

According to Stanford & Whaley, (2010) Language vitality is the ability of a language to survive. It is an indicator of a language's sustainability, and of the extent to which intervention is needed for its maintenance. From the above table which was interpreted from the data collated, the level of language vitality among the people in Igbanke community shows that 55% of them speaks Bini fluently against 45%, also there are no written school literature or Ika dialect taught in school, which would have preserve the mother tongue of the people.

4.3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The attitude of Igbanke adults deciding to become fluent Benin speakers as revealed in the Question One is clearly a source of the code-switching effect on the Ika dialect. These attitudes put together have deteriorated the condition of Ika dialect. Question Two reveals that to determine a language's ethno-linguistic vitality is its ability to be taught in schools at least at the primary level. Question Three, finds that the Igbanke children are fond of and more with code-switching/mixing even while communicating among themselves especially in public places, and the immediate language into which they frequently code-switch is Benin, and Question Four, reveals the level of language vitality of the Ika dialect in Igbanke community. From the above analysis, the discussion of findings shows the indicators of ethno-linguistic vitality which can be seen in various factors.

First and foremost, even though there may be certain external factors that pose a threat to the survival of a language, the most crucial one is the perception of the owners of the language themselves. In the view Agbedo (2011) citing Emenanjo (1990) that the fate of an endangered language may well lie in the hands of the owners of the language themselves and in their will to make it survive. This is quite enlightening to the Igbanke people and their dialect.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0. Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the findings of the whole study, in addition to the conclusion. Some recommendations will be made out of the findings, and finally, suggestions for further studies will be provided.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The attitude of Igbanke adults deciding to become fluent Benin speakers as revealed in the;

Question One is clearly a source of the code-switching effect on the Ika dialect. These attitudes put together have deteriorated the condition of Ika dialect.

Question Two reveals that to determine a language's ethno-linguistic vitality is its ability to be taught in schools at least at the primary level.

Question Three, find that the Igbanke children are fond of and more with code-switching/mixing even while communicating among themselves especially in public places, and the immediate language into which they frequently code-switch is Benin.

Question Four, reveals the level of language vitality of the Ika dialect in Igbanke community.

From the above analysis, the discussion of findings shows the indicators of ethno-linguistic vitality which can be seen in various factors. First and foremost, even though there may be certain external factors that pose a threat to the survival of a language, the most crucial one is the perception of the owners of the language themselves. In the view Agbedo (2011) citing Emenanjo (1990) that the fate of an endangered language may well lie in the hands of the owners of the language themselves and in their will to make it survive. This is quite enlightening to the Igbanke people and their dialect.

5.2 Conclusion

Ika dialect is truly socio-linguistically endangered because it has lost its vitality. The attitudes of Igbanke people towards their language is hampering to the survival of the language. The Bini language into which Ika dialect is sand-witched and assimilated has posed an intimidating threat to the survival of Ika dialect. It has also been discovered that too little or no attempt has been made by the Igbankes' themselves to deliberately protect their language.

5.3. Recommendations

The reputable possible solutions of language surveys, institutional involvements in the development of languages, media campaigns, implementation of the mother tongue policy and reward system in form of scholarship (especially to children reading endangered languages proposed by Agbeedo & Omeje (2007) are realistic and seemingly workable for sustainable ethno-linguistic vitality of Nigerian languages geared towards reviving the endangered languages of Nigeria. If these vital suggestions are well implemented, several endangered languages of Nigeria would be resuscitated.

Considering the various deficiencies characterizing Ika dialect, the certainty of loss of ethno-linguistic vitality of Ika dialect, hence, the endangered position of the language becomes obvious and indisputable. The dwindling population of the Igbankes', their economic and political low status, especially as compared with their host community, and above all, their negative perception of their own language evident in their attitudes towards their language, attest to the fact that the ethno-linguistic vitality of Ika dialect is on a danger side.

This study therefore concludes by saying that Ika dialect is critically endangered and requires urgent, deliberate efforts in reviving and saving it from total

extinction. Many nations today are beginning to see their identity and national prestige in their language and hence, the need to protect them from endangerment and subsequent attrition. In Nigeria, this awakening receives the backing of the Government as observed by Emenanjo (1990) who posits that Nigeria has an explicit National policy that some 44 Nigerian languages have standardized their orthographies and urges other minority Nigerian languages to learn from the experiences of these 44 languages in matters of orthography design and popularization. He also advocates that every Nigerian language needs a language planning agency (LPA) to succeed in its language engineering programme. Mbah (2012) corroborates that Nigerian law favours the use of Nigerian languages in official circles.

From the foregoing, it is expedient to quickly introduce the teaching of mother tongue at least in the primary school as a deliberate attempt to save their endangered language. It is also pertinent for the enlightened ones to start writing simple story books in Ika dialect with which the primary school children would be taught and their interest in the language aroused. As a matter of purposeful drive, the elderly ones should resume the culture of passing the language to the younger ones through oral story telling in the language at home. Having the backing of the

Government as earlier mentioned, the aforementioned recommendations would go a long way in reviving Ika dialect and safeguarding it from extinction.

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APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS STUDIES

FACULTY OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESEARCH: LANGUAGE VITALITY IN IKA

DIALECT

SECTION A

(DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION)

INSTRUCTION: Please tick appropriately in the box/column as []

1. Sex: Male [], Female []
2. Age: Age 19-29 [], 30-49 [], 50 - above []
3. Occupation: Student [], Farmers [], Trader []

SECTION B

S/N	QUESTIONS	Yes	No
WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE IGBANKE PEOPLE TOWARDS THE IKA DIALECT IN IGBANKE COMMUNITY OF EDO STATE			
1	Is it true that many Igbanke bear Bini names?		

2	Can young people (15-20) speak Ika fluently without code- switching?		
3	Can every Igbanke person speak Bini fluently in the community?		
4	In the market, is Ika dialect generally spoken more than Bini language?		
5	Is any book written in Ika dialect in Edo State?		
WHAT IS LANGUAGE CHOICE OF IGBANKE PEOPLE IN IGBANKE COMMUNITY IN EDO STATE			
6	Igbanke people have their own language distinct from Bini language?		
7	Bini language is also widely spoken among Igbanke people in the community?		
8	Can you say that every Igbanke child living within the community can speak Ika fluently?		
9	Is Ika dialect taught in any school at any level in Igbanke?		
10	Is it true that Ika is spoken at home freely more than outside home in Igbanke community?		