Bible Translation and Language Elaboration: The Igbo Experience

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By

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Dedication

To Mma

Ụsọ m

Okwufie nwa eze…

who made the journey easier

and gave me the best gift ever

and Dikeọgụ

Egbe a na-agba anyanwụ

who fought against every odd to stay with me

and always gives me those smiles that make life more beautiful

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Abbreviations

CMS	Church Missionary Society
IBT	Igbo Bible Translation
ICB	Igbo Catholic Bible
IIB	Isuama Igbo Bible
ILB	Igbo Living Bible
INWT	Igbo New World Translation
IRE	Igbo Revised Edition
ISC	Igbo Standardization Committee
KJB	King James Bible
NPE	National Policy on Education
NIB	Niger Igbo Bible
NKJB	New King James Bible
NLT	New Living Translation
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
RH	The Retranslation Hypothesis
RCM	Roman Catholic Mission
SPILC	Society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture
TD	Term from Description
TT	Term from Translation
UIBN	Union Igbo Bible New Testament
UIB	Union Igbo Bible

Summary

This study describes the contribution of Bible translation to the elaboration of the Igbo language, especially at the lexical and conceptual levels. Language elaboration, as used in this work refers to 1) the expansion of the functions of a language, i.e. use of the language in new domains and 2) the expansion of the lexical stock and semantic repertoire of the language. Prior to the arrival of Christian missionaries to Igboland in the 1800s, the Igbo had their own religious practices. Translating the Bible into Igbo therefore required equipping the language with new lexical and conceptual elements to properly represent the new religion in this native context.

Four research questions guide this study: 1) What lexical processes were adopted in creating new terms in the Igbo Bible translations (IBTs)? 2) What strategies were employed in representing Christian concepts in the translations? 3) How have these lexical and conceptual innovations evolved across the different IBTs? 4) How have the lexical and conceptual innovations spread among Igbo speakers?

To answer the research questions above, two types of analysis are carried out: a textual analysis of eight Igbo Bible translations, namely – Isuama Igbo Bible (1860/1866), Niger Igbo Bible (1900), Union Igbo Bible (New Testament,1908), Union Igbo Bible (1913), Igbo Living Bible (1988), Igbo Catholic Bible (2000), Igbo Revised Edition (2007), and Igbo New World Translation (2007), and an analysis of a survey (questionnaire) on the use of some of the terms and concepts introduced through Bible translations today. For the textual analysis, a corpus of new lexical items and concepts introduced through the Bible translations was created from these Bible translations. These are mainly lexical items and concepts that were not native to the Igbo language and culture or that were distinctly Christian. The corpus formed the basis for the descriptive linguistic analysis carried out in order to provide answers to the first three research questions. Answers to the fourth research question were got from the questionnaire that was administered to Igbo native speakers in Nsukka in February 2017. The questionnaire required respondents to supply

Igbo equivalents for certain Bible-based terms and concepts. The major findings of the study are summarized below.

Firstly, the textual analysis reveals that three major lexical innovation processes were used in the IBTs, i.e. compounding, direct lexical borrowing and descriptive terms. These processes yielded words that nativize Christianity to the Igbo cosmology, increase the stock of Igbo vocabulary, create polysemous meanings and accentuate a new register for the foreign (Christian) religion. Secondly, the introduction of Christian concepts into Igbo was done mainly by appropriating existing Igbo concepts and giving them new significations and meanings. The appropriation involved semantic shift, semantic extension, and register extension. As results of the survey show, some of these innovations have spread significantly among Igbo speakers today and have been included in Igbo dictionaries.

The study of the evolution of the lexical and conceptual innovations across the different Igbo Bible translations reveals that later translations did not retain all the innovations of the earlier translations. Rather, they replaced some of these with innovations of their own or replaced initially borrowed words with Igbo words – a process I term here 'deborrowing'. Some of these replacements lexically differentiated one Christian concept from another, especially in situations where the earlier translations had represented both concepts with the same term thereby reducing the range of polysemous words. In other instances, the replacements semantically differentiated Christian concepts from concepts found in the traditional Igbo religious practices. Beyond the lexical and semantic differentiations, some of the changes in the later translations were meant to further indigenize the Bible by shedding off some of the foreign elements found in the earlier translations. For instance, certain lexical items borrowed by earlier translations from English were replaced in later translations with existing Igbo words or new Igbo-based coinages. In other instances, the indigenization was in the form of adapting the spellings of the loan words to the Igbo spelling system.

Lastly, findings from the survey on the spread of the lexical and conceptual innovations indicate that many of the innovated terms have spread beyond their use in the Bible.

However, several others have been restricted to the (Christian) religious register, which has become more specific thanks to these Bible translations.

These findings indicate that, although the Christian institutions that did the Bible translations might not have consciously aimed at effecting changes in the language, their lexical choices for concepts succeeded in reshaping the language. They not only expanded the functions of the language but also added new terms and concepts in the language.

INTRODUCTION

> *The essential strangeness of the Gospel must never be forgotten. When it comes for the first time to a people, it opens up to them a whole new world, and introduces them to concepts which are wholly new and for which no suitable expressions exist in the language which they use.* (Neil 1976: 287)

0.1 Good News to the Poor Scattered Sheep

From the early 1800s, many countries in Europe and America abolished the transatlantic slave trade. However, the importation of slaves continued, which created the need to devise other means of ending the trade. Consequently, in a letter to the British Lords of the Treasury in London dated December 26, 1839, the Colonial Secretary, Lord John Russell suggested other ways of stopping the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. He stated, *inter alia*, that

> [a]lthough it may be impossible to check the cupidity of those who purchase slaves for exportation from Africa, it may yet be possible to force on those by whom they are sold, the persuasion that they are engaged in a traffic opposed to their own interests, when correctly understood. (Quoted in Seddall 1874: 167)

Thus, the British Government commissioned the first Niger expedition of 1841. The Church Missionary Society (CMS), a society of the Church of England, heard about the proposed expedition and saw in it an opportunity to carry on their Christian religious missionary operations among the Igbo[1] and other communities along the River Niger. The goal of the CMS could be deduced from this hymn:

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[1] "Igbo" is the current standard spelling of the term and this is the form used in this study, except for direct quotations where an alternative spelling, e.g., "Ibo", is used.

> Good news! all ye that wander wide,
> Poor scattered sheep long torn and tried,
> > In death and sin's domain:
> The gracious Lord His spirit sheds
> O'er broken hearts and weary heads,
> > To give them rest again
>
> Good news, idolaters! no more
> Your altars black with fire and gore,
> > Shall leave yourselves unclean;
> Th' atonement you never find,
> The blood that hallows all mankind
> > Christ's Holy Cross hath seen
> > > (*Church Missionary Gleaner*, quoted in Seddall 1874: 166)[2]

These lines show the missionaries' perception of the natives who live by the Niger River as a lost people ("scattered sheep"), wallowing in sin ("in death and sin's domain"), whom they intend to rescue ("give them rest again") using the gospel of "the gracious Lord". The second verse clarifies that the major target of the missionaries was the religious practices of the natives, since they are perceived here as "idolaters", whose black altars make them unclean. They therefore required the blood of Christ for atonement. Basically, the mission of the CMS was to "civilize" the people by converting them to Christianity. Suffice it to mention here that, as part of their methods of evangelism, the missionaries engaged in translating (portions of) the Bible into Igbo. This action introduced a new religious reality – Christianity – to the Igbo, which, in turn, brought about some changes in the Igbo language and their conceptualization of the world. As observed by Neil (1976: 287), quoted above, Bible translation introduces into the receiving culture new concepts for which it has no existing expressions. Consequently, Bible translation triggers the need to create terms for the new concepts in the target language. This study posits that translating the Bible into Igbo has engendered the elaboration of the Igbo language to enable it to express the ideas and concepts borne in the new religion.

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[2] Seddall (1874) prefaces all the chapters of the book with a quote that summarises the focus of the chapter. This hymn is his preface to the chapter on the Niger Missions, whereby it summarizes the goal and activities of the CMS missionaries in the Niger missions.

0.2   Judeo-Christian Paradigms in Studies of Igbo Religious Practices

The arrival of the CMS missionaries did not only mark the introduction of the Christian religion to the Igbo, who, at the time, were engaged in various religious practices different from Christianity. It also marked the beginning of academic discussions of the Igbo religious practices, which were done using Judeo-Christian paradigms[3]. For one, Igbo religious beliefs and practices are not collected in a body of holy texts the way those of Judaism, Christianity and Islam are. Rather, they are transmitted orally from one generation to another. The first attempts to represent them in writing were done by these Christian missionaries as they sought avenues to convert the Igbo to Christianity. To do this, these mission agents searched for concepts in the Igbo culture that were similar to concepts in Christianity. Such existing Igbo concepts then became the bedrock on which the Christian concepts were transferred into the Igbo language and culture through translation. Writing about a similar encounter between Christian missionaries and the Yoruba in the 19th century AD, Shaw (1990: 342-343), citing Peel (1987), submits that

> [m]issionary agenda depended upon the construction of homologies between Christianity and Yoruba 'heathenism'. Through such homologies, certain features could be "baptized" into Christianity, such as God, prayer and the concept of a mediator between mankind and deity. Other features could be replaced by parallel Christian forms, such as the substitution of communion for blood sacrifice. Others again, such as practices defined by the missionaries as "magic", as well as the trickster deity Esu, were assimilated to ideas of Satan and Satanism and thereby rejected.

By appropriating existing Yoruba concepts, the missionaries gave the impression that the Yoruba religious beliefs were not different from those espoused in Christianity. Chapter 2 expatiates on the Christian practice of appropriating concepts from other cultures in Bible translation.

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[3] By "Judeo-Christian" paradigms, I refer to the teachings in the Old and New Testaments of the Christian Bible (c.f. Section 2.1 for a highlight of the relationship between the Christian Old Testament texts and texts of the Jewish Bible).

The strategy adopted by the missionaries, i.e. representing African concepts using Judeo-Christian paradigms, was later reinforced by African scholars trained by the missions. In the words of Kalu (2002: 351), "[t]hrough the school system and charitable institutions, they [the missionaries] reared scholars who either as Christian apologists or resistant nationalists have studied traditional religious structures". Apologists or nationalists, these African scholars were exposed to Judeo-Christian religious paradigms, which form the basis of their studies. According to Kalu (2002: 351), "Christian or hellenistic assumptions had eaten their intellectual innards. In the end, they merely applied Hellenistic presuppositions on African materials and thereby further enslaved the latter". Incidentally, the prominent African scholars of African religious beliefs and practices have priestly (Christian) backgrounds, and some of them, like the missionaries, used their research as a tool for evangelism. As Kalu (2002: 351) further puts it, "[a]s a reaction to the politics of independence, many missionary groups deliberately pursued a strategy of indigenization predicated upon a large-scale study of indigenous religious forms so as to avoid the charge of irrelevance and to create new evangelical strategy".

The academic discussions of the (non)existence of the concept of a Supreme God in Igbo cosmology before the arrival of Christian missionaries is illustrative of the fact that traditional Igbo practices are discussed using Judeo-Christian paradigms. Nwoga (1984) notes that European monotheistic missionaries and ethnologists observed that the Igbo worshipped different deities and that the idea of a Supreme Deity was absent in their practices. To some of these Europeans, this was expected since they perceived Africans as being too primitive and brutish to conceptualize a Godhead. Other scholars, however, "believed that the Supreme God had not hidden himself from any people. An explanation had to be found for the phenomenon of the apparent no worship of the Supreme God" (Nwoga 1984: 19). Thus, they posited the theory of the "withdrawal" of the Supreme God, which became a major paradigm in scholarship on African religious beliefs and practices as scholars tried to account for the supposed withdrawal of the Supreme God. This theory is also applied to discussions of the Igbo belief in the Supreme God. However, the review in this study of existing studies on the topic, and analysis of the representation of the Supreme God in Igbo translations of the Bible, indicate that the idea of a Supreme God was

not part of the Igbo cosmology. It emerged from the Igbo contact with Christian missionaries.

What is more, the fact that Igbo religious systems are discussed in English translation further complicates the issue. Using English terms to represent Igbo concepts gives the impression that the terms in English and Igbo refer to the same phenomenon. For instance, Kalu (2002: 354) presents the Igbo concept of *chi* as the "personal guiding spirit which every individual receives at the inception of his/her earthly sojourn". The Nigerian (Igbo) novelist, Chinua Achebe, also represents this concept as "personal god" in his novels *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Arrow of God* (1964). To a Christian, these definitions are reminiscent of the Christian idea of a guardian angel mentioned in Psalm 91: 11: "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (King James Bible, KJB). However, the idea that the Igbo *chi* guards the individual is misleading because, as demonstrated in Chapter 5, a person's *chi* may allow evil to happen to them. So, the nuanced meanings of the Igbo concept of *chi* are lost in the English definition of it as "personal guiding spirit" and new connotations from the English definition are bestowed on the Igbo concept.

In sum, the missionaries did not only introduce Christianity to the Igbo, they also influenced the way the Igbo religious practices were conceptualized. This plays a major role in the Igbo conceptualization of the universe, a point that is expatiated in latter parts of this study.

0.3   Aim of Research and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to investigate how Bible translation has contributed to the elaboration of the Igbo language. The term "elaboration" is used here in two senses. On the one hand, it refers to the expansion of the functions of Igbo by making it the vehicle for expressing a foreign religion. On the other hand, it is used for the expansion of the Igbo lexicon to enable the language effectively express ideas in the new domain. Both forms of elaboration are complementary because the functional elaboration of Igbo created the need to expand the Igbo lexicon to express the new concepts encountered. The lexical and

conceptual expansions were achieved mainly by utilizing existing Igbo lexical items and concepts. In some cases, however, the lexical expansion involves the borrowing of terms from English. In the end, the innovated lexical forms and meanings are spread through regular and prolonged reading of the Bible and, over time, some of them get integrated into the Igbo language.

This study is guided by the following questions:

1. What lexical processes were adopted in creating new terms in Bible translation into Igbo? Focus here is on the lexeme and how the translators manipulated existing Igbo terms to give new meanings as well as how foreign terms were borrowed during the Bible translations.

2. What strategies were employed in representing Christian concepts in the Igbo Bible translations (IBTs)? Emphasis here is on the semantic level. This question is concerned with how existing terms for traditional Igbo concepts were adapted to (also) represent the Christian concepts.

3. How have these lexical and conceptual innovations evolved across the different IBTs? Interest here is in exploring whether later translations of the Bible into Igbo retained or replaced the lexical and conceptual innovations of the earlier translations, and what insight these choices provide on the Igbo experience of elaboration.

4. How have the Biblical lexical and conceptual innovations spread among Igbo speakers? This question explores whether Igbo speakers are aware of these lexical and conceptual innovations and whether they understand and use them in the same way as the Bible translations.

0.4 Methodology

To provide answers to these research questions (RQs), two types of analysis are carried out: a textual analysis and an analysis of a survey. Data for the textual analysis were

collected from the eight IBTs under study, namely – Isuama Igbo Bible[4] (1860/1866), Niger Igbo Bible[5] (1900), Union Igbo Bible (New Testament,1908), Union Igbo Bible (1913), Igbo Living Bible (1988), Igbo Catholic Bible (2000), Igbo Revised Edition (2007), and Igbo New World Translation (2007). From these Bible translations, a corpus of lexical items and concepts that have been elaborated or introduced into the Igbo language and spread through the Bible translations was created. The majority of these are lexical items and concepts that are not native to the Igbo language and culture or items that are distinctly Christian in nature, which means that there were no words for them in Igbo. However, there are also lexical items for which Igbo has existing cultural equivalents. It could have been expected that, following Nida's (1964) functional equivalence, the Igbo terms would have been used to represent the items in the IBTs. However, these functional equivalents were ignored, and novel lexical items were created instead. For illustration, the Igbo concepts of *eze mmụọ* "chief priest" and *dibịa* "doctor/priest" are fitting functional equivalents for the Biblical *priest*. However, apart from the Isuama Igbo Bible (IIB) which represents *priest* as *dibịa*, all the other IBTs use *onye-nchụ-aja* for *priest*, which literally means a person that offers sacrifices. The research corpus also includes such new terms created despite the existence of functional equivalent terms in Igbo.

This corpus forms the basis for the descriptive linguistic analysis carried out in order to provide answers to RQ1 (Chapter 4), RQ2 (Chapter 5), and RQ3 (Chapter 6). The analysis involves identifying the different components (morphemes, words) of the lexical items and reconstructing the meanings they had before their use in the Bible. The reconstructions are based on several sources: 1) dictionary entries for the terms and concepts, 2) academic publications on the terms and concepts, 3) uses of the terms and concepts in oral and written Igbo folklore, 4) interviews with Igbo native speakers, and 5) observed Igbo cultural practices. For one, when there is a difference in the usage of given lexical items in Christian contexts and in traditional Igbo religious practices, it is taken that the Christian

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[4] This refers to J. C. Taylor's translation of portions of the New Testament into the Isuama dialect of Igbo. The portions translated include: *Oku Omma nke Owu Matia: The Gospel according to St Mathew* (1860) and *Ma Oru nke Apostili*: *The Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians, Galatians and Ephesians* (1866). The choice of title –Isuama Igbo Bible – is based on the dialect of Igbo into which the translations were made.
[5] Like the Isuama Igbo Bible, this choice of name is based on the dialect of this translation. The full title of the translation is *Agba Ofu nke Dinwenu-Ayi na Onye-Nzoputa-Ayi Jesu Kristi n'Asusu Ibo* [New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in Igbo Language].

interpretation evolved from the traditional Igbo usage and not the other way around because the Igbo traditional practices pre-date the Igbo encounter with Christianity.

To complement the textual analysis, I administered a questionnaire in February 2017 to Igbo native speakers in Nsukka. Chapter 7 presents detailed information on the design and administration of the questionnaire, especially the study area, respondents and the questions. The quantitative analysis of the data from the responses to the questionnaire shows whether Igbo speakers are aware of the lexical and conceptual innovations in the IBTs and whether they use the innovated terms with the same meanings as in the IBTs. The analysis also shows the distribution of this awareness and usage across different age ranges and religious denominations. It further highlights nuanced interpretations of the lexical and conceptual innovations in relation to the meanings used in the IBTs.

Having presented the aim of this study, the research questions and the methodology, the next section provides a synopsis of each chapter.

0.5   Synopsis of the Chapters

This study consists of seven chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. Chapter 1 provides background information on the Igbo people and their language. It highlights key aspects of the Igbo language and cosmology relevant to the study. This background information is useful for the quantitative and qualitative analysis in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2 presents the major theories and concepts used in this study, namely Bible translation, equivalence and language elaboration. First, it clarifies the meaning of "Bible translation" used in this study, considering its inherent ambiguity. It also justifies the choice of "equivalence" as the basis for the analysis despite the controversies surrounding the concept in translation research. Then it highlights the relationships between equivalence and power relations on the one hand, and equivalence and cultural appropriation on the other. Lastly, the chapter defines "language elaboration" as applied in

this study. This definition expands the meaning and usage of the concept beyond the traditional usage in studies on language planning.

An understanding of the socio-political climate of Igboland when the IBTs were done is necessary to enhance a better appreciation of the choices made by the Igbo Bible translators and how it has influenced language elaboration. Thus, Chapter 3 explores the history and politics of the different IBTs, focusing on the activities that enhanced or inhibited progress in the translations, the influence of the prevailing socio-political climate on the translations, especially how they motivated not only the translations but also the strategies employed in them.

Having provided the necessary background information on the Igbo, their language and culture (Chapter 1), the theories and concepts that are used for the analysis (Chapter 2), and a history of the different IBTs (Chapter 3), the next four chapters are dedicated to the analysis of the data. They explore the different forms of language elaboration achieved through Bible translation into Igbo. Chapter 4 analyses in detail the lexical processes adopted by the Bible translators in creating new terms in the IBTs. The major lexical processes found in the corpus are compounding, lexical borrowing and descriptive phrases. Apart from the loanwords, the other processes involve adapting existing Igbo terms to serve new functions.

Chapter 5 focuses on the ways Christian concepts are represented in the IBTs. The chapter reveals that the Christian missionaries adapted existing Igbo concepts and gave them new significations. This adaptation entails widening the meanings of existing terms for concepts to embrace the Christian ones or restricting the meanings of the Igbo concepts. It also involves giving pejorative meanings to some Igbo concepts that did not have such negative connotations, as well as ameliorating other concepts. Most of the ameliorated concepts are secular concepts that are given religious significations.

Although Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the lexical and conceptual innovations in the IBTs, they do not trace the evolution of these innovations across the different IBTs to point out how the choices made in the IBTs have changed over time and how they have enhanced the elaboration of Igbo. Consequently, Chapter 6 adopts a diachronic perspective to the lexical

and conceptual innovations across the different IBTs. Emphasis is placed on the lexical choices made by earlier translations that were changed in later translations. Such changes include replacing appropriated Igbo cultural concepts with another cultural concept or with a new lexical creation and replacing one lexical creation with another. There are also words that are borrowed in the earlier translations that are de-borrowed and replaced in later translations with new lexical creations or adapted concepts. Other changes are graphological, e.g., non-capitalized proper names are capitalized, hyphenated compounds are de-hyphenated and made open or closed, and borrowed items had their spellings adapted to reflect the Igbo grapho-phonological system.

Chapter 7, the last of the analysis chapters, describes the spread of the lexical and conceptual innovations among Igbo speakers of different age range and religious backgrounds. It shows that while some of the lexical and conceptual innovations spread beyond their use in the Bible, others were restricted to Bible reading. Many of the lexical and conceptual innovations have acquired new meanings among Igbo speakers, beyond their meanings in the IBTs. The chapter also suggests the emergence of an Igbo Christian register as well as denominational registers.

The Conclusion reiterates the fact that so far scholars have not acknowledged the impact of Bible translation on the elaboration of Igbo. This study has filled that gap in research albeit minimally since much is still left untouched. It then calls on scholars of the Igbo Language to include this in their research agenda as it will significantly help to better understand the history of the language. It also calls for collaboration between Igbo language planners and Christian religious institutions on ways of further developing the Igbo language, especially for the new functions it has acquired thanks to Bible translation in this digital age.

CHAPTER 1

THE IGBO PEOPLE AND THEIR LANGUAGE

1.1   The Igbo People

The Igbo occupy the land surface found "between latitudes 4^0 15′ and 7^0 05′ North and longitudes 6^0 00′ and 8^0 30′ East", covering "a total surface area of approximately 41, 000 square kilometres" (Ofomata 2002: 1). They have a culture area "delimitable by an imaginary line running outside the settlements of Agbor, Kwale, Obiaruku, Ebu (West Niger Igbo area), Ahoada, Diobu, Umuagbayi Port-Harcourt area) Arochukwu, Afikpo, Ndinioafu, Isiogo Abakaliki Area) and Enugu Ezike (Nsukka Area), and Nzam" (Onwuejeogwu 1975: 1). Onwuejeogwu (1975: 1) adds that the indigenous people of this area "not only speak the various dialects of the Igbo language but also share typical and significant common culture traits and patterns". This culture area shares boundaries with the Igala, Idoma and Ogoja peoples on the north, the Ibibio people on the East, the Ijo of the Delta region on the South, and the Edo people on the West (Oguagha and Okpoko 1993: 103). The ethnonym "Igbo" is not only used to refer to the Igbo people but also to the geographical space they occupy as well as to the language they speak.

Igbo is one of the three major indigenous languages in Nigeria (the others being Hausa and Yoruba). The Nigerian National Population Commission puts the population of the country at approximately 182 million[6], and the 2017 CIA World Fact Book states that the Igbo make up 18% of the Nigerian population[7]. That places the population of Igbo speakers at approximately 33 million. Igbo is only native language spoken in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States of Nigeria. It is also spoken, alongside other native languages, in Delta and Rivers States (see Figure 1.1). Although many Igbo people have migrated to

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[6] http://population.gov.ng/nigerias-population-now-182-million-npc/
[7] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html

different parts of the world where they have formed Igbo communities and use the Igbo language for communication, Igbo is spoken as a native language only in the Nigerian States mentioned above.
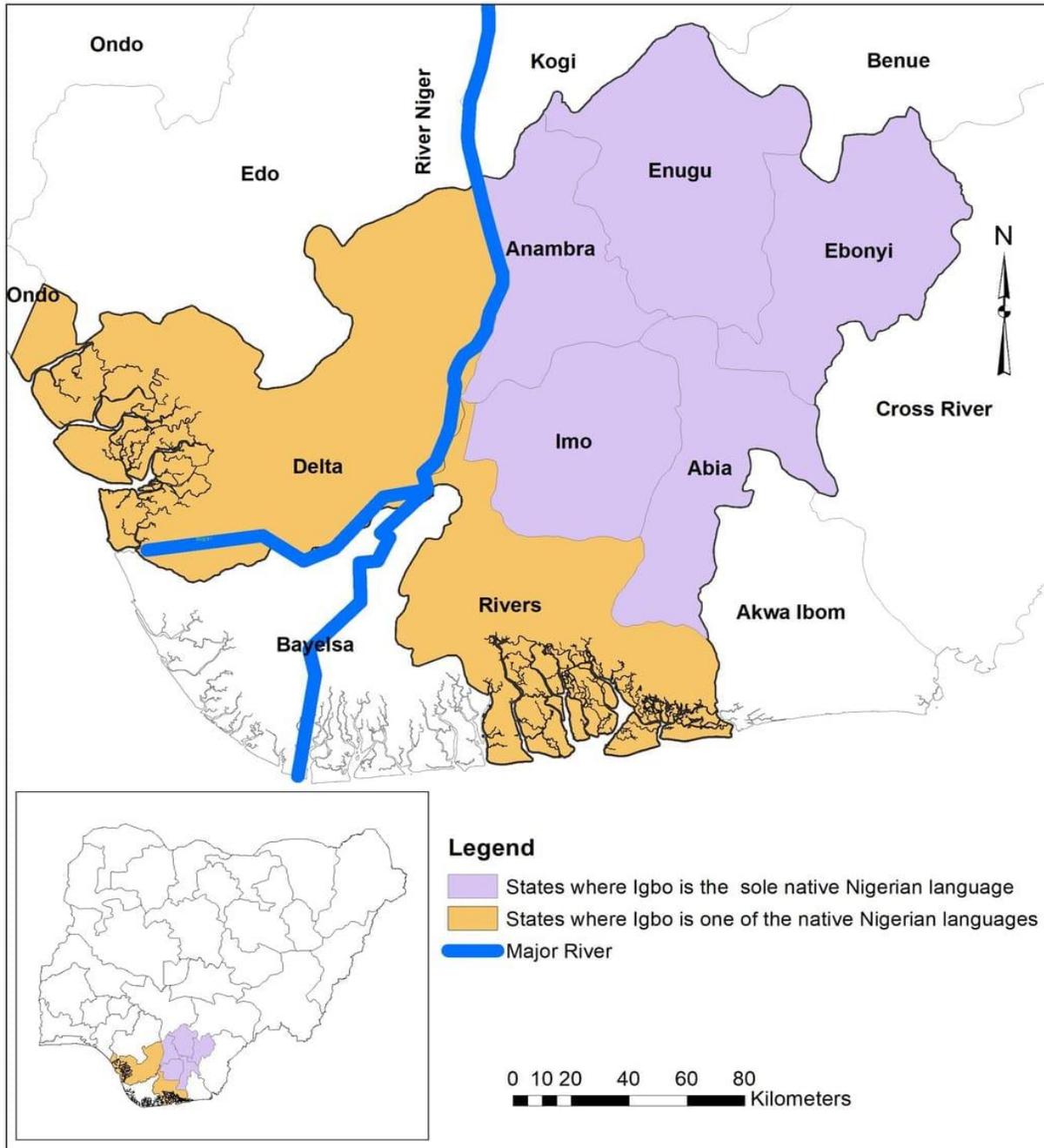
Figure 1. 1. Map of Igboland

Afigbo (2006: 211) submits that as at the mid-19ᵗʰ Century when Europeans arrived Igboland, the Igbo

> had behind them about six millennia[8] of unbroken history even though much of that history may not be available to us in sufficient detail. Much of that history was lived and experienced in and around the general area between the River Niger to the West and Cross River to the East, and between the River Benue to the North and the Atlantic Ocean to the South. That was the terrestrial platform or theatre. On that platform stood, at first, a rain forest which over time was reduced to orchard bush through intensive human exploitation. There were also hills and valleys, streams, springs, brooks and rivers, a wide variety of vegetable and animal life, as well as varied minerals.

Beyond delimiting the geographical space identified as Igboland, Afigbo (2006) here also describes the terrain. The Igbo engaged in several economic activities which include blacksmithing, pottery, weaving of cloth, baskets, mats and fans, carving, farming, and fishing among others (Ijoma 2002).

Politically, the Igbo were a decentralized and fragmented group of people, as they had no central controlling authority. They were rather composed of disparate cultural entities or clans. Oguagha and Okpoko (1993: 124) state that the "largest political unit is the village group (the town) which the Igbo call *obodo, ala* or *mba*. This is composed of a number of contiguous villages which believe that they are the collective descendants of a common ancestor". There is no central religious or political power that all the Igbo communities defer to. Rather, in the words of Nwosu (2002: 240), "administrative functions were shared and performed by the various political institutions such as the titled men, secret societies, and age grades".

Religion was an integral part of the Igbo social and political life. There was no separation of religion from these other practices. As Kalu (2002: 351) observes, "[r]eligion suffused other cultural forms and underpinned them". In fact, there was no term for the concept of

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[8] Emenanjo (2015: 14) corroborates this claim when he states that a distinct Igbo language started evolving from the Kwa language family around 6000 BC (c.f. Table 1.1).

"religion" in Igbo and the current Igbo terms for religion are appropriations of existing Igbo terms for some Igbo religious practices. The entries for *religion* in two Igbo-English dictionaries show the evolution of the current Igbo word for "religion". Welmers and Welmers (1968: 330) has this entry:

> (traditional indigenous religious activities, as offering sacrifices, are specifically described; organized religion, esp. Christianity and Islam, x 'praying to God') *okpukpe Cukwu*, (or x 'worship') *ofufe.* (Emphasis added)

Here, Welmers and Welmers (1968) clarify that the terms provided are for religious activities and not for religion per se. A religious practice like "praying to God" is rendered as *okpukpe Chukwu*, while "worship" is rendered as *ofufe.* However, three decades later, Echeruo (1998: 248) gives this entry for religion in his Igbo-English dictionary:

> *n* ofufe ci [LLHH]; okpukpe [LLH]; okwukwe {LLH]

Here, Echeruo (1998) defines religion with the same words used in Welmers and Welmers (1968) for religious practices, namely *ofufe* "worship" and *okpukpe* "prayer". He, however, adds a third word *okwukwe* "faith". In other words, Echeruo's (1998) definition of religion is an appropriation of Igbo words for some religious practices, which is an indication of the separation of religion from other cultural practices. Furthermore, while Welmers and Welmers (1968) illustrate the object of prayer with "praying to God", representing "God" as *Chukwu*, Echeruo (1998) identifies the object of worship as *ci* (*chi*). Chapter 5 presents an in-depth study of the evolution of both terms, *Chukwu* and *chi*, in Igbo cosmology and the role of Bible translation in the evolution. The next section highlights two aspects of the Igbo belief system that are vital to this research.

1.1.1 The World of Man and the World of Spirits

According to Uchendu (1965: 11), the Igbo world could be divided into two: the world of man peopled by all created beings and things, animate and inanimate; and the spirit world,

which is "the abode of the creator, the deities, the disembodied and malignant spirits, and the ancestor spirits". Ikenga-Metuh (1985: 6) also presents a similar view:

> The total world of Igbo experience, consists of two closely linked sections-*ubwa* [sic] (visible world) and *ani mmuo* (spirit-world). The visible world is a manifestation and as it were a carbon copy of the invisible world. Everything in the visible world has an invisible counterpart in the spirit-world. Chukwu is the creator of the whole world.

The idea of "creation" from nothing and *Chukwu* as the creator are here presented as part of the pre-Christian Igbo worldview. However, the analysis in Chapters 5 and 7 demonstrate that the belief in "creating out of nothing" was one of the outcomes of the Igbo contact with Christianity, and that *Chukwu* was initially an Igbo local deity that, through contact with Christianity, is now bestowed with the attributes of the Christian God.

According to Uchendu (1965: 12), in the cosmology of the Igbo, "the world of the 'dead' is a world full of activities; its inhabitants manifest in their behaviour and thought processes that they are 'living'". So, in the Igbo worldview, the dead continue to live. As also suggested by Ikenga-Metuh (1985), the world of the spirits is a replication of the world of humans. Afigbo (2006: 214) elaborates on this thus: the world of the dead "replicated in its every detail the territorial geography and ecology of the physical world with its flora and fauna, its hills and valleys, its rivers, forests, scrublands, and waterless deserts". In other words, the dead continue their existence in a world that is similar to that of the living and engage in activities that are similar to those of the living.

Afigbo (2006: 214) identifies three "parts" of this world of the dead: 1) an upper part inhabited by people that lived well in this life and, at death, had received full burial rites; 2) a middle part occupied by people who lived well in this life but are yet to be properly buried; and 3) the third part inhabited by those who, while living, belonged to "the scums of the earth – witches and wizards, thieves and robbers, and so on". Afigbo's (2006) "parts" of the world of the dead seems to be labelled based on the supposed value of their inhabitants, rather than on some vertical criterion. The idea of an "upper" part is to indicate that members of this group are valued highly and positively by the living. They are dead

people for whom complete funeral rites have been performed and who now belong to the ranks of the ancestors. Members of the middle part are potential candidates as ancestors pending when their funeral rites are performed. However, members of the third part do not belong to the rank of the ancestors because they transgressed against the Earth goddess while alive and so are not given proper burials. To this group belong spirits known as *akalogeli*, "evil spirits and malevolent ghosts of dead ones who for one reason or the other are still hanging around in this dimension of consciousness, wreaking havoc, causing illness, disasters and other misfortunes on living people and/or their possessions" (Umeh 1999: 200).

The ancestors are called *mmụọ* or *ndị ichie*. They are believed to "watch over the interests of their children, reincarnate in the young ones to ensure that their respective lineages are continued" (Kalu 2002: 356). On their part, the living recognize the important roles the ancestors play in their lives and so maintain communication with them. According to Ubah (1988: 75), the ancestors are

> regarded as members of their lineages whose leaders communicated with them through offerings and sacrifices. The annual festivals were also occasions for offering sacrifices to the ancestors, heads of families always acting as priests for this purpose. The sacrifices were a duty incumbent on family heads, and if they defaulted the angered ancestors would inflict appropriate punishment, usually ill-health or even death.

These views emphasize the central place of the ancestors in the Igbo cosmology. In many Igbo communities, the ancestors are incarnated in the *mmọnwụ* (masked spirits) in an elaborate ceremony (c.f. Reed and Hufbauer 2005). These incarnated spirits, of which the *Odo* is one, are believed to bring some blessings on their offspring:

> Like many Igbo masquerades, Odo manifests the support and blessings that flow from the elder dead to the living and back again as the generations pass. Economic, religious, and family responsibilities work together in Odo, supported by a broadly held feeling that these beautiful and beloved masked spirits have come home to bless the living. (Reed and Hufbauer 2005: 135)

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Interestingly, this Igbo veneration of ancestors posed a major obstacle to the Christian missionaries because it contributed to the Igbo resistance to Christianity. Thus, the missionaries discredited the practice in a bid to distract the people from their commitment to the ancestors. According to Ubah (1988: 76), the missionaries taught that

> [t]he religious attention paid to ancestors was also of no value. These dead people, it was contended, had lost all connections with the world and were incapable of influencing the affairs of men one way or the other. All those sacrifices made to them, like those to the deities, were a waste of time and resources, and the people should neither look up to the ancestors for help nor believe that they had ever been, or would ever be, reincarnated. Divination was therefore a useless and wasteful exercise, and those who claimed to have the power to tell the wishes of the deities and the ancestors were cheats.

The missionaries went on to give the concept of *mmụọ* a pejorative meaning by using the term to denote negative concepts in Bible translations, like the use of *ọkụ ala mmụọ* "fire of the land of the ancestors" to represent "hell" (c.f. Section 4.1.1.3).

1.1.2 Belief in the Supreme God

A general trend in academic discussions of Igbo deities is to provide some hierarchy of the deities, either overtly (c.f. Okorie 1998 and Agbedo 2010) or covertly by suggesting that such a hierarchy exists (Uchendu 1965). These scholars place the Supreme God at the top of the hierarchy, followed by other deities and spirits. The idea of a Supreme God in Igbo cosmology has raised a lot of controversies. For while some scholars posit that the idea existed in Igbo cosmology before the arrival of Christian missionaries (c.f. Uchendu 1965, Metuh 1973, Bews 1985), others insist that the idea entered Igbo cosmology through the agency of Christian missionaries (Achebe 1975, Nwoga 1984, Oyali 2016). Here, I argue in support of the latter view.

Uchendu (1965: 94) posits that the idea of a supreme creator of all things is focal in Igbo cosmology: "They believe in a supreme god, a high god, who is all good". However, in his words,

> [t]he Igbo high god is a withdrawn god. He is a god who has finished all active works of creation and keeps watch over his creatures from a distance. The Igbo high god is not worshipped directly. There is neither shrine nor priest dedicated to his service. He gets no direct sacrifice from the living but is conceived as the ultimate receiver of all sacrifice made to the minor deities [...] He seldom interferes in the affairs of men, a characteristic which sets him apart from all other deities, spirits, and ancestors. He is a satisfied god who is not jealous of the prosperity of man on earth.

Several observations could be made from Uchendu's (1965) statement. Despite his claim of the Igbo belief in the Supreme God, he presents that this deity is never worshipped directly, has no shrine erected for him, and receives no direct sacrifice. The only evidence provided is the surmision that this deity is worshipped indirectly, and sacrifices made to other deities are ultimately made to the Supreme God. Interestingly, Ubah's (1982) ethnographic research reveals that, as far as the people making the sacrifices are concerned, "sacrifices offered to any spirit are meant for its consumption, although it could invite any other spirit or spirits to its meal" (quoted in Nwoga 1984: 29).

What this indicates is that Uchendu (1965) uncritically imposed the Judeo-Christian idea of a Supreme God on the Igbo system. This is further illustrated by this analysis of the current names for God in Igbo:

> The high god is conceived of in different roles. In his creative role, he is called *Chineke*, *Chi-Okike* (*Chi* – God; *Okike* – that creates [sic]). To distinguish him from other minor gods he is called *Chukwu* – the great or the high god. As the creator of everything, he is called *Chukwu Abiama*, while as the pillar that supports the heavens, he is called *Agalaba ji igwe*. The sky is regarded as his place of residence and people invoke his name as *Chi-di-n'elu* "God who lives above". (Uchendu 1965: 95)

Although Uchendu (1965) here presents that *Chukwu* is used to distinguish the Supreme God from "other minor gods", evidence from the IBTs done up to 1900 shows that *Chukwu* was used for both the Supreme God and other minor gods, indicating that there was no such distinction in Igbo prior to the 1900s. It was not until the Union Igbo translations were produced that such a distinction was made, with *Chineke* used for the Supreme God and *chi* for minor gods, and *Chukwu* was removed completely from the IBTs because of its negative associations (cf. Section 4.3.1.1). So, Uchendu's (1965) statement describes a highly Christianized Igbo worldview, and not the worldview of the Igbo prior to their encounter with Christianity.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the different roles of the Igbo Supreme God identified by Uchendu (1965) are the same as the roles of the Christian God – creator of the world, greater or higher than other deities, and lives in heaven. It is too much of a coincidence for the non-Christian Igbo people to have the same roles for their non-Christian Supreme God as the Christian Supreme God. Besides, describing God as "the pillar that supports the heavens" is reminiscent of Job 26: 11: "The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof". So, Uchendu's (1965) ideas of an Igbo Supreme God is influenced by the Judeo-Christian ideas of a Supreme God.

So far, it is seen that there seems to be a gap between claims of the Igbo belief in a Supreme God and the data from which these claims were supposedly derived. On the topic, Afigbo (2006: 212) states that "[i]f the truth must be told, we do not know its [the Supreme God's] name. Traditions which do not go further back than the 19th century which saw the penetration of Christian missionary influence give it out that it is called Chineke, Chukwu or Obasi-di-n'elu". So, since ethnographic studies do not show a clear link between the data and the position that the Igbo had always believed in a Supreme God, and since the narratives that posit the existence of this belief dates to the period when the missionaries arrived Igboland, it then suggests that the Igbo belief in the Supreme God is an outcome of Christianization. The remaining sections of this Chapter explore important background information on the Igbo language.

1.2   The Igbo Language

As noted above, the word "Igbo" is used to refer to the geographical space identified as the Igbo culture area, its inhabitants and their language. The people living within this area speak the same language. In this section, I highlight some salient issues about the dialects of Igbo, before discussing the evolution of Standard Igbo.

1.2.1 The Dialects of Igbo

Identifying the dialects of Igbo has been a major challenge to linguists. In fact, as Ubahakwe (2002: 255) explains, "[i]t is easier certainly to distinguish Igbo as a language from one that is non-Igbo than it is to differentiate one dialect of Igbo from another". He attributes this difficulty to the fact that what constitutes a dialect "is largely a matter of operational definition given the present state of linguistic techniques" (Ubahalwe 2002: 255). For one, linguists adopt different techniques in distinguishing a dialect from another. Besides, there is yet no published comprehensive survey of Igbo dialects. That notwithstanding, there have been attempts at identifying the number of Igbo dialects with varying results. For instance, Grimes (1974) identifies 30 dialects while Ward (1941) identifies 47. Using a linguistic technique in dialectology known as Lexico-Semantic Technique, Ubahakwe (2002: 256) places the number of Igbo dialects at 24.

However, some other linguists (Manfredi 1991, Ikekeonwu 2001) have attempted grouping the dialects of Igbo in clusters. Manfredi (1991: 59), for instance, identifies the following clusters:

1. Ehwuda (Ekpeye)
2. Ogbakiri (South Ikwere)
3. Eleele (North Ikwere)
4. Omooku (Ogba)
5. Abo (Ukwuani)

6. Agbo (Ika)
7. Onicha (North Igbo)
8. Omaahya (South Igbo), and
9. Abankeleke (Izii)

Emenanjo (2015: 6) submits that a well-informed native speaker will find Manfredi's (1991) scheme, "with some modification, to be anthropologically, geo-culturally and linguistically well motivated".

Although scholars argue that the dialects of Igbo derive from one proto-Igbo language (Emenanjo 2015: 6), which means that the dialects share a lot of grammatical, lexical and phonological features, the dialects also differ in certain grammatical, lexical and phonological details. Intelligibility between them exists in a continuum. As Ubahakwe (2002: 267) puts it,

> if we look at a dialect map and begin from one dialect group to count say six dialects in any linear but contiguous direction, it would normally be the case that the intelligibility between one dialect and another adjacent to it would be higher than the intelligibility between that dialect and any other farther away from it.

A major factor that has enhanced intelligibility among the dialects is linguistic accommodation, the tendency for speakers to modify their speech forms to sound like those of their interlocutors. According to Ubahakwe (2002: 267), it is often the case that "the level of effective communication between speakers of different dialects is largely dependent upon the degree of willingness to adjust and to understand exhibited by the speakers". This tendency is not recent, for it has been observed by colonial linguistic anthropologists. Ward (1935: 92-93), for instance, reports that in her tour of the Igbo country, she

> collected records of ten or eleven dialects of Ibo and talked with a lot of educated Africans [Igbo]. We discussed, among other matters, the question of dialects, and I asked them all the same question: Do you, when you leave

your part of the country, use your own dialect, or you modify it? The answer in every case was, "We modify it".

This attitude of dialect adjustment to enhance communication played an important role in the evolution of Standard Igbo discussed in the next sub-section.

1.2.2   The Evolution of Standard Igbo

The first attempts at creating an Igbo literary standard started with the arrival of Christian missionaries in Igboland in the mid-19th century. Since then, several standard dialects have been introduced with varying levels of success. The first was Isuama Igbo (1851-1900), based on the dialect of Igbo spoken in Freetown among recaptive slaves of Igbo descent. These recaptive slaves spoke different dialects of Igbo, thus making the Isuama dialect a mixed dialect. The missionaries that came to Igboland studied this variety of Igbo and also used it in their writings and translations. It is the dialect in which J. C. Taylor did his translations of the Bible, i.e., the Isuama Igbo Bible. However, the inability of the missionaries to locate the part of Igboland where Isuama was spoken made them to discontinue using it and to opt for using dialects they heard on the ground, like the dialects of Onitsha and Bonny. Thus, the first complete and published[9] New Testament (NT) in Igbo was translated into the Onitsha or Niger dialect. Incidentally, before more substantial work could be written in these live dialects, Archdeacon T. J. Dennis suggested that a pan-Igbo dialect be created, one that could be understood in every part of Igboland. Consequently, Union Igbo (1905-1939) was created by joining features of five non-contiguous dialects of Igbo. This became the written standard dialect into which most writings in Igbo were done at the time. Owing to the artificial nature of Union Igbo, the fact that it is not spoken anywhere and only exists in the Union IBTs and a few other texts, Union Igbo died after the death of T. D. Anyaegbunam and T. J. Dennis, the two main Christian agents involved in its

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[9] Chapter 3 presents that J. C. Taylor had completed the translation of the NT in Isuama Igbo, but this translation was never published because of the disagreements between Taylor and J. F. Schön who was the leading "expert" in Igbo language studies at the time.

creation. Section 3.1.1 presents an in-depth history of the Isuama and the Union Igbo dialects, the agents involved in their creation and usage as well as the impact of their use in the IBTs.

The failure of Union Igbo to evolve into an Igbo literary standard and the growing need at the time for a standard form of the language to use in writing made creating an Igbo literary standard a necessity. Two factors, however, militated against creating this standard, namely, the multiplicity of Igbo dialects and the unsettled orthography question. Thus, in 1939, Ida Ward was commissioned by the colonial government to embark on a research tour of Igboland aimed at examining

> a number of Ibo dialects from the point of view of sound usages and constructions in order to find out if there is a dialect which could be used as a literary medium for African [Igbo] writers and for school publications, which could be acceptable over a considerable area of the Ibo country and which might form the basis of a growing "standard" Ibo; further to investigate in what areas this dialect would be easily understood; and finally to collect as much comparative dialect material as possible. (Ward 1941: 7)

To achieve this, Ward (1941) focuses on the Igbo dialects spoken in the old Owerri and Onitsha provinces, the major dialects known at the time to the missionaries and colonialists. Ward (1941) restricts her study to phonology and syntax and ignores lexical issues for time constraints. She observes that the differences between the dialects of the provinces studied are more at the lexical level than at the phonological and grammatical levels. However, she emphasizes that a speaker "readily makes adjustments in the sound system" (Ward 1941: 8). Consequently, she submits that "once the sound systems and variations in constructions are codified, the collection of vocabulary and vocabulary variants – an important and much-needed peeve of work – is straightforward" (Ward 1941: 8).

From her findings, Ward (1941) recommends that the dialect of Igbo that is suitable for standardization and use in writing is that of the old Owerri province, which she calls "the

central area of Ibo country" (Ward 1941: 11), hence the term "Central Igbo"[10]. She believes Central Igbo is spoken in more parts of Igboland than the Onitsha dialect:

> The so-called "Owerri type", in some form or other, must have many more speakers than the Onitsha dialect. Some of the Northern dialects including Nsukka, Eke, Udi, as well as a number of what may be called borderline dialects (which are mainly in the Onitsha province) show more affinity with the central Ibo type than with the Onitsha dialect. (Ward 1941: 11)

In addition to the geographical spread of Central Igbo, Ward (1941: 12) elaborates on other features of this dialect that make it the best choice for standardization:

> The suggested Central dialect is as near as can be a consistent whole; it is a spoken, living language with nothing artificial about it. In the Central area the language spoken now is this recognized type; in contiguous areas the differences are slight, and each dialect differs from the suggested "standard" in certain particulars only. All have something in common in every branch of the language, in pronunciation, constructions and vocabulary.

From Ward's (1941) recommendation, Central Igbo became the standard dialect for writing in Igbo. According to Green (1972), Central Igbo has been

> accepted by writers and publishers and by education authorities for use in schools…In addition to books, Central Igbo has been used from the beginning by the University of London in the O'Level Igbo paper for the General Certificate of Education. The training course in Igbo for the Colonial Cadets after the second world war was also carried out in Central Igbo. (Quoted in Emenanjo 1975: 116)

The Igbo Living Bible and the New Testament of the IRE are said to be translated into Central Igbo.

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[10] Ward's (1941) choice of the term "Central Ibo" as against "Owerri Ibo" was informed by her belief that the labels Owerri Ibo and Onitsha Ibo "imply that the dialects are more or less co-terminous with the political divisions of the Owerri and Onitsha provinces" (p. 11), which was not the case.

Prior to Green's (1972) sanguine report on Central Igbo, there were some dissenting voices to its adoption. An article in the *West African Pilot* of July 10, 1944 attacked the recognition given to Central Igbo, said to be a dialect "made up by a foreign student" (Nwadike 1983: 16). Three conferences attended by top Igbo scholars and government officials were held the same year (1944) at Umuahia, Onitsha and Enugu to decide whether to adopt it or not, and all three conferences agreed that Central Igbo be adopted as the standard Igbo dialect. This adoption, however, did not preclude writing in other dialects. As Nwadike (1983: 16-17) reports, at the Enugu conference,

> [i]t was, however, made clear that the use of the central dialect would apply only to such literature as would be produced in connection with any scheme which was supported by the government, and that it would be open to anybody to produce literature in any dialect of the Igbo language which he deemed fit to use, and that no school would be penalized for using stocks of literature in whatever dialect or orthography, while stocks of literature in the Central dialect, using the phonetic orthography[11], were not available.

In sum, Central Igbo was officially adopted by the government and Igbo scholars as the standard to be used in writing.

Despite this apparent acceptance of Central Igbo, Emenanjo (1975: 114) reports that his survey of the use of the term "Central Igbo" reveals that the identity of the dialect is fuzzy:

> One solid impression which I have got from all my tours, discussions and respondents is that most users of the term "Central Igbo" are agreed on one thing only – that the acceptable Central Igbo is anything that is NOT Onitsha Igbo. Outside this most people who use the term do not seem either to agree or to know in concrete terms what Central Igbo is.

He attributes this confusion to the fact that "Central Igbo is an abstraction" and so "people tend to find it difficult to define precisely or to speak fluently or consistently, especially for Igbo people who are from outside the old Owerri province" (Emenanjo 1975: 118). The

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[11] This period also coincided with the orthography controversy period discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

point here is that the advocates of Central Igbo seem, on the one hand, to be unclear about the exact dialect that constitutes Central Igbo or, on the other hand, to shy away from categorically stating that it refers to the dialect spoken in the old Owerri province, apparently for political reasons. Emenanjo (1975: 122) insists that discussing the prospects of an Igbo literary standard in relation to the Owerri and Onitsha dialects is a "gross simplification of the dialect situation in Igboland", after all, "Owerri and Onitsha are only two of the many dialects of Igbo". He further highlights two shortcomings in the use of Central Igbo. One, most of the available writings in Central Igbo were done by people from the old Owerri province. Two, the Protestants patronize the dialect more than others do. In other words, "Central Igbo does not have a pan-Igbo acceptance" as many Igbo do not seem to be willing to use it (Emenanjo 1975: 126). As a solution to the relative apathy towards Central Igbo, Emenanjo (1975) introduces what he tentatively called "Modern Igbo". Incidentally, this later became the accepted Standard Igbo.

Modern Igbo, according to Emenanjo (1975: 127), is "the dialect of the urban area […] the dialect which most of us, especially the educated ones, slip into when they [sic] talk with others from different parts of Igboland. It is the dialect of towns rather than the villages". He adds that this variety of Igbo is "aimed at and used in public places, public notices, popular music, records and advertisements […] It is the Igbo used in meetings with a pan-Igbo audience, church services, prayers, church bulletins and sermons especially in townships". Furthermore, Emenanjo (1987: xxi) emphasizes that Modern Igbo is not based on any one dialect of Igbo, and that it is eclectic in its choice of forms. The import of this is that although some writers favour Central Igbo, the standard recommended by Ward (1941), this standard did not have a pan-Igbo structure as its lexicon is from the dialects of the old Owerri province and it is spoken and used mainly by people from the old Owerri province. However, a pan-Igbo dialect naturally evolved from the spoken Igbo of the urban areas. Hence Emenanjo (1975) recommends that this pan-Igbo variety be explored and used instead as the Igbo literary standard. This recommendation was obviously heeded and Modern Igbo was studied and elaborated to serve as the Igbo literary standard.

Consequently, two decades later, Emenanjo (1995) reports the existence of two varieties of Standard Igbo: a spoken variety and a written one. What is presented in the preceding paragraph is largely the spoken variety. On the written variety, he states that

> Standard Igbo is a neo-language […] Its spirit is that of Central Igbo, its body that of all Igbo dialects. Much of its inflectional and derivational morphology is that of Central Igbo; its lexicon is patently pan-Igbo. Because it is written, then study has to precede it. Not everybody can write it. Only those who have had exposure to it through some form of study are competent to write it. Eclectism and spontaneity, the features that make the spoken SI [Standard Igbo] picturesque, unique and, sometimes amorphous, are edited out in the written (and published) tradition. (Emenanjo 1995: 219)

In other words, Standard Igbo did not completely disregard Central Igbo. Rather, it adopted some of the features of Central Igbo like its inflectional and derivational morphology. However, unlike Central Igbo whose lexicon is derived from one specific dialect area, Standard Igbo got its lexicon from all the dialects of Igbo. The written standard, being a product of conscious language planning efforts, also gives some stability to usages and forms that were absent in Central Igbo and in the spoken Standard Igbo. Emenanjo (1995: 220) emphasizes this point thus:

> more than *ALL* Igbo dialects, Standard Igbo is a neo-dialect with metalanguage. It is informed by historical hindsight and foresight. It is watered, propagated and perpetuated by all the canons of language engineering seen in verifiable and quantifiable features like graphization, codification, modernization, standardization (including decimal numeration, with all the place values), corpus development and metalanguage for the sciences, technology, legislative usage, education, language and literature.

The point here is that Standard Igbo learnt from the mistakes of the earlier standards – Isuama, Union, and Central Igbo. Isuama and Central standards were based on specific dialects which made them regional, and Union Igbo was not a living dialect which made it

artificial. Standard Igbo gets its lexicon from all the dialects of Igbo and thus gives speakers of Igbo, irrespective of their dialects, a sense of belonging and pride.

Two points need to be made regarding the emergence of Standard Igbo. First, it is a product of the functional elaboration of Igbo resulting from the policy statements of the Federal Government of Nigeria. Second, it is a product of the lexical and semantic elaboration engineered by the Society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture. These points need expatiation.

Following the Nigeria/Biafra 30-month civil war of 1967-1970, the Nigerian government devised means of promoting peace among the different ethnic nations, one of which was linguistic. Thus in 1977, the Nigerian military government introduced a linguistic element in the National Policy on Education (NPE). The parts of the NPE that contain linguistic statements include:

> Government appreciates the importance of language as a means of promoting social interaction and national cohesion; and preserving cultures. Thus every child shall learn the language of the immediate environment. Furthermore in the interest of national unity, it is expedient that every child shall be required to learn one of the three Nigerian languages, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba. (*NPE* 2004: para. 10a)

Thus, the government required that Igbo be learnt not only by native Igbo people, but also by speakers of other Nigerian languages. The NPE also states that, for Early Childhood/Pre-Primary Education,

> Government shall ensure that the medium of instruction is principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community; and to this end will
>
> i.   develop the orthography of many more Nigerian languages, and
>
> ii. produce textbooks in Nigerian languages (*NPE* 2004: para.

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Furthermore, the NPE holds that

> The medium of instruction in the primary school shall be the language
> of the environment for the first three years. During this period, English
> will be taught as a subject. (*NPE* 2004: para. 19e)

In addition to these statements in the NPE, Section 55 of the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) stipulates that:

> The business of the National Assembly shall be conducted in English,
> and in Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba when adequate arrangements have been
> made therefore.

For the State Assemblies, Section 97 of the CFRN states that

> The business of a House of Assembly shall be conducted in English, but
> the House may in addition to English conduct the business of the House
> in one or more other languages spoken in the State as the House may by
> resolution approve.

These policy statements made it necessary and urgent to produce texts in Igbo for use in education and in the national and state assemblies.

The task of elaborating the forms of Standard Igbo became the prerogative of the Society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture (SPILC), described by Emenanjo (1989: 222) as "a non-elitist grassroots' cultural association with a very wide membership including non-Igbo people". However, the language engineering aspect of SPILC's activities was handled by a specialist standing committee – the Igbo Standardization Committee (ISC), whose membership included

> lecturers of Igbo in the various institutions of higher learning, authors,
> publishers, broadcasters, teachers of Igbo in the secondary schools and

teacher training institutions, and representatives of the Ministry of Education and Information, State Schools Management Boards, and the mass media. (Ogbalu 1982: 98)

The cooperation between the government and the SPILC resulted in several linguistic projects that facilitated the enrichment of the vocabulary of Standard Igbo:

> The Federal Government through two of its agencies charged with language matters: the "National Language Centre" (NLC), and the "Nigerian Education Research Council" (NERC) have made substantial contributions to lexical modernization of Igbo through the following projects: The Primary Science Terminology Project (NLC 1979-1986); the Legislative Terminology Project (NLC 1980-1984); the Metalanguage Project (NERC 1981-1984); the Curricular Projects for Nigerian Languages in the Primary School, (NERC 1982-1984) and Teachers Training College (NERC 1975-1976; 1986); Curricular for Junior and Senior Secondary Schools (NERC 1982-1985); the Harmonized Advanced Teachers College of Education Curricula (NLC 1978); the WAZOBIA Project (NLC 1982). Between them all these projects have brought in not fewer than 20,000 words to the modern lexicon of Standard Igbo. (Emenanjo 1989: 222)

The different methods adopted in creating these new terms and enlarging the vocabulary of Standard Igbo are discussed in Section 2.5.2 below. Table 1.1 from Emenanjo (2015: 14-15) presents some landmarks in the evolution and development of Igbo.

Table 1. 1. Landmarks in the evolution and development of the Igbo language (after Emenanjo 2015)

Pre-Literate		6000 BC	Split-up of Kwa and birth of Igbo Evolution of Igbo dialects Beginning of Oral Standard Igbo

The arrival of the missionaries	The Isuama period	circa	1700 – The slave trade and birth of Isuama
			1766-7 The first Igbo wordlist
			1789-90 Equiano: Gustavus Vassa has 79 Igbo words transcribed
			1834 - Taylor and Crowther produced A Primer in Agbaja (Udi) dialect
			1841- Igbo first reduced to writing in the Roman script
			1852- Flirtation of missionaries with Isuama
			- Schön's orthography
			1861 - Schön's *Oku Ibo*
			1882 - 1st dictionary of Missionaries based on Isuama by Crowther
			1885 - Death of Isuama
			1899 - Ganot's *Grammaire Igbo*
Iconoclasm by foreign missionaries	The Union Igbo Period		Translation into Bonny and Onitsha
			1900 - Spencer's Grammar; 2 reading books and the translation of Genesis
			1904 - Ganot's Dictionary. *Azụ Ndụ*
			1905 - Archdeacon Dennis arrives Egbu. Beginning of Union Igbo
			1906 - Bible translated into Onitsha by H. H. Robinson and T. J. Dennis
			1911 - Abrogation of Nri Hegemony
			1914 - Norcote Thomas: *Anthropological Reports*…
			1923 - Publication of Dennis' Dictionary, and Union Bible
			1924 - Iwekauno, R. I. *Akụkọ Ala Obosi*
			1927 - Revision of Crowther's *Primer*

The period of radicalization of Igbo culture by SPILC	The "controversy" / the Central" Igbo period	1929 - Ward and Adams enter Igbo Linguistics - Professor Westermann's visit to Nigeria Government of Eastern Nigeria appoints him to revise Igbo orthography. Acceptance of "New" or "African" orthography in parts of Nigeria 1930 - Decision on Government Translation Bureau (x) 1932 - Adam's Grammar 1933 - *Omenuko* – the first Igbo novel - Ida Ward's visit to Ibo Country 1936 - Ward's Grammar 1941 - Ward's *Ibo dialects and the Development of a Common Language* 1942 - Igbo first taken at the Cambridge School Certificate at DMGS[12], Onitsha 1948 - Dureke – *Ịla Ọsọ Uzuakọlị* 1949 - Birth of the Society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture (SPILC) 1949 - Translation Bureau set up at Umuahia 1961 - Ọnwụ orthography approved 1966-70 The Civil War. Though few texts produced, oral Standard Igbo was stretched 1971 - Afigbo's UNN Seminar on the Problems of Igbo Language and Literature 1972 - SPILC Revival Seminar. OUP Ibadan employs an Igbo editor
The period of Igbo renaissance	The "Standard" Igbo period	1973 - Birth of the Igbo Standardization Committee 1974 - Igbo introduced at the Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri 1976 - *Ogene* and *Anyanwu*, Igbo weeklies introduced 1977 - Recommendations of the Igbo Standardization Committee 1979 - 1st Ahiajoku Lecture - Igbo at A/Level, G.C.E. Igbo taken in the 1st FSLC[13] in Anambra State 1982 - Igbo introduced as B.A./B.Ed. at UNN, Lagos and Ibadan 1990 - Death of F. C. Ogbalu 1994 - Odenigbo Lectures instituted 2001 - 1st bilingual Ahiajoku Lecture 2004 - Birth of Igbo Studies Association 2005 - Ogbalu Memorial Lectures instituted: 1st F. C. Ogbalu Memorial Lecture

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[12] Dennis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha
[13] First School Leaving Certificate

There are some mistakes in dating in Table 1.1. Firstly, the table shows that Crowther and Taylor produced a primer in Agbaja dialect in 1834. As at 1834, there is no record of missionary activities in Igboland, the first being during the first Niger expedition of 1841. Although Samuel Ajayi Crowther was part of the 1841 and 1854 expeditions, he was joined by J. C. Taylor in the 1857 expedition. As clarified in Chapter 3, Crowther and Simon Jonas produced the primer during the 1854 expedition, while during the 1857 expedition, Crowther delegated Taylor to correct the primer. So, the 1834 date given by Emenanjo (2015) is possibly a mistake. Secondly, the translation of the Bible into the Onitsha dialect was published in 1900 and not in 1923 as stated in the table, and the missionary agent involved was H. H. Dobinson and not Robinson as contained in Table 1.1. Thirdly, the Union Igbo Bible was published in 1913 and not in 1923. Besides, as mentioned above and expatiated in Chapter 3, there was a short intervening period between the Isuama Igbo period and the Union Igbo period. During this period, the missionaries decided to translate into the living dialects of Igbo rather than insist on a non-existent pan-Igbo dialect. Thus, Bible translations were done into the Bonny and the Onitsha dialects, but only the one done in the Onitsha dialect got published in 1900. Table 3.1 presents an updated picture of Bible translations into Igbo.

In sum, although the missionaries' attempts at evolving an Igbo literary standard failed, their experiments with and publications in Isuama, Onitsha and Union Igbo laid the foundation for the evolution of Central Igbo, which, in turn, had an immense influence on the current written Standard Igbo. Standard Igbo is the variety taught in schools and used in literary works. It is also the variety of Igbo in which the Igbo Catholic Bible, the Igbo Revised Edition and the Igbo New World Translation of the Bible were translated (c.f. Chapter 3).

CHAPTER 2

BIBLE TRANSLATION, EQUIVALENCE AND LANGUAGE ELABORATION

The Bible is one of the most influential books in the world today. For one, it is regarded in Judaism and Christianity as containing "the authoritative classics of their faith" (Moffatt 1934: 1). A 2010 survey reports that there are approximately "2.18 billion Christians of all ages around the world, representing nearly a third of the estimated 2010 global population of 6.9 billion" (*Global Christianity* 2011: 9). Nevertheless, in an earlier report by Gabel and Wheeler (1986: 226), it is stated that of the vast number of people who hold the Bible in high esteem,

> not one-half of one percent have read its *actual* words. For those words are in Hebrew and Greek[14], languages that only a small proportion of the world's population has ever been able to read. All others have had to depend for direct knowledge of the Bible on what a translation can communicate. (Emphasis in original)

The uses made of the Bible are profound and, sometimes, paradoxical. Riches (2000: 2-5) highlights instances of social actions taken as a result of insights got from reading the Bible. For instance, Mary John Mananzan, a Benedictine sister from the Philippines, after reading some lines of the Magnificat[15] resisted the suppression of women in the Philippines[16] and led her students on demonstrations. Bishop Dinis Sngulane, an Anglican bishop in

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[14] Although it is generally reported that the original New Testament writings were done in Greek, there are claims in some quarters (c.f. Esposito 2015: 3) that the texts were written in Aramaic and that the Greek texts are themselves translations of the Aramaic version.

[15] The text of the Magnificat is taken from the Gospel of Luke 1: 46-55

[16] Ironically, this suppression of women is also a result of Bible readings, as Riches (2000: 4) reports that "Filipina women were encouraged to be submissive and obedient to their husbands and superiors, as Mary was submissive to God's purpose in agreeing to bear the son". Another level of the irony here is that both the suppressor and the resistor drew their inspirations not just from the Bible, but specifically from the same Bible character, Mary.

Mozambique, was able to broker peace between RENAMO and FRELIMO – both militant organizations and political movements in Mozambique – by reading Matthew 5: 7 and 9 to the RENAMO and urging them to be merciful so that they would be called sons of God. Riches (2000: 6) adds that he is aware that

> the Bible has been used for purposes which for many are profoundly abhorrent, as well as in the cause of justice and liberation […] many members of the Dutch Reformed churches, which supported apartheid, sincerely believed that such policies were biblical and therefore theologically justified. At the same time, I am also aware of those engaged in the struggle against apartheid for whom the Bible was a source of moral and religious guidance and enlightenment.

These emphasize the influence of the Bible on people's lives, positive and negative, at the individual and group levels.

Perhaps because of the place the Bible holds in Christian beliefs and its influence on many peoples' lives, it is arguably the most translated literary text in history. As presented by Riches (2000: 3), about 2.5 billion copies of the Bible were distributed between 1815 and 1975. Riches (2000) also reports that over 20.7 million copies of the Bible were distributed in 1998 alone. A 2013 report by the United Bible Societies states that there are full (Old and New Testaments) translations of the Bible in 511 languages, while an additional 2139 languages have partial translations (Harrison 2015: vi). The number keeps increasing by the day as there are organizations like the Bible League International and the United Bible Societies whose mission is to translate the Bible into as many languages as possible.

Beyond individual translations into different languages, there are instances where more than one translation exists in a language. For instance, Duthie (1995: 13) reports the existence of "nearly sixty more or less different English versions of the whole Bible; plus another seventy-five of the New Testament". According to Vance (1993: 103) there has been a total of 291 translations of the Bible into English since 1611, comprising the complete Bible and translations of the NT alone. The existence of these many translations

has generated a lot of controversies over the years. In fact, Bible translation has been steeped in controversies from its earliest days (c.f. Gabel and Wheeler 1986, Metzger 2001, and Fee and Strauss 2007)).

This chapter highlights the relationship between the three major concepts used in making the claim that Bible translation has indeed facilitated the elaboration of the Igbo language, viz, Bible translation, equivalence, and language elaboration.

2.1   The Bible, Original Texts and Manuscripts: Some Clarifications

The term "Bible translation" is used here to refer to renderings or versions of the Bible in various languages. The word "Bible" is etymologically traced to the Greek plural *biblia*, the singular form of which is *biblion* "book". Thus, the Bible is a collection of books (Riches 2000: 31). Although the expression "the Bible" gives the impression of the existence of a specific text called by the term, in the present age the expression could be used to refer to what are known today as the Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible. The Christian Bible itself could refer to the Catholic Bible or the Protestant Bible. The choice of pre-modifiers, Jewish or Christian, Catholic or Protestant, depends on which books are collected in the Bible in question and the order of the books. Gabel and Wheeler (1986: 73) summarize the major differences between the different Bibles:

> the order of books in the Christian Old Testament is considerably different from the Jewish one. The Protestant Old Testament canon is identical in content to the Jewish canon, but it is split into thirty-nine rather than twenty-four books and arranged according to literary categories: history (Joshua through Esther), poetry and wisdom (Job through Songs of Solomon), and prophecy (Isaiah through Malachi). The Catholic Old Testament is somewhat longer because it contains certain books not included in the Jewish canon.

So, the Christians (Catholic and Protestant) agree on the books that make up the New Testament canon. However, about the OT, the Catholic canon includes seven more texts which are not found in the Protestant OT canon nor in the Jewish Bible. Furthermore, the Jewish Bible and the Protestant OT contain the same texts but disagree on how the different books should be categorized.

In this project, the Bible translations studied include those made from the Protestant canon as well as one made from the Catholic canon. However, the corpus of lexical items analysed is from the Protestant canon for the simple reason that four of the five full Bible translations in Igbo are of the Protestant canon. Besides, the first two full translations published in 1913 and 1988 were of the Protestant canon. It was not until 2000 that a translation of the Catholic canon was published. These older translations have been in use for a longer period, and it is, therefore, imaginable that they might have engendered some changes in the Igbo language than the relatively recent Catholic translation. Besides, the Catholic canon includes all the books of the Protestant canon, which means that in generating the corpus, I used the texts shared by both canons and ignored the extra texts contained only in the Catholic canon. The reason for this was to maintain consistency.

One point generally taken for granted in academic research on translations, especially in the linguistic approaches to translation research, is the existence of an original text from which the translation is made. The case of the Bible is peculiar at least at two levels. First, the Bible did not exist as a single text the way it is known today. Rather, the different books that constitute it existed as individual texts written on scrolls and at different times in history. Most of the books contained in the Old Testament were originally written in Hebrew and a few in Aramaic, while the books of the New Testament were originally written in Greek (Comfort 2000: 100). As reported by Gabel and Wheeler (1986), the OT canon was formed around 100 AD (p. 78) while the NT canon was formed around 400 AD (p. 80).

Secondly, the originals or autographs of the Biblical texts are all lost. What are available are manuscripts or copies made from these lost originals (Comfort 2000:99), i.e., new copies made from the copies of the original. These copies, those made from the original texts and

those made from the copies of the original texts, were written by hand, i.e. basically rewriting or copying them, and there was always bound to be a discrepancy between a copy and the copy made from it. Writing on the NT manuscripts, Fee and Strauss (2007: 113) submit that

> there are *no two manuscripts* of the New Testament that are exactly alike – even when we know that one of them is a copy of the other. The reason is that copyists made mistakes, mostly careless, but sometimes deliberate, as they tried to clarify or harmonize to a companion passage the sacred text they were copying. (Emphasis in original)

That is, many of the discrepancies were introduced because the copyists wanted to "correct" parts of the texts they were copying in order to harmonize them with other parts. The NT manuscripts are said to be riddled with many such discrepancies. However, textual critics have, over the years, worked on reconstructing the original Biblical texts, with some success. Fee and Strauss (2007: 113) explain that:

> there is near unanimous agreement among biblical scholars that the Greek text used to translate our contemporary English versions is very close to the original text of the NT. In the small percentage of passages that remain uncertain, one can be sure that the original is either in the text or is the alternative found in the footnote. So at this point the modern reader is well served.

In other words, there is some agreement among Biblical scholars on the books and chapters of the Christian Bible. The invention of printing brought some stability to the texts as printing ensures that the same text is reproduced, without mistakes. Of course, it did not stop editorial changes in the Bible, but such changes are usually explained in the prefaces or notes making the edited text easily recognized as such and not passed on otherwise.

2.2   Theory and Concept of Equivalence

The concept of equivalence has been used to define both the object of translation and the field of translation studies. However, its definition has generated a lot of controversy in translation research. Here, I highlight some of the criticisms against equivalence before justifying why I find it useful for this research. I also highlight some of the theories of equivalence that are useful for this study.

2.2.1 Definitions of Equivalence

The concept of equivalence is central in linguistic approaches to Translation Studies. It has been used not only to define the object of translation but also to delineate the field of translation research. Rabin (1958: 123), for instance, defines translation as

> a process by which a spoken or written utterance takes place in one language which is *intended* and *presumed* to convey *the same meaning* as a previously existing utterance in another language. It thus involves two distinct factors, a "meaning", or reference to some slice of reality, and the *difference between two languages* in referring to that reality. (Emphasis added)

Rabin's (1958) definition suggests that the intention of producing a translation is to convey the same meaning as found in an existing text, and that the recipients of the translation take it for granted that this meaning conveyance is successful. However, the second part of the definition cautions that this intention and assumption could be influenced by the difference between the two languages involved. Indeed, the nature of this "difference" goes beyond the languages involved (as is expatiated below). A similar definition of translation is given by Forster (1958: 1) who considers translation to be "the transference of the content of a text from one language into another, bearing in mind that we cannot always dissociate the content from the form". Like Rabin (1958), Forster (1958) emphasizes the

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movement of content across languages, and the awareness that the features (form) of the respective languages could have some marked effect on the content being conveyed. Incidentally, both Rabin's (1958) and Forster's (1958) definitions do not use the word "equivalence" nor its variant "equivalent", but other definitions of translation in the same linguistic paradigm (c.f. Nida 1964, Catford 1965, Nida and Taber 1974) indicate that Rabin's (1958) "meaning" and Forster's (1958) "content" could as well be replaced with the term "equivalence" or its variant "equivalent".

The term "equivalence in difference" was introduced by Jakobson (1959: 233-234): "Equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics. Like any receiver of verbal messages, the linguist acts as their interpreter". He observes that translation involves substituting in one language messages already existing in another language. Thus "translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes" (Jakobson 1959: 233). Jakobson (1959: 234) maintains that every conceivable idea can be expressed in any language, and that where there is a "deficiency, terminology may be qualified and amplified by loanwords or load-translations, neologisms or semantic shifts, and finally, by circumlocutions". That is, the expressions in the respective languages may not belong to the same word class or have the same syntactic structure, but the message being conveyed remains equivalent.

On his part, Catford (1965: 20), defines translation as "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL [source language]) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL [target language]). To Nida and Taber (1974: 12)[17], "[t]ranslating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style". Although Nida and Taber (1974) state that equivalence embraces meaning and style, they clearly privilege meaning over style when they state that translating "must aim primarily at 'reproducing the

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[17] This definition was earlier suggested in Nida (1964) although he does not give a direct definition of translation *per se*. He explains his approach to translation: "Instead of attempting to set up transfers from one language into another, it is both scientifically and practically more efficient (1) to reduce the source text to its structurally simplest and most semantically evident kernels, (2) to transfer the meaning from source language to receptor language on a structurally simple level, and (3) to generate the stylistically and semantically equivalent expression in the receptor language" (Nida 1964: 68).

message'" (1974: 12). Pym (2010a: 6) aptly summarises the different definitions of equivalence as:

> the idea that what we say in one language can have the same value (the same worth or function) when it is translated into another language. The relation between the source text and the translation is then one of equivalence ("equal value"), no matter whether the relation is at the level of form, function, or anything in between. Equivalence does not say that languages are the same; it just says that values can be the same.

This study adopts Pym's (2010a) description of equivalence and places the equivalent relation at the level of function, i.e., focus is on the function of the target text term *vis-à-vis* the source text term. However, before expatiating on this, it is pertinent to highlight the controversies surrounding the concept of equivalence, which the next section addresses.

2.2.2   The Problem with Equivalence

The semantic view of equivalence draws on the representational theory of meaning, which has been rejected in linguistics (Baker 2004: 65). Consequently, the treatment of equivalence as a semantic category is now seen as untenable in translation studies and other approaches to the understanding of translation/equivalence have been suggested (Baker 2004: 65). I return to these alternative models shortly.

Perhaps the most scathing critic of equivalence is Snell-Hornby (1988), who observes that the "discussion of the term *equivalence* was unleashed by an enigmatic statement in Roman Jakobson's essay" (Snell-Hornby 1988: 19, emphasis in original). The said statement is Jakobson's (1959: 233-234) declaration that: "Equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics. Like any receiver of verbal messages, the linguist acts as their interpreter". Snell-Hornby's use of the verb "unleash" indicates that Jakobson's "equivalence" has gained some widespread usage among

translation scholars. According to her, this concept has been uncritically transcoded into German as *Äquivalenz[18] in der Differenz*, "whereby however, the linguists have *not* acted as the interpreters of the verbal message concerned" (Snell-Hornby 1988: 19, emphasis in original). She further examines different conceptualizations and applications of equivalence in translation and concludes that

> equivalence is unsuitable as a basic concept in translation theory: the term *equivalence*, apart from being imprecise and ill-defined (even after a heated debate of over twenty years) presents an illusion of symmetry between languages which hardly exists beyond the level of vague approximations and which distorts the basic problems of translation. (Snell-Hornby 1988: 22)

With the foregoing, the notion of equivalence gradually became unpopular among translation scholars. Table 2.1 summarizes the evolution of this gradual erosion of equivalence in translation research:

Table 2. 1. The gradual erosion of the notion of equivalence in Translation Studies (after Baker 2004)

source text/target text	(same meaning)
source text/target text	(same effect on respective readers)
source text/target text	(same function)
target text	(independent function, specified by commission)
target text	(independent function acquired in the situation in which it is received)

Table 2.1 presents the evolution of equivalence from the idea of a target text giving the same meaning as source text; to the suggestion that the target text produce an effect on the receptor audience similar to the effect the source text had on the original source culture audience (Nida and Taber 1974: 1); to the position that the target text should have the

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[18] Snell-Hornby (1988: 17 – 18) submits that "equivalence" in English has nuanced connotations which are not shared with *Äquivalenz* in German, one of which is that the English term indicates a quantitative approximation while the German term denotes a qualitative evaluation.

same function in the target culture as the source text had in the source culture (Roberts 1985); to the belief that the function of a text in the target culture – as determined by the commission – determines the method of translation (Vermeer [1989] 2004); to the position that the function of a text is determined in the situation in which it is received (Nord 1991). One also notices the gradual shift of emphasis from the source text to the target text thereby making the source text appear almost irrelevant.

These redefinitions of the relationship between the source text and the target text and the place of the source text in translations have resulted in the call for a broader definition of translation, as illustrated in Ammann (1989: 107–108):

> On the basis of modern translation theory we can talk of "translation" when a source text (of oral or written nature) has, for a particular purpose, been used as model for the production of a text in the target culture. As translator I am also in a position to judge when a source text is unsuitable as model for a target culture text, and to propose to the client the production of a new text for that target culture. (Quoted in Koller 1995: 194)

Koller (1995) observes that this expansion of the meaning of translation would suggest that some original texts could as well be counted as translations, which raises the questions: "what does the term *translatory* imply, if it also refers to *original* text production? Or put in another way: if this is a case of translator activity, then what in the field of text production could ever constitute *non*-translatory activity?" (Koller 1995: 194, emphasis in original). He, therefore, insists that the concept of equivalence remains very useful in order to delimit the field of Translation Studies. Pym (1997: 78) supports Koller's (1995) position, for, in his words, he does not

> like the current social and political ideals of translation, because I want to name and defend the varieties and virtues of *non*translation, and because the concept of equivalence is needed to prise those two fields apart, be it only for a moment of illumination, so that we know what we're talking about.

In other words, equivalence cannot be completely dropped until a different and more convincing criterion for delimiting an act of translation and the object of Translation Studies is found.

As this research is interested in exploring how Bible translation has engendered the creation of and semantic changes in specific lexical items in Igbo and the introduction of Christian concepts into the cosmology of an erstwhile non-Christian people, there is then the need to identify these lexical units, and the concept of equivalence helps in this regard.

2.2.3 Equivalence as a Historical Paradigm: Word for Word and Sense for Sense

Although the term "equivalence" was introduced by Jakobson (1959), ideas about equivalence had existed before then. A year earlier, Forster (1958: 11) used the word "symbol" to refer to "the unit of utterance which is to be converted into the other language" (Forster 1958: 11), in other words, the unit of equivalence. He identifies three units of utterance: individual word, phrase or sentence, and the whole text (Forster 1958: 11). Forster (1958) observes that the first type is the preferred option in the translation of sacred texts, including the Bible, while the second option is applied mainly to non-sacred texts. In the third option, the words and phrases that compose it are subordinated to the whole text. This option is generally used in the translation of genres like lyric poetry and short stories. One could add that the third option foreshadowed Katharina Reiss' (1971) text-linguistic approach to translation research.

Meanwhile, as early as the 4th century AD, the idea of equivalence and the unit for identifying and describing it had bothered translators. This is seen in the dilemma of whether to translate word for word or sense for sense. Jerome ([395 AD] 2004: 23)[19], for instance, declares that "except for the case of Sacred Scriptures, where the very order of the

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[19] Jerome wrote this letter in defense of his translation of a letter sent by Pope Epiphanus to Bishop John of Jerusalem. The letter was much talked about among the clergy that Eusebius of Cremona, who could not speak Greek, requested that Jerome translate the letter into Latin for his (Eusebius') personal use. The said letter got into the hands of Jerome's detractors who accused him of not translating word for word.

words is a mystery – I render not word for word, but sense for sense" to avoid producing a translation that sounds absurd in the target language. He justifies his decision in these words:

> It is difficult, when following the lines of another, not to overshoot somewhere and arduous, when something is well put in another language, to preserve this same beauty in translation. To a degree signification is one with the very property of a word: I do not have a comparable word in my language with which to express it, and in seeking to satisfy the meaning, I take a long way around to convey barely the space of a few words. Joined to this difficulty are the twists of hyperbaton, the differences in grammatical case, the variety of rhetorical figures and, finally, what I might call the peculiar native character of the language: if I translate word by word, it sounds absurd; if out of necessity I alter something in the order or diction, I will seem to have abandoned the task of a translator. (Jerome [395] 2004: 24)

In the excerpt, Jerome ([395]2004) lists the challenges he faces because of the peculiar lexical, semantic, grammatical, stylistic and pragmatic features of the source and target languages. Hence, rather than translate with individual words as the unit of translation, he argues for translating the sense of the text instead. Despite these reasons for a sense for sense translation, Jerome maintains that he would not apply the method in the translation of Sacred Scriptures because "the very order of the words is a mystery" (Jerome [395] 2004: 23). In other words, not maintaining the exact order of the words in the target text has the potential of distorting the message or impinging on its sacredness. It is, however, doubtful whether Jerome indeed maintains this word for word translation in his translation of the Vulgate[20], for Comfort (2000:105) suggests otherwise, i.e., that Jerome did sense for sense translation in parts of the Vulgate.

The position that sense for sense translation is not good for translating Scriptures was, however, overtly challenged by Martin Luther in his translation of the Bible into German.

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[20] The Vulgate is said to be Jerome's translation of the Bible from the Hebrew and Greek into Latin. It is called Vulgate "because it was in the language of the *vulgus*, the common people of Rome" (Gabel and Wheeler 1986: 226)

Nonetheless, Luther was criticized by some bishops for his translation method. In his defence, Luther insisted that his translation was meant for the receiving culture and not the culture of the source language. So, a word for word translation would not have made sense to his audience, as he explained in this excerpt:

> What they can't see is that it[21] fits the meaning of the text, and if you want to translate it into strong and clear German, you've got to put it in there. You see, I wanted to speak German, not Latin or Greek, since German was the language I was translating into. (Luther [1530] 2002: 86)

For his audience to get the sense of the text, he as translator must present it in the current, natural language and not bend it to reflect the source language in his bid to retain the words of the source language, or to avoid adding extra information to the source text. To get the right idiom, Luther insists that one must

> go out and ask the mother in her house, the children in the street, the ordinary man at the market. Watch their mouths move when [they] talk, and translate that way. Then they'll understand you and realize that you're speaking *German* to them. (Luther [1530] 2002: 86, emphasis in original)

Nevertheless, Luther does not insist on sense for sense translation in all instances. He maintains that he and his assistants "studied them [the texts of the Scriptures] very carefully, so that when a lot seemed to be riding on a passage, I stuck to the letter and didn't deviate from it quite so freely", and that he would rather "do violence to the German language than to stray from the word" (Luther [1530] 2002: 88). The idea here is that he first understands the message of the source text, and then transfers that message into the form of the target language. Maintaining the syntactic pattern of the source language in the translation only becomes necessary when not doing so would change the meaning of the text.

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[21] Luther's letter is a response to his critics who oppose his inserting the German word *allein* "alone" in his translation of Romans 3: 28, whereby the word is not in the Latin version. The pronoun "it" in the quote refers to the inserted word a*llein*

The implication of Luther's strategy is that it shifted attention from the source text and source culture to the target language and target culture. He de-emphasizes the place of the source text in the translation and emphasizes the place of the target language in the translation. This laid the foundation for later theorizations on translation that resulted in the so-called "dethronement" of the source text as seen in Vermeer's ([1989] 2004) *Skopostheorie*, and the gradual erosion of the concept of equivalence as highlighted above. It is ironic that such a shift was introduced by Bible translators, considering that the translators normally believe the Bible to be God's word and so are very sensitive and cautious not to change the content.

So, even though the term "equivalence" is not overtly used by Jerome ([395] 2004) and Luther ([1530] 2002), or by other translation scholars prior to Jakobson (1959, c.f. Nicolas Perrot D'Ablancourt [1640] 2004 and John Dryden [1680] 2004), the dilemma of whether to translate the word or the sense of the text in question is a search for equivalence. It is a search for the unit of translation that would enable the translator to adequately convey the message of the source text. The problem was where to locate the value to be conveyed, on the individual words (word for word) or on a group of words that front an idea (sense for sense).

Very importantly, although Jerome and Luther may not be translation scholars *per se* since they had their professions as clergymen and translation was what they did in passing, their reflections on translations, both given as responses to critics of their translations, were illuminating and formed the foundation on which future translation scholars would build.

2.2.4 Formal and Dynamic Equivalence

As mentioned above, Jakobson (1959) introduced the term "equivalence in difference" in translation research. However, Eugene Nida (1964) expanded the concept of equivalence by distinguishing between formal and dynamic equivalence. According to him, formal equivalence focuses attention on the form and content of the message. In formal

equivalence, the translator produces a message that matches "as closely as possible the different elements in the source language". Thus, "the message in the receptor culture is constantly compared with the message in the source culture to determine standards of accuracy and correctness" (Nida 1964: 159). An example of such a translation given by Nida (1964: 159) is "a rendering of some Medieval French text into English, intended for students of certain aspects of early French literature not requiring a knowledge of the original language of the text". Such a translation would require "a relatively close approximation to the structure of the early French text, both as to form (e.g. syntax and idioms) and content (e.g. themes and concepts) [as well as] numerous footnotes in order to make the text fully comprehensible" (Nida 1964: 159). In a way, Nida's formal equivalence is similar to Jerome's word for word translation.

On its part, dynamic equivalence is based on the principle of equivalent effect (Nida 1964). Here, the translator tries to produce a text that has an effect on the receptor audience that is similar to the effect the source text has on the source audience. This kind of translation "aims at complete naturalness of expression, and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behaviour relevant within the context of his own culture" (Nida 1964: 159). Understanding the cultural patterns of the source language contexts is not important, rather, what should matter is the cultural patterns of the receptor language. An instance of such a translation, according to Nida (1964:160), is J. B. Phillips rendering of Psalm 16: 16 as "give one another a hearty handshake all around", in contrast to "greet one another with a holy kiss" as rendered in the KJB. Incidentally, as observed by Waard and Nida (1986: 7-8), the term "dynamic equivalence" has "been misunderstood as referring to anything which might have special impact and appeal for receptors". So, they replace it with "functional equivalence", although they insist that there is nothing essentially different between the two terms. Both terms are thus used interchangeably in this study.

The distinction between formal and dynamic equivalence is better appreciated within the framework of Nida and Taber's (1974) definition of translation cited above: "[t]ranslating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the *closest natural equivalent* of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (Nida and

Taber 1974: 12, emphasis added). The choice of "receptor language" as against "target language" (c.f. Catford1965: 20) is hinged on the desire to

> emphasize the fact that the message must be decoded by those who receive it. One does not merely shoot the communication at a target. Rather, the communication must be received, and this process is crucial in evaluating the adequacy of a translation. (Nida 1969: 484)

Here, Nida (1969) sees translation, especially Bible translation, as a form of communication that has a source and a receptor. The role of the receptor in the communication process is equally, if not more important than that of the source text. Thus, the "closest natural equivalent" should elicit from a native speaker of the receptor language the statement: "this is just the way we would say it" (Nida 1964: 166). He clarifies that *equivalent* points toward the source-language message, *natural* points towards the receptor language, while *closest* binds the two orientations together based on the highest degree of approximation. Since dynamic equivalent translation is concerned more with equivalence of response than equivalence of form, Nida (1964) clarifies the three areas the word "natural" is applied to so as to elicit such a response: "a natural rendering must fit (1) the receptor language and culture as a whole, (2) the context of the particular message, and (3) the receptor-language audience" (Nida 1964: 167).

It could be observed that, in a way, dynamic or functional equivalence is similar to Jerome's ([395] 2004) and Luther's ([1530] 2002) sense for sense translation. Just as Luther ([1530] 2002) insists on not retaining the lexical and syntactic forms of the source text, Nida (1964: 167) maintains that dynamic equivalence involves grammatical and lexical adaptation. Grammatical adjustment involves maintaining the syntax of the receptor language, rather than adjusting it to reflect that of the source language. This involves shifting word order, replacing verbs with nouns and vice versa, etc. Lexical adaptation, on its part, involves three levels of lexical items: terms with readily available parallels in the receptor language, terms that identify culturally different items but have similar functions, and terms that identify cultural specialties, i.e. items that are found in the source culture but not in the receptor culture. The first set of terms does not pose any problem to the translator. It is the

second and third groups that would require a lot of cultural adaptations. This study focuses attention on lexical items that fall under the last two groups because their use as equivalents of the ST words involves some lexical and semantic changes, which are instances of language elaboration. Thus, they are cultural adaptations of Igbo concepts and lexical items to represent Christian or Biblical concepts. Hence, it is necessary that I expatiate on cultural adaptation, especially as it affects Bible translation. However, before I do that, I would like to highlight Anthony Pym's (2009, 2010a and 2010b) contribution to the meta-discussion of equivalence, for I find some of his insights very useful in the analysis.

2.2.5   Natural Equivalence and Directional Equivalence

Pym's (2009, 2010a and 2010b) distinction between natural and directional equivalence emerges from his analysis of the meta-language of translation, especially theorizations on equivalence. Unlike Nida (1964) whose postulations are more prescriptive in that they are meant to help translators (especially of the Bible) in the act of translation, Pym's (2010a and 2010b) views are rather descriptive of the existing postulations on equivalence.

For Pym (2010a:12), natural equivalence refers to "what different languages and cultures seem to produce from within their own systems" as against what is created from translation. It is termed "natural" because "it is assumed to exist before the translator's intervention" (Pym 2010b: 2). Pym (2010a: 12) illustrates this with the report of Vinay and Dabelnet (1958) on the Canadian French versions of some bilingual (English-French) road signs in Canada. They report that the Canadian French versions, which are translations of the English versions, are different from what is normally seen in France, i.e., the French French versions or terms for the same ideas. For instance, *lentement* is given in one of the road signs as the Canadian French equivalent of "slow", instead of French French *ralentir*. Consequently, Vinay and Dabelnet (1958: 19) submit that

No monolingual speaker of French would ever have come straight out with the phrase, nor would they have sprayed paint all over the road for the sake of a long adverb ending in – MENT. Here we reach a key point, a sort of turning lock between two languages. But of course – parbleu! – instead of LENTEMENT [adverb, as in English] it should have been RALENTIR [verb in the infinitive, as in France]! (Quoted in Pym 2010a: 12)

Here, *ralentir* is the natural equivalent of "slow" and not *lentement* which was created from translation. A back-translation of a natural equivalent would give the same source text word. Thus, natural equivalence is non-directional (Pym 2009: 89) and/or reciprocal (Pym 2010a: 12). That is, in whatever direction the translation goes, from language A to language B, and back to language A, the same terms would be supplied as equivalents of the other terms. In other words, the test for natural equivalence is back-translation.

As opposed to natural equivalence, directional equivalence lacks the ability of reciprocity. For such, back-translating the word from the target language to the source language would result in a term different from the original source text word. Consequently, Pym (2010a: 25) submits that "*directionality* is a key feature of translational equivalence, and that translations are thus the results of active *decisions* made by translators" (emphasis in original). The conceptualization of the target text word as having an equal or similar value as the source text word does not happen naturally. Rather, the word takes that status because the translator has ascribed it such during translation. The relation between the source text and the target text is asymmetrical because "equivalence is located on one side more than the other".

As mentioned in the preceding section, Nida's (1964) notion of dynamic equivalence involves three levels of lexical adaptation. Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between Nida's (1964) levels of lexical adaptation and Pym's (2010a) notions of natural and directional equivalence. Nida's (1964) first level of lexical adaptation does not present any challenge to the Bible translator because there are readily available terms in the target language for the source text words. Hence, the equivalence relations between the source and target texts terms fall under Pym's (2010a) natural equivalence. There is little or no

adaptation of the target text word to make it function as the equivalent of the source text word, which means that the meaning of the target text word does not change. On the contrary, the other two levels of lexical adaptation involve source and target texts terms that have, *ab initio*, some marked differences in meaning or referents. As such, using them as equivalent items results in some changes in the meanings or referents of the target text terms. Thus, they belong to Pym's (2010a) directional equivalence.
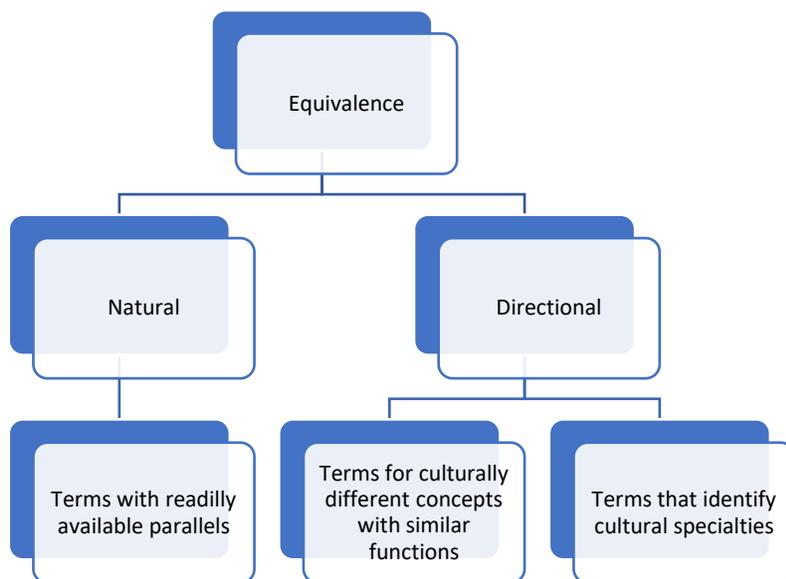
Figure 2. 1. Levels of lexical adaptation vs natural and directional equivalence (after Oyali forthcoming)

Pym's (2010a) concepts of natural and directional equivalence clarify the relationship between equivalence on the one hand, and lexical and conceptual innovation on the other. When a translator translates a text containing information that is new to the receiving culture, the kind of equivalence they use cannot be natural, since the ideas are new in the culture (Pym 2010a: 21). Thus, directional equivalence engenders not only conceptual enrichment by introducing new ideas into the receiving culture, but also lexical enrichment because it emphasizes the fact that an existing word has been given new signification, or that some new word has been added into the language via the translation. The de-emphasis

of the source text in directional equivalence gives the translator more room to exploit the creative resources in the receptor language to serve the desired purpose. This study explores new words and concepts added through directional equivalence in the Igbo language.

Pym's (2010a) concepts of natural and directional equivalence highlight a fundamental aspect of Nida's (1964) dynamic equivalence and its search for natural equivalence. To him, claims of "natural equivalence" where a translation brings a new way of thought to a culture are "fundamentally deceptive, and quite possibly imperialistic" (Pym 2010a: 21). He asks rhetorically

> Can Nida really pretend that the Christian God was already in the countless non-Christian cultures into whose languages the Bible is translated? When the "lamb of God" becomes a "seal of God" for Inuit readers[22], the New Testament quite simply ceases to refer to first-century Palestine. (Pym 2010a: 21)

The point here is that Nida's (1964) use of "natural equivalence" gives the impression that the new signification given to "seal" in its use in the Bible had existed even before the Bible was introduced to the Inuit. This makes the NT, where this phrase is used, the story of the 21st century Inuit and not of the first-century Palestine. The same applies to the terms used for the Christian God in erstwhile non-Christian cultures, terms that becloud the fact that monotheism might not have been the people's practice before the advent of Christianity[23]. The use of *Chineke* for "God" in the IBTs gives the impression that the Igbo were monotheistic before the arrival of Christian missionaries, but Oyali (2016) shows that the idea of a Supreme God among the Igbo came with the missionaries (also see Chapter 5). So, while Nida's (1964) concept of natural equivalence makes this cultural assimilation and

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[22] This is a famous example of Nida's dynamic equivalence, whereby "Lamb of God" (symbolizing innocence) is translated as "seal of God" for the Inuit who are unfamiliar with lamb (Snell-Hornby 2006: 25). Since the goal of dynamic equivalence is to evoke equivalent effect and the Inuit are not familiar with lamb, the seal is used instead to evoke the same effect – innocence.

[23] Richardson (1984) is an extensive study of how different non-Christian cultures around the world have concepts that mirror certain aspects of the Judeo-Christian teachings, which could be used as entry points for evangelism; that is, these non-Christian concepts can be explained as misunderstandings of the Christian teachings, the Christian viewpoint hereby presented as the correct viewpoint.

inherent imperialism obscure, Pym (2010a) would rather group such translations as directional, not natural, thereby exposing the asymmetrical power relations between the source language and culture and the receptor language and culture.

2.3   Cultural Appropriation in Bible Translation

Appropriating cultures is an ideological move that has been employed in varying degrees in translations (c.f. Knight 2002 and Fernández 2013). However, its overwhelming application in Bible translation is remarkable, a practice that could be attributed to the status of Bible translations in Christianity. In Christianity, translations of the Bible into any language have the same status as sacred, irrespective of the source text from which they are made, or the strategies adopted. This is different from what obtains in the translation of the Quran and the Hebrew Bible in Islam and Judaism respectively. In Islam, for instance, only the original Arabic version of the Quran is considered sacred. While converts to Christianity are not required to read the Bible in its original languages of Hebrew and Greek, the situation is different in Islam, as illustrated by Stine (2004: 14):

> Converts to Islam, whatever their culture or language, must learn to read and recite the Qur'an in Arabic, even if they do not understand what they are learning. The entire theological vocabulary, including the divine name, is in a foreign language.

The Qur'an in other languages is not perceived as being equally sacred as the Arabic version. Stine (2004) observes that this stance of Islam alienates converts in a way, as enunciated in the following narrative:

> A number of years ago in Mali, a young man, a former Muslim, recounted his conversion to Christianity. He had been selected to undertake university studies in Russia, and on one leg of the trip to Moscow he found himself sitting with two native Arabic speakers. Eager to impress them with his

devotion, he recited for them prayers he had learned in the Qur'anic schools. Totally unable to understand his Arabic, the two native speakers told him that he was pronouncing the words of the prayers and Scriptures incorrectly. The student arrived in Moscow with his faith shattered, for he had always been taught that Allah would hear him only if the pronunciation were correct. All the prayers he had recited over the years had therefore been in vain! (Stine 2004: 14 – 15)

The Christian convert is not subjected to such an experience. Similarly, in Judaism, translations of the Torah are perceived only as "aids to comprehension" and are not supposed to be used as texts in their own right (Mühleisen 2009: 467). In contrast to this, the Bible in whatever language it is translated into is accorded equal status as sacred.

This position of Bible translation in Christianity could in turn be traced to the beginning of Christianity as a religion, where translation played a significant role. In the first place, Jesus and his disciples spoke Aramaic, but the Gospels were first written in Greek, which indicates that the sayings of Jesus were written in translation. Secondly, as noted in Oyali (2016: 160fn), the texts of the OT (originally written in Hebrew) freely quoted in the NT (originally written in Greek) were quoted in translation. Hence, Christianity is described by Stine (2004: 14) as a "translated religion", which, by implication, means that "it must be translatable". Stine (2004: 14) adds that

> Christians do not turn to Bethlehem or Jerusalem for spiritual guidance. They do not have to learn new terms for spiritual and theological concepts. Instead, vernacular translations of the Bible have adopted indigenous terms, concepts, and customs.

This indigenization apparently hinges on the belief by early Christians that God is not partial against any linguistic or cultural group, for "the 'many tongues' of Pentecost demonstrate that God accepts all cultures within the scheme of salvation" (Sanneh 2009: 53). Consequently,

Christianity broke free from its exclusive Judaic frame and, taking a radical turn, it adopted Hellenic culture to the point of complete assimilation. Christian thought was Greek thought. In the expansion of mission beyond Rome and Byzantium, we find evidence of how that cultural captivity was challenged. (Sanneh 2009: 56)

Christian beliefs and teachings are thus introduced into other cultures by appropriating aspects of the receiving cultures.

Whereas the practice of cultural appropriation in Bible translation predates Nida (1964), his concept of dynamic equivalence nonetheless seems to have given it more impetus. Stine (2004) observes that Bible translation before Nida (1964) tilted more towards literalism, such that the translations conformed closely to the form of Hebrew or Greek or the European language from which it was translated. This made the Bible difficult to understand, as "[p]reachers spent entire sermons explaining the meaning of the Biblical texts. Access to the Bible was therefore still limited to those who had received some biblical or theological training, most often from missionaries" (Stine 2009: 26). However, the situation has changed since Nida's (1964) introduction of functional equivalence.

A key outcome of cultural appropriation in Bible translations is that it makes the message of the Bible no longer appear foreign to the receptor culture. Stine (2004: 13) attributes the dying out of Christianity in North Africa and Nubia and its survival and flourish in Egypt and Ethiopia to the existence of Bible translations in the indigenous languages of the latter and the absence of such in the former. Sanneh (2009) cites the case of Carthage in present-day Tunisia whose population was exposed to Christianity. The Christian priests and bishops learnt Punic, the indigenous language of Carthage in order to evangelize to the population. However, the Bible was not translated into Punic, which had some negative consequences for the survival of Christianity in the community as outlined below by Sanneh (2009: 78):

[the failure] to produce a Punic version of the Bible was an ill omen for the church in North Africa, for it left the indigenous population excluded from

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any meaningful role in Christianity [...] Without the native Scriptures, the local populations considered the church to be an instrument of foreign domination and were as a result alienated from the Romanized Christians. When Islam spread into the region in the seventh century, it encountered only the echo of a long-spent force, which it proceeded swiftly to put to rout.

Tied to this is the improved prestige a language acquires when the Bible is translated into it. The Bible is seen as the word of God and making a language to convey God's word evokes some pride in the speakers. Bible translation thus becomes a marker of identity and pride. Harrison (2015: vii) cites the case of Mokilese, whose speakers could all speak a sister language, Pohnpeian. However, they desire a Bible in their language, which, in Harrison's (2015: viii) words, "will bring prestige and respect for Mokilese, both within the community and without". Beerle-Moor and Voinov (2015: 10) also cite the case of languages in Brazil and Papua New Guinea that were on the brink of extinction until the Bible was translated into them. Consequently, "coming to believe the message of the Bible improved the dignity and self-esteem of the language bearers, many of whom had previously been subject to a poor self-image due to denigration by majority ethnic groups surrounding them" (Beerle-Moor and Voinov 2015: 10).

Although translating the Bible into Igbo may not have been an effort to improve the prestige of the language per se, the appropriation of concepts from Igbo traditional religious practices gives the impression that the Christian concepts so represented in Igbo were an integral part of the Igbo cultural practices. Thus, Christianity is no longer perceived as a foreign religion, and Christian values now expressed in Igbo are inadvertently perceived as part of the Igbo cosmology prior to the advent of Christian missionaries. As demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 7, the pejorative meaning given to an Igbo heroic and trickster deity *Ekwensu* in its use to represent the Christian Devil resulted in many families that bore *Ekwensu* as surname changing their name, while communities and schools named after the deity were also renamed. The point is that the pejorative associations of the deity in its use to represent a negative Christian deity has changed the Igbo perception of the cultural icon. The Christian appropriation of *Ekwensu* is now the

prevailing conceptualization of the deity in Igbo. The fact that a whole clan would change the name of the clan is an indication that Christians and non-Christian's alike now conceptualize *Ekwensu* in a negative light, thereby making the erstwhile Christian concept of Devil an integral part of the Igbo culture.

2.3.1 Cultural Appropriation and Directness of Translation

The degree of cultural appropriation in Bible translations becomes heightened when it is considered that most translations of the Bible in modern times are not done directly from the Biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek, but from intermediate languages like English, French, Latin, among others. This is called "indirect translation", defined in Alvstad and Rosa (2015:19) as "a translation resorting to intermediate texts in a language other than the source or target languages". Incidentally, this practice of translating translations of the Bible is also not a recent trend. Gabel and Wheeler (2013: 226 - 227) observe that the Septuagint, a rendering of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, became "the source from which the earliest Latin versions of the OT were made, and it was a strong influence on the Latin version produced by Jerome in the fourth century A.D." The Latin versions in turn became the source text from which translations into many European languages were made, e.g., Luther's translation into German was done from the Latin version. Interestingly, as shown in the next chapter, all the Igbo Bible translations were made mainly from English based source texts.

The implication of this is that the more intermediate versions there are between the original Bible manuscripts and a modern-day translation, the more striking the level of appropriation involved. Although this study is not concerned with the theology of the translations, or with the quality of the translations, it suffices to mention that the fact that many Bible translations into African languages have been indirect translations has been a source of concern in some quarters. For example, Mojola (2004: iii) insists that "African languages and cultures are closer to the cultures of the ancient Biblical worlds than are, for

example, European languages and cultures". Consequently, "basing an African translation [of the Bible] on a European version is likely to introduce more translational difficulties and distortions than would result by working from the original source-text". Two illustrations would suffice here. Firstly, Forster (1958: 17) observes that the Biblical Greeks and Romans would normally *recline* at table while eating, but 17th century French translators of the Bible made them *sit* at table instead. The KJB also used "sit at table" (c.f. John 12: 2). The point is that in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period, people sat at table (Forster 1958: 18). Consequently, since their source texts were not texts in the original Biblical languages, but English-based translations, it is not surprising that all the translations into Igbo use Igbo equivalents of "sit at table" as well. Secondly, the expression "summer and winter" in the KJB evokes images of two of the four seasons experienced in temperate Western Europe. Thus, an unsuspecting reader would interpret it that Biblical Israel also had the four seasons of Europe. However, Israel has only two seasons (Esposito 2015: 18). Because of this, the translators of the Bible into Igbo apparently had the four seasons in Europe in mind when they translated "summer" and "winter" into the tropical Igbo culture (c.f. Section 4.1.1.5).

2.4   Translation and Power Relations

The degree of cultural appropriation especially in Bible translation is also a reflection of the power relations between the source and receiving languages. Pym (2010a) alludes to this when he observes that prior to the Renaissance, European theorizing hardly saw languages as having equal value:

> Much of medieval thinking assumed a **hierarchy of languages**, where some were considered intrinsically better than others. At the top were the languages of divine inspiration (Biblical Hebrew, New Testament Greek, Arabic, sometimes Sanskrit), then the languages of divinely inspired translation (the Greek of the Septuagint, the Latin of the Vulgate), then the

national vernaculars, then the patois or regional dialects. (Pym 2010a: 22, emphasis in original)

Translation was thus seen as a way of enriching the languages on the lower rung of the hierarchy with values from languages on the higher rung, which explains why there were more translations downward the hierarchy from Hebrew or Greek to Latin, or from Latin to the vernaculars.

This supposedly intrinsic value of languages is appraised by the kind of information they are made to convey. Pym's (2010a) hierarchy above suggests that this value lies in the perceived connection of the language with divinity: at the top of the hierarchy are languages perceived to be divinely inspired, followed by those into which divinely inspired texts have been translated. Forster (1958) would rather talk about the resources of languages based on their use as vehicles for intellectual discussion. In Western Europe, Latin was the language of intellectual and philosophical discussion, and "the vernaculars had no fixed terms to designate, for instance, certain philosophical concepts which were the commonplaces of schools". The creation of new nations increased the statuses of the vernacular languages and thus resisted the dominance of Latin:

> In the years after 1919, when languages which until then had virtually only been spoken by peasants became the vehicle of national culture, legal, political, philosophical and scientific discussion, which had previously been carried on in either Russian or German, had now to be conducted in, for instance, Lithuanian, Estonian or Lettish, languages whose literary tradition was that of folklore and whose scientific and philosophical resources were practically non-existent. (Forster 1958: 8)

Consequently, there was the need to devise a vast new terminology for these languages and the function of bringing them up to date intellectually was in the hands of translators. In other words, the less powerful languages, i.e., languages that did not have scientific and philosophical resources, relied on translations from the more powerful languages for vocabulary enrichment.

The determination of the value of a language also goes beyond their association with divinity and the resources they are said to possess. It could simply be a case of the asymmetrical power relations between different cultures, members of these cultural groups and the languages they speak. This is the situation in colonial settings like India and Nigeria where English, being the language of the colonizer, has a higher social power than the languages of the colonized people. The official status of English in these settings now makes the languages of the colonized people minority languages. It is then not surprising that most studies of translations in minority languages "tend to be languages that are in contact with English: Irish in Ireland, Scots in Scotland, and French in Canada – a non-minority language that nevertheless occupies a minority position" (Branchadell 2005: 4). The mention of French as a minority language in this context emphasizes the place of context in this discussion. While French might not be a minority language especially in France and with its large population of speakers around the world, it is a minority language in Canada. Similarly, while English is a major language in the world, it is a minority language in Cameroon[24]. Furthermore, this asymmetry in power is demonstrated in Chan's (2000) application of postcolonial translation theory to China even though China never experienced colonialism per se. The key factor here is that the minority languages are subordinate to the major ones. The case of China is seen in its position "in relation to existing modes of interpreting reality" (Simon 2000: 18), the reality in this context being postcolonial theories[25]. China's subordination in this context is then more political and cultural than colonial[26].

The power relations between English and Igbo could be seen at different levels. When the early Christian missionaries arrived Igboland in the first half of the 19th century, they met a

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[24] Anchimbe (2016) notes that Cameroon was a colony of Germany, but after WW1, Germany was ousted and Cameroon was split between France and England, resulting in the emergence of francophone and anglophone Cameroon. According to Anchimbe (2016: 513), "[t]he anglophones occupy only two of the ten administrative regions, corresponding, according to the 2010 census projections, to 16.5% of the national population of 19 million people. From the population sizes of these two groups, the anglophones have always been the minority". So, French is the major language in Cameroon and English a minority language.
[25] Chan (2000) submits that the application of postcolonial theories to translations in China is akin to that in colonized contexts.
[26] Chan (2000: 53) admits that some parts of China came under foreign powers, like Hong Kong ceded to Britain and Taiwan colonized by the Dutch and the Japanese, but this was not the case with "mainland China, where the majority of translations are still carried out and published".

people whose language served as a vehicle for intellectual discussions. The philosophy of the new religion, Christianity, was different and so translation served as the method of transferring this new intellectual tradition. English was at the time a minority language among the Igbo as very few people, those exposed to Christianity and western education, spoke it. Most missionary schools were run in Igbo. However, the enactment of the 1882 education ordinance changed the power relations between English and Igbo as English was now favoured by the missionaries. This is reinforced, on the one hand, by the Christian's act of giving pejorative meanings, at times forcefully, to Igbo traditional religious practices, thereby making Christian converts to avoid associations with the traditional practices. Conversion translated to getting exposed to English, and English thus became an index of a Christian identity. On the other hand, it is strengthened by colonialism, which invariably imposed English on the colonized population, a situation that has prevailed up till date as English is the major official language of Nigeria. Simon (2000:10) aptly captures the outcome of translations in colonial times:

> Translations during the colonial period, we know, were an expression of the cultural power of the colonizer. Missionaries, anthropologists, learned Orientalists chose to translate the texts which corresponded to the image of the subjugated world which they wished to construct. Translations materialized modes of interpretation whose terms were rarely questioned.

This situation is replicated in Bible translations into Igbo during the missionary period. As expatiated in Oyali (2016) and in chapter 5, while the Igbo had their own conceptualizations of the spiritual, this was markedly different from the teachings of Christianity as embedded in the Bible. For instance, the Christian concept of the Supreme God was foreign to the Igbo people. Translating the Bible into Igbo thus created the need to have a term for this concept in Igbo. Although the missionaries used existing Igbo terms for the Christian God, the meanings given to the terms are markedly different from their earlier, pre-Christian meanings. In other words, the missionaries mapped their conceptualization of deities onto the Igbo conceptualization, thereby changing the

cosmology of the Igbo, and this change has endured and is reproduced in subsequent translations of the Bible into Igbo.

Nonetheless, this did not go without some resistance from the Igbo. As elaborated in the next chapter, many Igbo Christian converts resisted some of the decisions of the missionaries, but their voices were suppressed by those of the European missionaries in positions of authority. With Nigeria's attainment of independence in October 1960, a new set of IBTs were done, this time by native Igbo Christians with little or no external influence. Chapter 6 points up some lexical and graphological changes made in these translations by native Igbo agents, which are an attempt to reclaim the Igbo language as used in the missionaries' translations and present the language the way Igbo speakers would want it. In other words, the IBTs become a site for resisting the missionaries' construction of the language and for nationalism.

Furthermore, the asymmetrical power relations between English and Igbo is seen in the fact that religious translations are done more from English into Igbo and hardly the other way around (c.f. Oyali 2017a). It is also not a coincidence that all the IBTs were done from English based source texts. Commenting on the power play seen in the direction of translations between more powerful and less powerful languages, Mühleisen (2010: 260) notes that:

> [t]he English language has an exceptional status here in that it has become such an overwhelming power player in the world of languages that it is not even deemed necessary to translate other languages into it – the expectation is that general-purpose, scholarly and recently to an increasing extent even literary texts are produced in English in the original publication.

Adejunmobi (1998: 165) calls this type of writing "compositional translation", used to refer to "texts which are published in European languages and which contain occasional or sustained modifications of the conventions of the European language in use, where 'versions' or 'originals' in indigenous African languages are non-existent". An example of a text in this category is Achebe's *Things Fall Apart.* Oyali (2010) also observes that some Igbo folklore existing in Igbo in the oral

medium, were first written down in English. This power of English has been so expanded in the case of the Bible that English versions of the Bible have now become the source texts for subsequent translations of the Bible into other languages, as is the case with translations into Igbo.

2.5   Language Elaboration

The discussion so far suggests that translation enhances the creation of new terms and concepts in the receptor language, which generally results in language change. However, there is the need to further conceptualize the linguistic and cultural impact of translations in the receptor culture and language. In this regard, I find the concept of language elaboration very useful.

Incidentally, the concept of language elaboration is one developed in the literature on language planning, especially in discussions built around Haugen's ([1966] 1972 and 1983) model. Haugen ([1966] 1972: 252) isolated "four aspects of language development [...] as crucial features in taking the step from 'dialect' to 'language', from 'vernacular' to 'standard'". Bamgbose (2004: 74) summarizes the four stages in Haugen's (1966) model thus:

1. *selection of a norm* (one of a number of competing languages, modification of an existing language variety or creation of a new standard),
2. *codification of form* (establishing the selected norm by adopting an appropriate script, devising an orthography and linguistic description),
3. *elaboration of function* (expanding the language to cope with use in wider domains, particularly vocabulary expansion) and
4. *acceptance by the community* (stamp of authority on the selected norm by the government).

In his revision of the model, Haugen (1983) places elaboration at the fourth stage. Here, he defines elaboration as the "continued implementation of a norm to meet the functions of a modern world" (1983: 273). By "implementation", or acceptance in the original version, he means "the activity of a writer, an institution, a government in adopting and attempting to spread the language form that has been selected and codified", and this activity includes "producing books, pamphlets, newspapers, and textbooks in the language" (1983: 272). So, language elaboration involves steps taken to spread a (dialect of a) language that has already undergone codification.

Language elaboration is used in this study in an expanded sense to embrace aspects of Haugen' (1966, 1983) codification. For one, expanding the vocabulary of a language involves establishing the form of the innovated terms, like their word classes as well as their correct spellings. This is more so for oral languages that are being codified and with little or no existing scientific descriptions, as was the case with Igbo during the missionary period of Bible translation. Consequently, the term "language elaboration" is used here in two senses. The first is elaboration of function, whereby the language is given a new function by using it to express ideas in domains it was not used before. The second is expansion of lexicon and meaning, which entails creating new lexical forms to give new meanings or changing the meaning of existing lexical items to accommodate new meanings, all geared towards making the language function adequately in its new role. Two types of semantic elaboration are meant here: 1) semantic elaboration introduced by the Bible translators, and 2) semantic elaboration done by the language users (expatiated shortly).

The use of the expression 'language elaboration' here incorporates language modernization (Nwachukwu 1983, Emenanjo 1991) and language engineering (Emenanjo 1985). However, it differs from these terms in that it is also interested in the "life" of the innovated terms. As Haugen (1983: 269-270) clarifies, the steps in his model "are starting points, since they say nothing about the end points, the goals to be reached, or the ideals and motivations that guide planners". The point is that sometimes, innovated terms acquire new or nuanced meanings, or shed some of their innovated meanings as they spread among different speakers. Although this might not be part of the intentions of the agents

that initiated the elaboration process, in this case Bible translators, it is still an outcome of their activities, i.e., they started the process of lexical and semantic elaboration, which the speakers of the language built on. So, the investigation of language elaboration in this study includes exploring the spread of the lexical and semantic innovations among speakers of the language, whether they get used by non-specialists or non-academics or end up only as reference terms in the Bible, and whether there is some discrepancy between the planned outcome and the actual outcome. Figure 2.2 presents the relationship between language elaboration as used in this study and Bible translation. It shows how functional elaboration results in lexical and semantic elaboration.
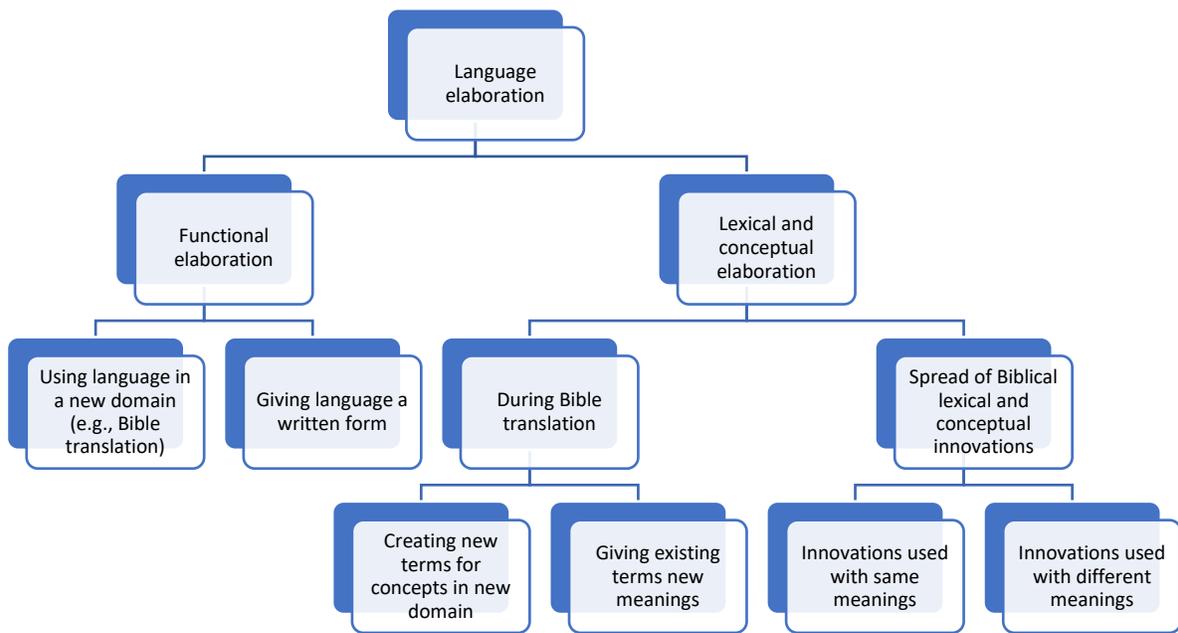
Figure 2. 2. A model for Bible translation and language elaboration

Figure 2.2 identifies the two forms of language elaboration explored in this study, namely 1) functional elaboration, and 2) lexical and conceptual elaboration. Functional elaboration involves using the language in a new domain, e.g., Bible translation, and, for languages that do not yet have a written form, giving the language a written form for. The second form of language elaboration results from the first one, i.e., the functional elaboration engenders

the lexical and conceptual innovations in order to cater for the dearth of terms for concepts in the new domain. This generally happens at two levels. Firstly, during Bible translation, many new terms are created, and existing terms used with different meanings in the new domain. Secondly, in the course of use by speakers of the language, these lexical and conceptual innovations sometimes evolve new meanings or get used creatively beyond the innovations in the Bible translations. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 explore the innovations done during Bible translation into Igbo, while Chapter 7 investigate the spread of the innovations among Igbo speakers.

2.5.1 Previous Studies of the Elaboration of Igbo

It is remarkable that studies of the elaboration of Igbo are generally silent on the contributions of Christian institutions. One would expect that Emenanjo (1991), for instance, would at least mention the contribution of Christian institutions to the elaboration of Igbo. This is especially because his report also has a historical dimension and highlights language planning activities in Nigeria by both government and non-government agencies. His description of a typical language planning agency (LPA) in Nigeria covers individuals and institutions found in Christian organizations:

> A typical LPA in Nigeria is a cooperative venture between government and the speakers of the language. Because it operates within given government directives, it holds within its membership government officials, linguists and literary people, *language educators*, educationists, traditional rulers, *authors*, *writers*, *printers*, *publishers*, the media people and all types of local people representing various interests – *religious*, inter-ethnic, intra-, and inter-state. (Emenanjo 1991: 159, emphasis added)

Although Emenanjo (1991) mentions that these agents represent various interests including religious interests, his expatiation of the interests and contributions of the various agents and agencies does not overtly include those of any religious group. This is a

huge omission because the contribution of Christian institutions, historically and in the present age, to the modernization of Igbo is too significant to be ignored. An illustration with the Watch Tower Bible and Tracts Society will suffice.

This Society organizes the Theocratic Ministry School Education, whose objective is to "prepare all 'faithful men,' those who have heard God's Word and proved their faith therein, to 'be able to teach others' . . . to the one end of making each one . . . better equipped to publicly present the hope that is within him." (Watch Tower 2001: 5). Every member of this Society is expected to enrol free of charge in the program and, as my informant, Okoro Mark Ogbonnaya[27], explains, "nobody graduates from the school". In other words, members are expected to regularly update their skills by continuous participation in the program. People who attend this school are equipped with the following skills: listening and remembering, personal reading, studying, doing research, analysing and organizing, conversing, answering questions, putting thoughts down in writing (Watch Tower 2001: 7). The manual for this education is the book *Benefit from Theocratic Ministry School Education.* The Watch Tower Society also runs this program in Igbo and the Igbo version of the manual is titled *Rite Uru na Mmụta a na-Enweta n'Ụlọ Akwụkwọ Ije Ozi Ọchịchị Chineke*. The implication of having the program in Igbo is the reinforcement it has given to education in Igbo. Apart from departments of Igbo in tertiary institutions, some primary schools in Igboland, and secondary school classes where Igbo is taught as a subject, Igbo is not the language of instruction in any other formal contexts. So, the Watch Tower's theocratic school expands the functions of Igbo by making it the language of instruction in a formal, educational and religious context. This school does not teach only religious education, it also teaches other skills, e.g., linguistic skills, that will make the students better teachers in Igbo. This requires developing the metalanguage of various domains. In a personal communication with me, Okoro Mark Ogbonnaya, a member of the church who attends the school, shares his experience with the school: "I learnt how to read, write and do research with Igbo, and then present it in public. I also learnt how to speak fluent Igbo without mixing it with English." Although Ogbonnaya has a bachelor's degree in Igbo Linguistics, he started writing literary works in Igbo before starting the degree program.

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[27] Male, late 20s

Till date he has written 50 literary works in Igbo, with 18 of them already published. According to him, he owes his skills in spoken and written Igbo to the theocratic school. So, the theocratic school also equips members with skills to write professionally in Igbo.

In addition to the theocratic ministry school education, the Watch Tower Society has also published an Igbo translation of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* as well as translations of numerous books, magazines and tracts of this society, published online and in hard copy. Thus, they should be grouped as part of Emenanjo's (1991) language educators, authors/translators, printers and publishers.

The Watch Tower's modernization activities also front their distinct religious ideology. As demonstrated in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, there are choices of terms made to front the ideology of the organization. Such choices include opting for direct lexical borrowing for certain Christian concepts for which other Bible translations coined new terms from existing words in Igbo. For example, the Society does not believe in the concept of "hell" and thus borrowed the original Greek/Hebrew terms that are usually translated as "hell", namely: "gehena", "sheol", and "hades". Their choice of direct lexical borrowing in their Bible translations, including the Igbo version, weakens the indigenization efforts of other Christian groups that coined terms in Igbo for "hell". Members of this group learn this and teach same to whoever they evangelize to. This reinforcement of certain semantic aspects of some terms and weakening of others is a form of elaboration embarked on by the institution.

That said, it is also telling that Emenanjo (1991) does not mention translators among his agents of planning alongside writers and publishers. For one, these are the pioneer language planning agents for many Nigerian languages. The written forms of Yoruba and Igbo, for instance, were developed by missionaries who translated the Bible into these languages, and over the years, they continued to produce texts in these languages. As highlighted in Chapter 1, the first Igbo literary standards were results of Bible translators, namely – Isuama Igbo and Union Igbo. Translations after these, done by native Igbo after independence from Britain, were done partly to modernize the language, and Chapter 6 demonstrates some of the methods adopted in this regard.

Another key aspect of elaboration enhanced by translations is that certain genres emerged in Igbo because of translation. Oyali (2010, 2017a) has demonstrated that the corpus of religious, scientific and public service texts available in Igbo was created largely by translations from English. This is part of Haugen's (1983) corpus planning. So, translators have been involved in elaborating Igbo from the beginning of scientific studies of Igbo till date, yet they have not been given due recognition by Igbo scholars.

That said, other previous studies on elaboration of Igbo approach it from various angles. Nwachukwu (1983: 67-68), for instance, identifies four methods languages generally adopt for vocabulary expansion, namely: direct borrowing, coining new terms from existing terms in the language, creating new terms from foreign roots or items, and compounding of two or more words to create a new word. He then suggests that "Igbo scholars will need to examine the different processes of vocabulary expansion available and adopt whichever of these are found suitable" (1983: 68).

Unlike Nwachukwu (1983) who is more prescriptive, Emenanjo (1985) is descriptive, being an exploration of the different strategies adopted in the modernization of Igbo. Specifically, Emenanjo highlights the modernization activities of the Igbo Standardization Committee (ISC), a committee of the Society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the SPILC was founded in 1949 and contributed a lot in the standardization of Igbo. Emenanjo (1985) emphasizes the progress the SPILC, through the ISC, has made, which includes expanding the Igbo numeral system as the traditional numeral system was no longer adequate for the times, and resolving some controversial issues around Standard Igbo orthography, spelling system and dialect. The aspect that is relevant to this study is the development of an Igbo metalanguage, a project that became necessary when tertiary institutions started teaching Igbo in the 1970s. In other words, the functional elaboration of Igbo by having Igbo language programs in tertiary institutions created the need to develop the metalanguage. Developing this metalanguage entailed utilizing resources from within Igbo and from outside the language. Emenanjo (1985: 87) stresses the fact that "[b]efore this [the intra- and extra-Igbo strategies] became formalized by the ISC, the language had been doing so from the very beginnings of its history".

According to Emenanjo (1985), the intra-Igbo strategy includes the following:

1. verb derivational morphology – this involves deriving new words from existing Igbo verb roots. Examples are 1) -*da* "sound" from which *ụda* "sound" is derived for "tone" and "intonation"; 2) -*de* "write" from which *ederede* "something written" is derived for "passage".

2. phrase derived morphology – here "phrase" is used to mean "a string of words/morphemes" (Emenanjo 1985: 88). This strategy covers the process of deriving new terms from erstwhile phrases, clauses and sentences. Examples include 1) *asụsụ* "language" + *nka* "art", which are combined to give *asụsụ nka* "figurative language", and 2) *akụkọ* "story" + *n'egwu* "in a song", combined to give *akụkọneegwu* "ballad".

3. intra-lingual borrowing – this entails giving terms from different Igbo dialects special signification in Standard Igbo. The new signification takes different forms:
   a. different dialectal terms for the same phenomenon are regarded as synonyms in Standard Igbo, e.g., *akum* and *enyimmili* for hippopotamus.
   b. dialectal words are elevated as the Standard Igbo term, e.g., *ezu* "inland water" (Agulu dialect) for "lake" (Standard Igbo), and *ifo* "folk narrative" (Central Igbo) for "folktale" (Standard Igbo).
   c. dialectal phonological variants are given different functions in Standard Igbo. For example, *ọrụ* (Central Igbo) and *ọlụ* (Onitsha Igbo) are dialectal phonological variants for the female genitalia and work. Standard Igbo separates their functions: *ọrụ* for the female genitalia and *ọlụ* for work.

The extra-Igbo strategy for modernization entails borrowing terms from other cultures with which Igbo has had direct or indirect contact. Indirect contact apparently refers to "second-hand" borrowing, i.e. borrowing a word in a language through a mediating language with which Igbo has had direct contact. An example of indirect borrowing is *alakuba* "Muslim", a corruption of the Arabic *Allahu Akbar* "God is great" borrowed through Hausa. Other borrowed items include *mita* "meter" (French) and *piichi* "pitch" (English). Such borrowings are not only from languages spoken outside Nigeria. There are also items

borrowed from neighbouring Nigerian languages, like *oluku* "fool" from Igala "friend", and *osikapa* "rice" from *cinkafa* "rice" (Hausa).

The analysis of lexical processes in Bible translations in Chapter 4 shows that the Bible translators also adopted intra- and extra-Igbo strategies. The intra-Igbo strategies include derivations and compounding, including lexical blends, where an Igbo word is joined with a non-Igbo word to create a new term.

Some other studies on the elaboration of Igbo (Acholonu and Penfield (Okezie) 1980); Ikekeonwu 1982; and Uzoezie 2011) focus on the activities triggered by the contact between Igbo and English. The major strategies explored in these studies are borrowings from English and the different methods adopted in integrating the borrowed items into Igbo. They also highlight some aspects of compounding and lexical blends. The major difference between these studies and Emenanjo (1985) is that the latter focuses on elaboration efforts by an institution, namely the ISC, while the former explore elaboration phenomena at the level of speakers of the language. In this study, I combine both approaches. In Chapters 4, 5 and 6, I analyse the elaboration activities of the Christian organizations engaged in Bible translations. However, in Chapter 7, I focus on how the speakers use these new features. This is done with the help of a questionnaire.

2.6 Bible Translation, Language Change and Institutional Ideology

There is a bi-directional relationship between Bible translation and language change. On the one hand, Bible translation especially into previously oral languages introduces significant changes in the receptor language. On the other hand, especially where there are existing Bible translations in the language, retranslations are made to update the language of the Bible in order to reflect the changes that have taken place in the language since the earlier translations were made. Furthermore, some retranslations are made to promote the ideologies of the institution involved in the translation. These are expatiated in the following sections.

2.6.1 Language Change through Bible Translation

Changes introduced in a language through Bible translations are discussed here under two related headings: expansion of lexicon and emergence of a written form. The first section emphasizes that Bible translation introduces novel lexical items in the receptor language. The second section highlights the impact of writing on an oral language.

2.6.1.1   The Expansion of Lexicon

The preceding sections of this chapter emphasize that translation does more than just transfer information from one to another. Translation demonstrates how a language could be put to more use and thus accentuates how the intrinsic resources in the language can be used to elaborate the language. Specifically, translating the Bible for the first time into a language opens the language up to a new set of concepts. As Neil (1976: 287) puts it,

> [t]he essential strangeness of the Gospel must never be forgotten. When it comes for the first time to a people, it opens up to them a whole new world, and introduces them to concepts which are wholly new and for which no suitable expressions exist in the language which they use.

Grappling with representing this new set of ideas forces the translator to create novel terms and phrases, which, at times, may sound awkward to speakers of the language but who eventually get used to them. For illustration, McGrath (2001: 262) observes that "[m]any of the Semitic turns of phrase that have gained an accepted place in modern English can be traced directly to the King James Bible of the Old Testament". The KJB is said to have retained the Hebrew word order in some places, which "resulted in a reading that did not sound quite right to English ears at the time". However, the "passage of time, and increased exposure to their translation, has eliminated any awareness of its initial 'strangeness', and led to its phrases being accepted as 'normal' or 'standard' English"

(McGrath 2001: 264). Crystal (2010: 6) adds that the "most interesting cases of the Bible shaping our [English] language are when we find expressions in daily use, where people take a piece of Biblical language and use it in a totally nonbiblical context, knowing that the allusion would be recognized". Other studies of how Bible translations enriched English with new words and phrases include Malless and McQuain (2003), and Noble (2014).

As shown in Chapter 3, the creation of an artificial dialect of Igbo for Bible translation was resisted by many Igbo native speakers because the mixture of different dialects sounded awkward. However, this act of using terms from different dialects of Igbo to create a new dialect facilitated the spread of the dialectal words to other parts of Igboland, thereby making speakers of other dialects familiar with the terms. This made it possible for concepts familiar to speakers of one dialect to be known by speakers of other dialects, as it is the case with *iko* "concubinage" practiced only in some parts of Igboland (c.f. Section 7.2.2B). However, the dialectal terms were not all given the same meaning in the Bible translation as they had in common usage. *Iko* is also used in the IBTs for any form of sexual relationship outside marriage. This meaning has also spread among Igbo speakers.

2.6.1.2   The Emergence of a Written Standard

Bible translation into oral cultures results in creating orthographies for these languages and, consequently, having written forms of the languages. These might seem commonplace today, but their effect, especially writing, on an oral language is remarkable. For one, unlike oral communication that is temporary, writing makes the communicated idea permanent. While it might be difficult to recall every detail of a spoken text, the situation is different for the written text as the full text could always be referred to. The reader can consult any part of the text they want to consult, a luxury that spoken communication does not give, unless the listener chooses to further interact with the speaker.

This has some implications for Bible translation, especially for cultures that were predominantly oral and had relied on the oral medium for information dissemination

across the population and from one generation to another. As noted above, writing gives permanence to the information transmitted. However, while the interactants in spoken communication usually have some shared non-linguistic context, written communication does not allow for this. The listener to spoken information can refer to the shared context for clarity but the reader of written information, especially texts written in an age far removed from that of the reader, like the Bible, has only the written text to refer to. In the words of Schallert, Kleiman and Rubin (1977: 12), "[w]ithout a shared context, some ways of clarifying the message are not available: The speaker cannot point to objects or use gestures. Perhaps more importantly, there are many words whose interpretation depends upon the context of their use". The reader is thus forced to depend on the linguistic context of the text for all interpretation. The significance of this, especially in relation to language change, is that the meaning given to certain expressions in the written text tends to become *the* meaning that survives, especially in a situation of competition between expressions. As Oyali (2016) has demonstrated, the Igbo word *chi* is used to refer to sunlight, the person that reincarnates in another person, and to a person's alter ego in the spirit world who determines the person's lot in life. The Christian appropriation of this term to represent "god" in the Bible has over time become the popular interpretation of the term, such that this interpretation is used in many Igbo personal names. The other meanings of the word as a person's counterpart in the spirit world and as the person that reincarnates in a new born baby are gradually getting lost. So, the interpretation found in a written text has superseded other meanings that are not used in print, or that appeared in print many years after. Consequently, children learning Igbo, who are raised Christian, would be exposed to this interpretation first and may not be aware of other meanings attached to the term. In other words, the context of the written text becomes the only known context, and every other context of usage becomes relegated to the background and thus has a higher potential of becoming lost.

2.6.2 Bible Translation Done to Update the Language of the Bible

Bible translation that is done because of language change is seen mainly in cases where there are existing translations in the language. One reason for such later translations is the need to update the language of the Bible. Languages change over time. New words get created from existing words or get borrowed from other languages. Existing words take up new shades of meaning or shed some shades of meaning. At times, a word with positive connotations becomes associated with negative ones. In other instances, some words become archaic and new words are used to replace them. Thus, the meanings of some words in a given Bible translation might not remain the same after some decades or centuries. These semantic changes then make it necessary to have new translations that would use current words that pass across the intended meanings. A case in point is the King James Bible published in 1611, whose language has undergone many changes. Comfort (2000: 108) observes that many statements in the KJB "no longer make any sense – or, worse still, communicate the wrong idea to modern readers". He illustrates this with the use of "gay" in James 2: 3:

> And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool.

To the modern reader, the word "gay" connotes homosexuality. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*,

> Gay meaning 'homosexual' became established in the 1960s as the term preferred by homosexual men to describe themselves. It is now the standard accepted term throughout the English-speaking world. As a result, the centuries-old other senses of gay meaning either 'carefree' or 'bright and showy' have more or less dropped out of natural use. The word gay cannot be readily used today in these older senses without arousing a sense of double entendre, despite concerted attempts by some to keep them alive. Gay in its

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modern sense typically refers to men (lesbian being the standard term for homosexual women) but in some contexts it can be used of both men and women.

Thus, recent translations like the New King James Bible (NKJB, 1982) replace "gay" with "fine" in James 2: 3:

and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool".

In addition to the changes in the meanings of words, the excerpt from the KJB also shows some archaic forms that are no longer in use. These forms are replaced with modern forms in the NKJB, e.g. "ye" -> "you", "weareth" -> "wearing", "thou" -> "you". So, some Bible translations are done in order to update the language of the Bible, to make it reflect the current usage.

In relation to the Igbo translations, the period from 1913 when the Union Igbo Bible, the first complete translation in Igbo, was published and the late 1960s when new translations were started was too short for any remarkable change to have taken place such that would necessitate a new Bible translation. Thus, as demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 5, many of the lexical choices of the translations done during the missionary period (1840-1913) were retained in the translations by native Igbo agents (published between 1966 and 2007). That notwithstanding, findings in Chapter 6 reveal instances of lexical and semantic differentiation in later translations where earlier translations did not make such differentiation. Such changes may be seen as corrective, i.e., the later translations corrected perceived errors in the earlier translations. Interestingly, the lexical and semantic differentiation also contributes in expanding the lexicon of the language.

Furthermore, according to Comfort (2008: 108), some verses of the KJB "exhibit dated, male-oriented language". 1 Corinthians 14: 20 is illustrative of such male-oriented language:

> Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

In this passage, "men" is used to represent both men and women. Commenting on this generic use of "men" to represent both men and women, Comfort (2000: 108-109) submits that

> [m]odern readers, accustomed to male-female equality, would take exceptions to this rendering. And well they should. According to the Greek, Paul was encouraging his readers to be 'mature': it has nothing to do with maleness or manliness.

Such male-oriented language may have been the norm in the English of the 15th century AD, but it is no longer so in modern times. Thus, some modern Bible translations into English, use gender neutral terms in this Bible verse to reflect the current norm. For example, in place of "men" in 1 Corinthians 14: 20, the New Living Translation (NLT) uses "mature" while the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) uses "adults".

Incidentally, Igbo does not have this problem of gender mis-representation, for it is not the norm to represent both genders with one gender. Rather, each gender is represented distinctly, and in situation where both genders are referred to, a gender inclusive expression is used. For example, the UIB uses *ndị tozuru okè* "fully grown people" or "adults" in the 1 Corinthians 14: 20 text. Other IBTs use different gender inclusive terms. Secondly, the practice in English of using the third person singular pronouns "he" and "his" in a generic sense for both male and female referents is also not seen in Igbo, because Igbo pronouns are gender neutral, i.e., Igbo personal pronouns do not make any gender distinction. The Igbo third person pronouns *ya* and *Ọ* could be represented in English as "he", "she" or "it".

However, there were other aspects of change in the Igbo language that necessitated the subsequent translations of the Bible in Igbo, e.g., changes in orthography and in the standard dialect of Igbo. As noted in Chapter 3, Igbo was an oral language and the first CMS missionaries that translated portions of the Bible into Igbo used different writing systems.

With the introduction of the Lepsius orthography in 1855, revised in 1863, the missionaries adopted this orthography for all their translations. However, the colonial government introduced the "African orthography" in 1927, which the CMS rejected. The Catholic church embraced this new orthography and thus ensued the orthography controversy in Igbo. The UIB was translated in the Lepsius orthography. After the orthography controversy was settled and a standard orthography developed for Igbo, the need arose to have the Bible in the standard orthography. A similar incident is seen as regards the dialect of the Bible. The UIB was translated into an artificial dialect of Igbo, created by combining features of five different Igbo dialects. The development of an accepted standard dialect of Igbo after independence in 1960 also warranted that the UIB be revised to reflect this new standard dialect. The ILB and the IRE both acknowledge that they were made to update the language of the UIB to reflect current usage. However, the ICB and the INWT are silent on the existence of any earlier translation of the Bible in Igbo, a step I attribute to the ideologies of the denominations that did the translations.

2.6.3 Bible Translation and Institutional Ideologies

Some Bible translations are not made necessarily because of the need to update the language of earlier translations to reflect current usage. Rather, they are done for ideological reasons. The two full Bible translations in Igbo done by specific Christian denominations, the ICB by the Catholic Church and the INWT by the Jehovah's Witnesses, belong to this category. As expatiated in the next chapter, the Igbo Catholic Christians were involved in the translation of the IRE. However, the Igbo Catholic bishops also wanted an Igbo Bible that reflects the ideology of the Catholic church, which includes *inter alia* having a canon of forty-six books of the OT as against the thirty-seven books in the Protestant canon. Thus, while the ecumenical translation of the IRE which the Igbo Catholic Christians were involved in was still going on, the ICB was translated. Beyond the Biblical canon used, the ICB also displays some lexical usages that are not used in the other IBTs. For instance, Chapter 7 shows that while other IBTs use *mmụọ ozi* for *angel*, *nsọ* for *holiness* and *ebighi*

ebi for *eternity*, the ICB uses *mmụọọma*, *asọ* and *ebeebe* respectively for the same concepts. These might be seen as an attempt by the Igbo Catholic Christians to be distinct from non-Catholic Christians.

On its part, the INWT projects the ideology of the Watch Tower Bible and Tracts Society. The Society believes that other translations of the Bible have been influenced by the ideologies of other religious institutions, which has rendered these translations no longer adequate. The belief is that other translations of the Bible in English prior to 1961 when the English version of the New World Translation was published convey inaccurate information and thus misrepresent Christianity and the message of God (c.f. Section 3.1.2.6). Consequently, the New World Translation of the Bible was done in English, and this translation became the source text from which other New World Translations of the Bible, including the Igbo version, were made. An instance of such ideological projection in Bible translation is in the interpretation of Bible concepts. This excerpt from John 1: 1 is illustrative:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God.* (KJB).

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was a god.* (NWT)

In rendering the highlighted phrase, the KJB capitalizes "God" and does not pre-modify it with any article. However, the NWT de-capitalizes "god" and pre-modifies it with the indefinite article "a". In *Insight on the Scriptures 1* (1988), the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society explains that the noun phrase "a god" means "divine", i.e. the Word was divine (p. 52), and that "the text itself shows that the Word was 'with God,' hence could not be God, i.e., be the Almighty God" (p. 54). Consequently, the NWT in Igbo uses the word *chi* "god" in the Bible passage while other IBTs use *Chineke* "God". Chapters 5 and 6 provide more examples of such lexical choices that promote the ideologies of the denominations.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the ICB and INWT are not the only translations that promote the ideologies of the institutions that did the translations. Indeed, the ILB and

IRE also have ideological leanings. The difference between the ILB and IRE on the one hand and the ICB and INWT on the other hand is that the former were interdenominational translations, i.e. they were not translated to promote the ideology of any specific Christian denomination. On the contrary, the ICB and INWT were done to promote the ideologies of the Catholic Church and the Jehovah's Witnesses respectively. As expatiated in Chapter 3, the ILB, for example, was aimed at simplifying difficult Bible concepts such that a reader would not require a dictionary or Bible study guide to understand the Bible text. This ideology of the Living Bible International is also seen in the translation strategies adopted in the translation of the ILB (c.f. Section 3.1.2.4).

2.7   The Retranslation Hypothesis

The phenomenon of having subsequent translations of the Bible in one language because of the changes that have happened in the language or for ideological reasons is part of what is generally categorized in translation research as retranslations. I find the Retranslation Hypothesis (RH henceforth) very useful in the analysis of Bible translation and language elaboration carried out in this study. Before I discuss the thrust of the hypothesis, I would first clarify the notion of retranslation, especially considering the dynamics of Bible translations generally, and Bible translations into Igbo in particular.

Koskinen and Paloposki (2010) distinguish between retranslation as a product and retranslation as a process. As a product, retranslation "denotes a second or later translation of a single source text into the same target language" (Koskinen and Paloposki 2010: 294). As discussed in Section 2.1, the idea of "a single source text" is problematic in the case of Bible translation. Gabel and Wheeler (1986: 236) put it directly thus: "there is no such thing as a universally agreed-on text of the Bible to translate from". Indeed, there were many manuscripts of portions of the Bible existing with minor and major differences amongst them. However, there is a body of texts generally accepted as constituting the Christian Bible today. The fact that translations of the Bible have equal sacred status in

Christianity and that many translations of the Bible are translations of translations make the idea of a single source text in Bible translation less important. As a process, retranslation is "prototypically a phenomenon that occurs over a period of time, but in practice, simultaneous or near-simultaneous translations also exist, making it sometimes hard or impossible to classify one as a first translation and the other as a second translation" (Koskinen and Paloposki 2010: 294). This is also problematic in relation to Bible translation as a translation published before another translation does not necessarily mean that the project of the first published translation was started before the second one. The case of the IRE and the ICB discussed in the next chapter is illustrative. Although the IRE project started in the 1960s, the complete translation was published in 2007. Meanwhile, the ICB project that was started in 1991 was completed and published in 2000, seven years before the publication of the IRE.

It is often assumed that different translations of a given text are independent of one another. However, according to Koskinen and Paloposki (2015: 25), "a close reading of individual examples of first and subsequent translations soon reveals that there are often subtle links between them". The point is that the subsequent translations are usually made in reaction to the first translation thereby creating some dependency relations between them. The need for a subsequent translation stems from some perceived shortcomings of the first translation, which the subsequent versions are meant to correct. As noted above, a subsequent translation of a text could be made to update the language of the earlier translation. This does not write off the fact that there could be passive translations, that is, translations "produced without any direct contact with or even knowledge of an existing earlier translation" (Koskinen and Paloposki 2015: 25 – 26). In the next chapter of this study, I showed that when the New Testament versions of the IRE and the ILB were produced, the institutions involved were not aware of the existence of the other translation project. However, both projects were started around the same period and aimed at revising the UIB. So, unless it is clearly established that a subsequent translation project is passive to an existing one, it is safer to see retranslations as done in reaction to the existing translation.

Academic research on the phenomenon of retranslation by translation scholars has led to the formulation of the Retranslation Hyosthesis (RH), summarized by Desmidt (2009, 671) thus:

> First translations [...] deviate from the original to a higher degree than subsequent, more recent retranslations, because first translations determine whether or not a text (and its author) is (are) going to be accepted in the target culture; the text is therefore adapted to the norms that govern the target audience. At a later stage, when it has become familiar with the text (and author), the target culture allows for and demands new translations – retranslations – that are no longer definitively target oriented, but source text oriented.

This hypothesis is traced back to Goethe's ([1819] 1992) thoughts on the three kinds (or rather epochs) of translation in a given culture. According to Goethe (1992: 60), "the first acquaints us with the foreign country on our own terms; a plain prose translation is best for this purpose", while in the second epoch "the translator endeavours to transport himself into the foreign situation but actually only appropriates the foreign idea and represents it as his own". In the third epoch,

> which is the finest and highest of the three...the goal of the translation is to achieve perfect identity with the original, so that the one does not exist instead of the other but in the other's place [...] the translator identifies so strongly with the original that he more or less gives up the uniqueness of his own nation, creating this third kind of text for which the taste of the masses has to be developed. (Goethe 1992: 61)

Indeed, Goethe (1992: 63) insists that in the third epoch, "[w]e are led, yes, compelled as it were, back to the source text".

Not much research was done on retranslations *per se* after Goethe until a special issue of *Palimpsests* (1990) was dedicated to it. Antoine Berman's contribution to this issue of the journal has been described by Deane (2011: 8) as encapsulating "one of the most prevalent

and influential theoretical approaches to retranslation". Berman (1990) essentially argues, in line with Goethe ([1819]1992), that the first translation is awkward and faulty, and subsequent translations arise from the need to correct these shortcomings of the first translation. The idea is that there is some ideal status a translation needs to attain to be regarded as "great"', and first translations hardly achieve this because they are just meant to be infelicitous introductions of the source text into the target culture. With time, it requires the retranslations for this ideal to be achieved.

The RH gives the impression that a third translation of a given text tends to be better than the first two translations, the criterion for determining the quality of the translations being their closeness to the source text. In other words, subsequent translations are expected to be closer to the source text than earlier translations. As clarified above, subsequent translations of the Bible in Igbo were made to "correct" the language of the earlier translations or to front a denomination's ideology. However, does it also follow that subsequent translations of the Bible in Igbo are closer to the source texts than earlier translations? As has been observed by several scholars (cf. Paloposki and Koskinen 2004, 28; Desmidt 2009, 671; Deane 2011, 2), this hypothesis should be tested on empirical data to see how valid it could be and what variables determine the results of such tests. Thus, Chapter 6 tests this hypothesis to see whether it is validated in the IBTs, whether the techniques for language elaboration employed in subsequent translations tilt more towards the source culture or towards the target culture.

Another issue that the RH raises is what the unit for measuring the "closeness" of a target text to the source text should be. Koskinen and Paloposki (2010, 296) have identified "syntax, lexical choices and culture-specific items, forms of address, units of measurement, spoken language, dialects and slang" as some of the units on which studies on the retranslation hypothesis have been based. In this study, the unit for measuring the closeness of the translations is the lexical and conceptual innovations in the IBTs. That is, the equivalents given in the IBTs for specific Christian concepts are analysed in relation to the English terms in the source texts of these Igbo translation.

2.8   The Adoption of the Biblical Lexical and Conceptual Innovations

The preceding sections of this chapter might give the impression that the lexical and conceptual creativity of Bible translators immediately gets general acceptance and use in the target language. However, this is hardly the case, for every lexical and conceptual innovation takes a life of its own and either gets accepted and assimilated into the lexicon of the receptor language or ends up as a nonce used only in the translation in question. In this study, this phenomenon is investigated from two perspectives: from their use or non-use in the day to day activities of the speakers of the language and from their use or non-use in subsequent Bible translations. The latter has been presented in the preceding sections and so emphasis in this section is on the former.

The adoption of the lexical and conceptual innovations is important because that is the confirmation that the innovation has not ended up as a nonce, but is in use in the language, effectively contributing to the change in the language. Connolly (2013: 1) suggests that adoption is more important than innovation in language change because "an innovative form must be adopted by a significant number of speakers in order for observable change to take place". Hence, when an innovative form is introduced via translation, and this form is only used when the translated text is read and not outside that context, it could not be said to constitute change in the language.

The spread of such innovations could be within one generation or across generations. Joseph (2014: 408) thus distinguishes between "transmission" and "diffusion". Transmission refers to the passing of language and features of language across generational populations, while diffusion refers to "the spread of language and language features within and across various nongenerationally based sectors within society". In the case of the IBTs, the use of the different translations in various churches across Igboland and beyond gives room for the innovations to be exposed to the Christian faithful. These innovations are in turn adopted and transmitted across the population in various modes. Children born into the society are also exposed to these expressions thereby effecting their

diffusion across generations. The forms and meanings these innovations take are not necessarily exactly as used in the translations, as Chapter 7 showcases.

The aim of this chapter has been twofold – to show the gap in studies of language elaboration in Igbo, which I wish to fill, and to explain the concepts used in the analysis. I have shown that studies of elaboration of Igbo have not acknowledged the contribution of Bible translation. The analysis in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 are geared towards exploring different aspects of the elaboration of Igbo facilitated by Bible translations. However, before delving into the analysis proper, there is need to discuss the history and politics of the various translations of the Bible into Igbo. Chapter 3 provides such a history. Bible translation does not take place in a vacuum, but rather reflects the socio-cultural and political atmosphere of the period. The background of the agents involved in the translation also affects the decisions taken during the translations. Thus, in Chapter 3, I investigate the background of the agents involved in the different translations, their motivations and some socio-political and historical incidents that facilitated their translation of the Bible into Igbo.

CHAPTER 3

THE HISTORY AND POLITICS OF BIBLE TRANSLATION INTO IGBO

From the mid-1800s, in Freetown, Christian missionaries started studying Igbo and translating Christian literatures, including the Bible, into Igbo. Their studies and translations marked the beginning of scientific linguistic studies of Igbo and the earliest attempts at evolving an Igbo literary standard. Translations of portions of the Bible into Igbo started in the 1840s and the first complete[28] translation was *Bible Nsọ: Union Version* published in 1913. Four other complete translations have been published after this, namely *Baịbụlụ Nsọ* (1988), published by the International Bible Society (IBS); *Baịbụl Nsọ: Nhazi Katọlịk* (2000), by the Roman Catholic Church; *Baịbụl Nsọ: Ndezighaṛị Ọhụṛụ* (2007), published by the Bible League International; and *Baịbụl Nsọ: Nsụghaṛị Ụwa Ohụṛụ nke Akwụkwọ Nsọ* (2007), by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. For ease of reference in this study, I use the following abbreviations for the different translations: IIB (Isuama Igbo Bible) for the translations of portions of the New Testament (NT) into Isuama Igbo by J. C. Taylor, which include the Gospel of Mathew (1860), the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians, Galatians and Ephesians (1866); NIB (Niger Igbo Bible) for the first complete published NT, done in the Onitsha or Niger Igbo (1900); UIBN (Union Igbo Bible New Testament) for *Testament Ohu nke Jisus Kraist* (1908, the New Testament of the Union Igbo Bible); UIB (Union Igbo Bible) for *Bible Nsọ: Union Version* (1913); ILB (Igbo Living Bible[29]) for *Baịbụlụ Nsọ* (1988); ICB (Igbo Catholic Bible) for *Baịbụl Nsọ: Nhazi Katọlịk* (2000), IRE (Igbo Revised Edition[30]) for *Baịbụl Nsọ: Ndezighaṛị Ọhụṛụ* (2007); and

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[28] By "complete" I mean the translation of both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. I recognize the different perceptions of complete Bible by different Christian denominations, like the fact that the Catholic Church includes the Apocryphal texts in their canon while other Christian denominations do not. For me, any translation of the Old and New Testaments is a complete translation, irrespective of what books constitute the canon.

[29] As explained below, the source text for this translation was the English Living Bible. The simplified language and verses of the Igbo translation were also modelled on the English Living Bible.

[30] This translation is identified as Igbo Revised Edition on the copyright page of the publication.

INWT (Igbo New World Translation[31]) for *Baịbụl Nsọ: Nsụgharị Ụwa Ohụrụ nke Akwụkwọ Nsọ* (2007). Table 3.1 highlights salient aspects of Bible translation into Igbo, for example, the composition of each translation (portions of the NT, the full NT or both the NT and OT), the dialect into which the translations were made, the institutions and key persons involved in the translations and the year of publication.

Table 3. 1. Salient aspects of Bible translation into Igbo

Igbo Bible Translation	Bible sections	Dialect	Institutions	Key Figures	Year
Isuama Igbo Bible	Portions of the New Testament	Isuama Igbo	Anglican Church	John Christopher Taylor	1860/66
Niger Igbo Bible	New Testament	Niger (Onitsha) Igbo	Anglican Church	Henry Johnson, Isaac Mba, Henry Hughes Dobinson, Thomas David Anyaegbunam.	1900
Union Igbo Bible, New Testament	New Testament	Union Igbo	Anglican Church	T. D. Anyaegbunam and Thomas John Dennis	1908
Union Igbo Bible	Old and New Testaments	Union Igbo	Anglican Church	T. D. Anyaegbunam, Thomas John Dennis	1913
Igbo Living Bible	Old and New Testaments	Central Igbo	Living Bible International	Jeremiah C. Okorie	1988
Igbo Catholic Bible	Old and New Testaments	Standard Igbo	Catholic Church	Christopher Ifenatuora, Chudi-Peter Akaenyi, Ernest Ezeogu	2000
Igbo Revised	Old and New	Standard Igbo	Bible Society of Nigeria[32]	A. O. Iwuagwu, Anthony Ilonu	2007

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[31] The Igbo translation was not only published by the same society that published the English New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, the English text was also used as the source text for producing the Igbo version. So, the Igbo text is modelled on the English version.

[32] As explained above, the IRE was produced under the auspices of the BSN. It is inter-confessional, with representatives of the Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian, and Seventh-Day Adventist Churches as part of the team that produced it.

Edition	Testaments				
Igbo New World Translation	Old and New Testaments	Standard Igbo	Watch Tower Bible and Tracts Society	Anonymous	2007

Table 3.1 highlights the IBTs used in this study. However, it is not exhaustive as it does not contain, for instance, information on the portions of the NT translated in the first and second Niger expeditions, for which I have little information. It also does not contain data from the New Testament translation published in 2015 by Christ Embassy Church because this study had reached advanced stage when the translation was made.

This chapter discusses the history and politics of the IBTs. I adopt D'hulst's (2010: 397) definition of history as "the proper sequence of facts, events, ideas, discourses, etc". Translation history is thus the sequence of facts, events, ideas and discourses that resulted in the translations under study, in this case Bible translations into Igbo. Interest here is in understanding the impact of history on the translation or lack of translation of the Bible into Igbo. A study of this kind is important as it accentuates the motivations for the different translations and helps define and account for the policies that guided the translations, which further determine the strategies employed in the translations. According to Long (2007: 64), studying the history of translations

> gives bases for comparison and demonstrates whether translators are making progress or simply repeating the same mistakes. It also helps to assess whether modern theorists are saying something new or simply repeating the same ideas in different language.

Long (2007: 64) adds that such histories "reveal the translators' attitudes towards both translation and the translated text" as well as "discrepancy between the intention of the translator and the realization of that intention". In the case of the IBTs, highlighting these issues is key towards appreciating the different forms of elaboration Bible translation has engendered in Igbo, as one then has a basis for comparing the lexical choices of the

different translations as well as for explaining some of the discrepancies in the translations.

On its part, the politics of translation focuses on

> social, cultural and communicative practices, on the cultural and ideological significance of translating and of translations, on the external politics of translation, on the relationship between translation behaviour and socio-cultural factors, on social causation and human agency. (Schäffner 2007: 136)

Translations are done within specific socio-political contexts the study of which would give deeper insights into the translation phenomenon. Interest here is on political decisions to encourage, allow, promote or hinder translations, the study of which would complement the findings from the historical study, both of which would complement the linguistic studies of the following chapters.

Incidentally, as far as I know, there is no academic study of the histories and politics of all the different IBTs to accentuate the factors that triggered them and how these factors changed the linguistic and sociolinguistic space of the Igbo. The only attempt at such a historical study was Ogharaerumi (1986). However, Ogharaerumi's (1986) study predates the publication of all the four complete IBTs after the UIB, which means that it covers only one fifth of the complete IBTs. It should be noted, however, that Ogharaerumi (1986) gives valuable insights into the NT versions of the ILB and IRE. Other studies focus on individual translations, like Tasie ([1977] 1996a) that concentrates on the UIB, Adiele (1996) that discusses the history of the IRE prior to its publication in 2007, and Ezeogu (2012) that focuses on the ICB.

This chapter, therefore, extends the efforts of these scholars by discussing these different IBTs together, and by studying the recent ones as well. It is guided by the following questions: Why were the different IBTs made? Who commissioned the translations? Who were the translators? From what source text/language were the translations made? Into what dialect of Igbo were they made? In what Igbo orthography? What socio-political and

historical incidents encouraged or hampered the translations? Data for this study are textual, paratextual and metatextual. The textual data comprise the translated texts themselves. The paratexts here include prefaces, forwards, blurbs, notes, while the metatexts include archive records, interviews with agents involved with the translations, reviews, comments, blogs, information on the websites of the agencies that did the translations, etc. I find the paratexts and metatexts very useful in this study because, while the translated texts themselves provide information on the final translation product, the paratexts and metatexts provide information on the social, historical or political factors which influence the production and distribution of these Bible translations. They also give deep insights on the principles guiding the translations, which reflects in the translation strategies.

3.1   Epochs in Bible Translation into Igbo

I identify two epochs in Bible translations into Igbo: 1840 to 1913 and 1966 to 2007. Translations done during the first period were by foreign missionaries while those done during the second period were by native Igbo agents. The period from 1914 to 1965 is blank because there was no Bible translation published within this period. That notwithstanding, the decisions to embark on, and the actual translations in the second period started during the blank period.

3.1.1   The Missionary Era: 1840 – 1913

Translations in the first stage were done by foreign Christian missionaries as well as by Igbo native speakers but supervised by the foreign missionaries. By "foreign" here I mean Europeans, African recaptives now re-settled in Sierra Leone and children born to these recaptives. These were assisted in many cases by Igbo native speakers, born and raised in Igboland. Some of the translations done towards the end of the first period are said to have

been done by native Igbo but supervised by foreign missionaries. Whatever the case may be, the final decisions on choices made during the translations were those ratified by the foreign agents. This section is structured according to some landmark historical incidents during the period from 1840 to 1913.

3.1.1.1   Translations during the First Niger Expedition

The "discovery" of the course and mouth of the Niger River in 1830 by the Lander brothers inspired many attempts by Europeans to penetrate and exploit the territory. One such attempt was the 1841 Niger expedition, "which also laid the foundation for future CMS missionary work on the banks of the Niger" (Ekechi 1972: 1). This expedition was organized in response to Thomas Fowell Buxton's ideas that

> the best way to stop the slave trade and regenerate Africa was to establish legitimate commerce with the African rulers: by introducing commerce, civilization and Christianity, "a blow would be struck at the nefarious traffic in human beings, from which it could not recover". (Ekechi 1972: 1)

In preparation for the 1841 Niger Expedition, J. F. Schön, a German clergyman and linguist, was charged by the CMS Parent Committee in London to train interpreters and himself acquire "the languages he considered most essential" (Ajayi 1965: 127), and he chose Hausa and Igbo. Schön (1840) presents his personal motivation for studying Igbo:

> I made first choice of the Ibo language for the following reasons. From the journals of Mr. Laird (an English merchant interested in the opening up of the Niger Delta) and Oldfield (an English explorer) I experienced that the last Niger expedition [of 1832] came much in contact with chiefs and people of the Ibo nation. I also learned from Ibo people that their language is very extensively spoken and understood at the entrance of the River, and even by the people of Fernando Po, and the great number of Ibos located in Sierra

Leone seemed to be an additional reason why attention should be paid to their language.[33]

He alongside Samuel Ajayi Crowther, an ex-Yoruba slave, now clergyman and linguist who was also part of the 1841 expedition, learned the mixed version of Igbo spoken among the freed slaves in Sierra Leone called Isuama. Oraka (1983: 20), however, observes that Isuama is a derogatory name given to village communities located in the more barren areas surrounding Isu and Nkwerre and that probably most of the emancipated Igbo slaves came from that area. Bersselaar (1998: 69) also adds that *Isomas* was a derogatory term used by the Ikwere to refer to other Igbo groups in the 1950s. Be that as it may, assigning Schön to study Igbo "marked the beginning of the scientific study and systematic reduction into writing" of Igbo (Ogharaerumi 1986: 168).

By 1840, while still at Freetown, Schön had translated potions of the Bible, which included the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Parable of the Prodigal Son and he repeatedly read same to the Igbo in Sierra Leone "and have had the pleasure to perceive that they are understood by them" (Schön 1840).

Shortly before leaving Sierra Leone for the 1841 expedition, Schön recruited Simon Jonas as his Igbo interpreter. Jonas, an Igbo recaptive living in Sierra Leone at the time, was, in the words of Ogharaerumi (1986: 173), "a competent Igbo mother-tongue speaker, proved to be useful to Schön and others during the expedition". Despite such preparations, Schön's work on Igbo was cut short by two events. One, within eight weeks after the expedition entered the Niger in August 1841, 43 out of the 145 Europeans and a handful of Africans in the team died. So, the expedition was called off in October of the same year to avoid more deaths (Ogharaerumi 1986: 173). The abrupt end of the expedition, however, does not mean that it did not have its successes, for, as reported by Walker (1931: 29),

> experience was gained that was of value in later efforts. The river was proved to be a great highway, navigable for hundreds of miles; the riverside peoples

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[33] Schön to Local Committee, Sept. 25, 1840, CMS CA10/175/13.

were found to be friendly, and there was obviously great opportunity if only the deadly climate could be overcome.

Later developments validated this optimism.

The second factor that discouraged Schön's work on Igbo was his discovery of the limitations of his expertise in Igbo. In his journal entry of August 25, 1841, Schön writes that he tested his proficiency in Igbo but was

> not a little mortified today, by observing that the dialect of the Ibo language on which I had bestowed so much labour in Sierra Leone, differs widely from that spoken and understood in this part of the country. It never escaped my observation, that a great diversity of dialects existed: but I must blame myself much for not making stricter inquiries about that which would be most useful for the present occasion. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 47)

Undaunted, he went on, on another occasion, to read his translation of "Address to the Chiefs and People of Africa" to the Obi of Aboh. He reports in his journal of August 27, 1841, that "[i]nstead of its exciting his curiosity, he soon felt tired" and interrupted the reading. A disillusioned Schön concludes that "[p]erhaps the style of my translation was not sweet enough for his ears, and my tongue not sufficiently Ibonized" (Schön and Crowther 1970: 55).

Incidentally, although the Obi of Aboh was disappointed in Schön's Igbo, he is reported to have been excited with Simon Jonas' Igbo. In his journal entry of August 28, 1841, Schön records that he "opened the English Bible and made Simon Jonas read a few verses to him [the Obi] and translate them into Ibo" (Schön and Crowther 1970: 60). The unencouraging reception of Schön's Igbo might have made him ask Jonas to read instead. Interestingly, the Obi's reaction to Jonas was different:

> [the] Obi was uncommonly taken with this. That a White man could read and write, was a matter of course; but that a Black man – an Ibo man – a slave in times past – should know these wonderful things too, was more than he could ever have anticipated. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 60)

The Obi's excitement might also be attributed to Jonas' Igbo. Jonas was an Igbo recaptive who learnt his Igbo in the Igbo heartland before he was captured and sold into slavery. So, his choice of words and accent might have been clear to and well understood by the Obi, unlike Schön who must have spoken Igbo with a German accent. Secondly, Jonas' style of translation must also have been different. Be that as it may, the Obi

> seized Simon's hand, squeezed it most heartily, and said, "You must stop with me: you must teach me and my people. The White people can go up the river without you: they must leave you here until they return, or until their people come. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 60)

Frustrated with Igbo, Schön shifted attention to Hausa. He observes, in his journal entry of September 14, 1841, that "Haussa is now, to these parts of Africa, what French is to Europe, I cannot see why that should not become the standard", and that

> [t]he Hausa, too, does not labour under the same difficulties as do other languages. It is rich and admits of additional number of words being formed legitimately; and the influence which Mohammedanism has gained over the people in the interior has supplied it with many religious terms and words which we sought for in vain among the vocabularies of Pagan nations. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 120)

In other words, Schön's attraction to Hausa was also hinged on the fact that the population of Hausa speakers was more since Hausa also serves as the lingua franca in the North, and that Hausa already has developed terms for religious concepts with its contact with Islam. This should not suggest that Igbo lacked terms for religious concepts, but that the concepts are markedly different from the Christian ones the missionaries were intent on introducing. For instance, in his journal entry of August 26, 1841, Schön writes on the Igbo deity *Tshuku* (today spelt *Chukwu*), which he believes is the Igbo word for God: "Their notions of some of the attributes of the Supreme Being are, in many respects, correct, and their manner of expressing them striking" (Schön and Crowther 1970: 50). However, he also writes about a certain "subject on which they are generally agreed – but which, I am sorry to say, I shall have no opportunity of pursuing any further", which is

their common belief that there is a certain place or town in the Ibo country in which "Tshuku" dwells, and where he delivers his oracles and answers inquiries. Any matter of importance is left to his decision, and people travel to the place from every part of the country. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 52-53)

This conceptualization of *Chukwu*[34] is contrary to the Christian conceptualization of the Supreme God and was apparently one of the frustrations of Schön.

Despite his pioneering efforts in Igbo language studies and IBTs, Schön got some criticisms. For instance, Beyerhaus (1959: 130 – 132), as cited in Ogharaerumi (1986: 170), "declares that Schön's work in Igbo at this period was worthless outside Sierra Leone because it lacks thoroughness and has inadequate understanding of the dialectal complexities of the language". Ogharaerumi (1986: 193) adds that

Schön did not study the type of Igbo that was spoken on the Niger. He studied a type of mixed language of various Igbo dialects, spoken at Sierra Leone […] Schön's residual knowledge of Igbo was, therefore, based on an impure form of the language.

Schön discontinued his study of and translations into Igbo, yet he remained the major voice, indeed the sole authority in Igbo language studies at the time. As demonstrated shortly, his opinions at the time on matters concerning Igbo language were final.

In a letter addressed to the Lay-Secretary to the CMS, Schön reflects on his experience during the 1841 expedition and makes suggestions for future missionary activities, some of which apparently influenced the CMS' next lines of action. He acknowledges his limitations as a non-native Igbo and suggests that better work can be done only with native agency. Commenting on Igbo, he observes that

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[34] As expatiated in Chapter 4, despite the fact that *Chukwu* was not the same concept as the Christian Supreme God, this concept is appropriated and used in representing the Christian God in Bible translations before it was later replaced with *Chineke*.

I have paid some attention to this language, have collected a considerable Vocabulary, and also attempted some translations into it; but deem it proper to defer the publication of them, until I shall have had another opportunity of correcting them by the assistance of Natives, and of collecting more information on the various dialects spoken by the Ibos. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 355)

Beyond the linguistic limitation, Schön's suggestion is also hinged on the threat to health that the environment posed to Europeans, as evidenced in the deaths recorded during the 1841 expedition and the fact that the expedition had to be called off. Hence, Schön insists that "[t]he work must chiefly be carried out by native agency". Later in the report, he suggests that it would be easier to convert natives if they are evangelized to by fellow natives, because

the nations in the interior acknowledge the superiority over themselves of their own country people who have received instruction, and are willing, nay anxious, to see them return, and to be instructed by them in the habits of civilized life, and especially in the truth of the Gospel. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 361)

Thus, the fact that there is a general enthusiasm among the recaptives in Sierra Leone to join the missions should be banked on, and some of the recaptives trained and sent into the mission fields.

Schön also emphasized the need for evangelism to be done in the native languages: "It appears to me obvious, that not much good can be expected to result from Missionary Labours unless the various nations are addressed in their own languages, and portions of the Sacred Volume are put into their hand" (Schön and Crowther 1970: 358). Regarding the suggestion in some quarters that English be used instead, in the belief that it would eventually displace the native languages, Schön agrees that this would have eased the work of the missionaries as "the laborious work of executing Translations, and of forming new terms and expressions for Religious purposes, would be unnecessary" (Schön and Crowther 1970: 358). Besides, it would have been easier to effect this among a people

whose language has no written tradition: "it could be effected with less inconvenience in Africa, where the language has less hold on the minds of the people than it has on those whose languages have long since been reduced to writing, and who possess an extensive literature in it". However, Schön insists that imposing English is impracticable, as there is no precedence to support the position. He observes that in multilingual Sierra Leone where the multilingual nature of the society makes it easier for English to be introduced, English has not displaced the native languages of the recaptives, as "the children of the Liberated Africans speak the language of their parents with fluency and correctness" (Schön and Crowther 1970: 358).

In addition to these, Schön stresses the need for data on languages to be collected directly from the natives, as against the second-hand information from "travellers":

> You must collect all information from the lips of the Natives. Things which you take for settled and fixed, you find to be wrong by the next inquiry […] In the vocabulary collected by travellers, I often found whole sentences given for single words; the pronouns connected with the substantives and verbs; and no regards paid to the distinction of gender, of numbers, tenses. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 360)

In other words, to better understand and use the Igbo language effectively, the missionaries were here advised to learn the language directly, first hand, from the native speakers, and not make decisions about the language based on second-hand linguistic data got from non-native speakers.

All of this notwithstanding, Schön's attitude towards the native African agents in Sierra Leone was not all positive, for he nursed a lot of reservations. For instance, in his journal entry of August 28, 1841, he goes beyond keeping a journal of happenings during the expedition to giving suggestions reflecting his personal attitude to the native Africans:

> West Indian people may in many respects be better qualified than the liberated Africans of Sierra Leone: they [the liberated Africans of Sierra Leone] have seen more of European habits; are better acquainted with

agricultural labours; and have a much greater taste for European comforts, if that be considered an acquisition. But it must not be overlooked, that there are many things which would prove a drawback, rather than a help. The high wages they have been accustomed to receive, and the high notions which they have imbibed of their own importance, have, I am afraid, rendered them, in a great measure, unfitted for Africa. Add to this, that many may carry a recollection of the driver's lashes with them; and many more have a disposition to inflict them on others: so that the one would not feel disposed to co-operate heartily with England, and the other would little recommend the civilization system by his conduct. (Schön and Crowther 1970: 63)

He was not alone in having this negative attitude towards the African missionaries, a factor that later became pervasive and led to the purgation of the African missionaries at the Niger mission that was later established, and also affected Bible translation activities. This is discussed in more detail shortly. Meanwhile, the CMS Parent Committee resolved on February 22, I842

that further measures should be adopted, in order to train Natives in Sierra Leone with a view to their being employed as teachers of their countrymen, and in order also to fix the most considerable native dialects and make translations into those dialects for missionary purposes. (Quoted in Walker 1931: 30)

Nevertheless, it took over a decade for this policy to be implemented.

It is pertinent to comment on the orthography situation during this period. The earliest writings in Igbo were done by missionaries "who had little or no expertise in linguistic description" (Bamgbose 1978; 1). Being unfamiliar with some of the sounds they encountered in the language, these missionaries represented the sounds with "values in English or some other European language of the Roman alphabet", an outcome of which was representing the eight vowels of Igbo with the five vowel letters of English. This effort was laden with errors and inconsistencies (Bamgbose 1978: 1).

Meanwhile, in 1848, the CMS had produced its *Rules for Reducing Unwritten Languages in Alphabetical in Roman Characters. With Reference Especially to the Languages Spoken in Africa*[35]. However, feeling that an alphabet "should be presented in a more complete form, and that the scientific principles should be explained upon which it was constructed" (Lepsius 1863: iii), the CMS requested that Professor Richard Lepsius, a German linguist, produce a standard alphabet for use in the missions. A conference was convened in this respect, at which Schön represented the interest of Hausa and Igbo. In other words, the information on which Lepsius represented Igbo in the orthography was got from Schön. In the postscript of Lepsius (1863: 311), the author states that he "conversed orally with" some "learned gentlemen, who had long resided in the respective countries and were practically acquainted with their languages". Although he mentions J. F. Schön as the resource person that provided information on Hausa and Igbo, it has been demonstrated that Schön's stay in Igboland was very short. Whatever the case may be, Lepsius published his standard alphabet in 1855, and a second edition in 1863. The revised version is partly updated with data from Samuel Crowther and J. C. Taylor's works[36] (Lepsius 1863: 276). This became the orthography used by the missionaries in Igboland up till 1930 when a new orthography was introduced, with serious implications for Bible translation into Igbo.

3.1.1.2   Translations during the Second Niger Expedition

Around this period, there was a wave of emigration of Sierra Leoneans of Yoruba extraction back to Yorubaland for evangelism, and some Igbo Sierra Leoneans were also eager to do the same. So, in 1853, at the instance of the CMS, the Rev. Edward Jones, a West Indian and the Principal of Fourah Bay College, led an expedition of three Igbo recaptives "to visit the Niger and report on the prospect awaiting emigrants there" (Ajayi 1965:41), or as Hair (1967: 77) puts it, "to prepare the ground for a general return of the Ibos in Freetown". Unfortunately, the party was told at Bonny that it was impossible "to penetrate up the

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[35] This document was popularly called "Venn's Rules", after Henry Venn who was the Secretary of the CMS at the time the document was produced.
[36] Crowther and Taylor's publications are discussed in the following sections.

Niger because of the hostility of the Delta peoples" (Hair 1967:77). Thus, the party had to call off its mission up the Niger. Ironically, the Niger expedition of the following year was a huge success, which indicated that the report given the 1853 party was exaggerated.

Meanwhile, following the sterling qualities he displayed during the 1841 expedition, Samuel Ajayi Crowther was invited to England and, after a course of study at Islington, ordained a minister by the Bishop of London. Furthermore, improvement in healthcare like the discovery of the preventive qualities of quinine encouraged further attempts at expeditions up the Niger (Crowther and Taylor 1859: iv[37]). Thus, in 1854, another expedition was sent up the Niger, led by William Baifour Baikie, a Scottish explorer, naturalist and philologist. Samuel Ajayi Crowther was part of the team, as was Simon Jonas, the Igbo interpreter that accompanied Schön in the 1841 expedition. Remarkably, this was the first expedition that recorded no loss of life. All the members of the team returned alive, unlike earlier expeditions that had many casualties.

Unlike during the 1841 expedition where Crowther focused more on Yoruba and Schön on Igbo, during this 1854 expedition Crowther devoted more time to Igbo. Being a non-native Igbo speaker, he had to engage the services of Simon Jonas. Together, they translated "a selection of verses of Scripture," analysed numerous sentences and prepared a Primer (Ogharaerumi 1986: 178). Though in terms of quantity Crowther and Jonas did not translate a lot of texts into Igbo, their efforts, in addition to Crowther's recommendations to the CMS Parent Committee in London, influenced later decisions and actions regarding the study of and translations into Igbo. In the said recommendation, Crowther acknowledged the multiplicity of dialects in Igbo, and suggested that Isuama was perhaps the standard dialect to be used for missionary translations:

> Isoama seems to be the leading or popular dialect of this language; all Ibo people who meet together in Sierra Leone, whether of the Abo, Elugu, Aro, or Abadja tribe, speak Isoama, and it has been recommended as the best to be used in the translations into the Ibo language: the Rev. J. F. Schön translated his vocabulary into this dialect.

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[37] This information is from the preface of Crowther and Taylor (1859), signed with the initials W. K.

Interestingly, Crowther makes this suggestion without discovering where Isuama dialect is spoken in the Igbo country. According to Bersselaar (1998: 108),

> [i]n the mission field they did not meet many people who actually spoke Isuama, nor were their Isuama translations properly understood by the Igbo-speaking people they met. The translations also differ considerably from the dialect spoken by modern Isuama, an Igbo group living in the present Owerri area. The nineteenth century missionaries were not aware of the location of Isuama. Their most precise geographical reference to the Isuama dialect was that it was spoken in `the interior.

That notwithstanding, the next phase of translations into Igbo were done into Isuama before the decision to translate into dialects spoken in the Igbo country was taken.

3.1.1.3 Translations during the Third Niger Expedition

Apparently, the fact that the (children of the) native Igbo in Sierra Leone were eager to return to their native lands for evangelism, coupled with the reports and suggestions of Crowther, informed the CMS' decision to send native Igbo missionaries to establish a mission on the Niger. Thus, in 1857, a third expedition was sent up the Niger. This expedition arrived Onitsha with the *Dayspring* on July 26, 1857, and it succeeded in establishing the Niger missions. Members of the team that came included Samuel Ajayi Crowther who was the leader of the CMS Niger Mission, J. C. Taylor who was born in Sierra Leone of Igbo parents, and Simon Jonas who also participated in the first two expeditions. Crowther sailed further to Lokoja, leaving Taylor in charge of the Niger Mission and with an eleven-point direction to guide him in overseeing the mission. The fourth item on the list was that Taylor should "attend to the reduction of the [Igbo] language, correct the primer [earlier prepared by Crowther and Jonas] in the course of using, improve and enlarge the vocabulary and make as much translations as you can".

Ajayi (1965: 130) suggests that Taylor's parents did not speak the same dialect of Igbo, which implies that Taylor learnt a mixed dialect of Igbo at home in Sierra Leone. He was ordained after his studies at Fourah Bay College and pastored a church before embarking on the expedition (Crowther and Taylor 1859: 241). While still in Sierra Leone, he had started studying and translating into Igbo. He showed some of his translations to Bishop Vidal in 1854 who then "gave him instructions in orthography, asked him to collect idioms and proverbs" and encouraged him to do more translations (Hair 1967: 83). However, though a native Igbo speaker, Taylor relied on Simon Jonas to interpret for him at Onitsha (Crowther and Taylor 1859: 249). Taylor's inability to preach to the Onitsha people in Igbo might be attributed to 1) the fact that he learnt the dialect of Igbo spoken at Sierra Leone which is markedly different from that spoken in Onitsha, and 2) he normally preached in Sierra Leone in English and so was not confident enough to preach in Igbo. It was not until 1860 before Taylor could deliver his first sermon in Igbo (Ogharaerumi 1986: 182).

All of this notwithstanding, Taylor resumed translating into Igbo shortly after arriving Onitsha. For instance, his journal entry of August 3, 1857 has it that he "[b]usily engaged in writing out the alphabet in large characters" (Crowther and Taylor 1859: 249) while the entry of August 7 has it that he was "[b]usy in writing my translation" (Crowther and Taylor 1859: 251). On September 13, 1857, he had a church service where he used his revised translation of the Lord's Prayer in Igbo (Crowther and Taylor 1859: 271). One of the challenges Taylor faced was explaining Christian concepts to the natives. For instance, his journal entry of September 10, 1857 shows the natives' confusion with the concept of *salvation* and his struggle to explain the concept to them:

> I asked them about their soul. "Do you know who made you and all men?" They replied, "Tshuku." "What has God done for you?" "He keeps me from every thing." "What thing do you mean?" "From war and every thing, bad as well as good." "Which thing do you call bad?" "*Amusu* (witchcraft) is a bad thing." "When any one dies, where do you think he goes?" "I think he dies, and goes to Tshuku." "Very true," I said: "he dies, and goes to his Maker." "Is death an easy thing?" "No." "But do you think a man can save himself and go where God lives?" Here one of them was puzzled, but the other caught at the

word, thinking he could give a decisive answer, but the word "salvation" they could not fully comprehend. Both of them, after a few minutes struggling, said they did not know. Then I began simply to point out to them the meaning of that little but emphatic word "salvation," and afterwards directed them to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." It is through Him, and in His blood alone, we sinners can have access unto God. They were astonished to hear the word "salvation" illustrated by a canoe being upset, and the people saved from drowning. (Crowther and Taylor 1859: 269)

One sees the natives' confusion about the idea of salvation after death. This confusion stems from the fact that the people's cosmology did not have such a concept. Taylor was then forced to use the imagery of being saved from a capsizing canoe[38] to explain *salvation*. Although Taylor did not fully convince his listeners, he at least succeeded in introducing the idea, which follow up teachings would convince them of. Consequently, Taylor rounds off the day's journal entry thus:

We had now ocular demonstration, in the mass of the heathen around us that they are not far from being enlisted under the banner of Christ. I pressed it home to them, and asked them to carry it to their friends, and tell them what they had learnt today. (Crowther and Taylor 1859: 269)

The arrival of Christian missionaries among the Igbo over the years had started influencing the peoples' worldview. For instance, in the penultimate quote above, Taylor equates "Tshuku" with "God". However, Schön's presentation of "Tshuku" above does not equate the deity to the Christian God. Even Taylor's journal entry of August 8, 1857 describes Tshuku as a god: "I questioned him about [...] Aron, the consulting place of all the Ibo tribe concerning Tshuku, their god" (Crowther and Taylor 1859: 252). So, Taylor's identifying Tshuku as God in the quote above indicates the missionaries' gradual appropriation of the Igbo (Aro) deity as the equivalent for the Christian God. In addition, Taylor's question on

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[38] Onitsha is a riverine town and so the idea of a canoe capsizing is familiar to the natives.

whether a man can save himself and "go where God lives" was apparently confusing, for the people perceived "Tshuku" as living at Aro and not at some space in the spiritual realm.

In recognition of his insufficient knowledge of Igbo and the need to better this, Taylor got permission from Crowther to visit Schön, the only European "expert" on Igbo language at the time, at Chatham, England. According to Ogharaerumi (1986: 183), "Taylor's visit was specifically undertaken to enable Schön give him the needed consultation on the grammar of the Igbo language". While with Schön, Taylor was reported to have "made considerable progress in his Ibo translations; the Prayer Book selections are nearly through the press and the M.S. of the Gospel of St. Matthew is completed"[39].

However, Taylor and Schön disagreed on certain linguistic features of Igbo, which led to their parting ways unceremoniously. In a letter to Crowther, Henry Venn, the CMS Secretary at Salisbury Square, reports that Schön "has had a very difficult task, for Mr. Taylor was by no means willing in the first instance to follow his guidance". Venn adds that although Taylor "has certain talents in great perfection", he lacks the talent of reducing a language to a grammatical or uniform system"[40]. This rift would affect Taylor's progress in translations into Igbo, discussed shortly. Meanwhile, in the early 1860s, Taylor "succeeded in translating the four gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and St Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians and Philemon into Isuama (Owerri) dialect of Ibo language" (Azikiwe 1961: 337). Other portions of the Bible translated into Isuama include Paul's Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians. These translations were published by the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS).

At this juncture, it is pertinent to state that what is generally termed "Isuama" in the literature on missionary works might actually encompass words from other dialects of Igbo and even languages other than Igbo. For instance, Bersselaar (1998: 108) observes that this dialect

> contained words which stem from different Igbo dialects, and even some
> words which seem to have been incorporated from Yoruba and the Niger

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[39] Colonel Dawes to Crowther, July 22, 1859, CMS CA3/L/39 (cited in Ogharaerumi 1986: 185)
[40] Venn to Crowther, Dec 22, 1859, CMS CA3/L/43 (cited in Ogharaerumi 1986: 189)

Delta languages, and thus nowadays would be considered to be from substantially different languages.

Tasie (1996b: 64) adds that although

> [t]he bulk of Taylor's work in Igbo, admittedly, was in the Isuama Igbo [...] his work sometimes also showed traces of some sort of an amalgam of the major dialects of Igbo, especially the Onitsha, Isuama, and the Igbo spoken in the Niger Delta (also known as Mbamiri Igbo). Taylor himself was basically Isuama-speaking, and he lived in Onitsha. The presence of the Mbamiri Igbo might, however, suggest that the traces of "amalgamated Igbo" in his translations were probably not by accident but a conscious attempt by Taylor to produce a more widely accepted Igbo than Isuama.

Tasie's (1996b) use of "Mbamiri Igbo" here is rather curious. Literally, "mbamiri" is a compound word formed from *mba* "community" and *mmiri* "water/river". So, the term refers to riverine communities. Onitsha also belongs to the riverine Igbo communities and the vibrant trade relations among these communities, as shown in Crowther and Taylor (1859), make it difficult to distinguish one dialect from another. At best, the dialects of these communities exist in a continuum such that dialectal differences become clearer among communities that are distant from one another. Be that as it may, Tasie's (1996b) view shows that Taylor's attempt at consciously creating an Igbo with wider acceptance foreshadowed Dennis' "Union Igbo" expatiated below.

In 1866, Taylor completed his translation of the NT into Isuama and sent the manuscript to the CMS authorities in Salisbury Square, London, who in turn forwarded it to Schön for verification. Schön's assessment of the translation was negative. He "advised that the manuscripts be returned to Taylor for revision in accordance with his own view of the Igbo language" (Ogharaerumi 1986: 189). He sees Taylor's translation as "defective" and as such would not "advise the Bible Society to print them without further revision"[41]. In his defence, Taylor stood his ground, arguing that, being a native speaker of Igbo unlike Schön,

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[41] Henry Venn to Crowther, Dec 23, 1867. CMS CA/L/252 (quoted iin Ogharaerumi 1986: 190)

his views on Igbo were superior to Schön's: "my learned friend, Mr. Schön, cannot do better in the [Igbo] language than I who have actually been on the spot and have the advantage of acquiring it from the lips of my parents"[42]. He adds that "I cannot correct him in his native language" because "however perfect I might be in the German language, it will be impossible for me to correct a German whose language is his element". Taylor's insistence was not based solely on the fact that he was native Igbo, he also claims to "have read the returned MSS to many of the Ibos here and found it correct". In other words, his field experience indicated that his views on the translations were superior to Schön's. Unfortunately for Taylor, the CMS authorities took sides with Schön and thus Taylor's translation of the complete New Testament was never published.

Ogharaerumi (1986: 188 – 200) submits that the CMS' authority's act of taking sides with Schön against Taylor was misguided and hasty, and that an unbiased analysis of the situation would have yielded a different result and Igbo language would have been saved the over thirty years of inactivity resulting from this hasty decision. Although the exact defects Schön identified in Taylor's translations and the various linguistic issues on which both men disagreed were not stated, Ogharaerumi (1986) suggests that the background and experiences of both men would give some insight into these grey areas.

One, Ogharaerumi (1986) insists that Taylor's defence of his translations based on the fact that he was a native Igbo speaker unlike Schön, "can not be easily refuted. Schön could not have corrected even a mother-tongue Igbo speaker who had not done any linguistic investigation into the language". He adds that "[w]hen we add to Taylor's mother-tongue competence the fact that he had spent at least 12 years in analysing and translating into the language in Sierra Leone and on the Niger, it is clear that he had important advantages over Schön" (Ogharaerumi 1986: 192). On the other hand, Schön was German, never mastered speaking Igbo and had a very brief and interrupted stay among Igbo native speakers to have mastered the language. As at when Schön rejected Taylor's translations in 1864, it was almost two decades since Schön set foot on Igbo soil and so Schön must have forgotten most of what he learnt in the field.

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[42] Taylor to Venn, April 16th, 1867, CMS CA3/037/23 (quoted iin Ogharaerumi 1986: 192)

Furthermore, Ogharaerumi (1986: 206) suggests that Schön's training in Classics meant that his "knowledge of language was 'Latinized', because of the predominance of Latin in the study of the arts in that period. Most of the linguistic assumptions they made were coloured by their knowledge of Latin and Greek". Thus, Schön's views on Igbo were apparently influenced by his knowledge of Latin and Greek. In addition to this, Ogharaerumi (1986) argues that Schön's linguistic views also must have been influenced by his native language German. He highlighted several phonological and morphological features that German does not share with Igbo, which affected the descriptions and analysis of Nigerian languages done by Schön and some other German linguists working in the field (Ogharaerumi 1986: 201 – 207).

What is more, Ogharaerumi (1986) adds that Henry Venn, having studied Classics like Schön, was biased in favour of Schön, for

> since Schön and Venn shared a somewhat similar view of language, it was easier for the latter to trust the judgement of Schön than that of Taylor. In addition, Venn never had experience in a foreign country outside of Europe. His views of European languages would have greatly influenced his opinion of other languages. It was, therefore, easier for him to accept the views of another European who had had some experience in a non-European language that it was to accept Taylor's. (Ogharaerumi 1986: 195)

This experience apparently marked the end of Taylor's efforts in Bible translations into Igbo, but he and his assistants at Onitsha translated other religious texts, like hymns. Not long after he was transferred to Igbebe and later to Sierra Leone. Taylor resigned from the Niger Missions in 1869 (Ogharaerumi 1986: 210).

3.1.1.4 The Great Purge

Apart from the German J. F. Schön, who was part of the interrupted 1841 expedition, all the other CMS agents involved in Bible translation into Igbo, indeed almost all the missionary

agents on the Niger, were Africans who were re-settled slaves at Sierra Leone or children born to the re-settled slaves. Although it was not a policy of the CMS to only have blacks on the field, the mortality rate of the Europeans forced the CMS authorities to send mainly blacks to the mission field. Events took a different turn in the mid-1870s when

> the reasons for continuing the Niger as a field entirely manned by African agency no longer had strong support. Medical facilities had since improved the European life span in most parts of West Africa. Besides, the ugly rumours of the Niger necessitated that fresh arrangements be made for better and more effective superintendence. On the other hand too, Sierra Leone as a source of support for the evangelistic missionary agency of the Niger had become overstrained, especially as it had its own needs to supply. Also, as time went on, the recruits from Sierra Leone were no longer the generation who spoke the Niger languages. Like everybody else, they too had to learn them. (Tasie 1978: 88)

So, with time, the monopoly of African agency in the Niger missions changed and European missionaries were sent to take over the missions.

Bishop Crowther was the head of both the spiritual and administrative arms of the missions and operated mainly from Lagos. The workload was becoming too much for one person to head. So, Bishop Crowther split the Niger Mission into two branches: the Upper Niger with headquarters at Bonny and the Lower Niger with headquarters at Onitsha. Two senior African clergymen, Dandeson Coates Crowther (Bishop Crowther's son) and Henry Johnson were appointed archdeacons to man the Upper and Lower Nigers respectively. In addition to these two, an English layman, J. H. Ashcroft was sent and "assigned specially to the charge of the economic questions of the missions, to supervise its building operations, keep its accounts and stores and manage the missionary vessel 'Henry Venn'" (Tasie 1978: 89). The idea is that Bishop Crowther should focus on the spiritual issues. However, there were clashes between Crowther and Ashcroft as each tried to assert his authority over the other (Tasie 1978: 90).

Furthermore, negative reports from European merchants against the African missionaries increased and, in 1879, an English missionary, Rev. J. B. Wood, was appointed to investigate the activities of the Niger missions and make recommendations for the future. Ekechi (1972: 60) records that "[a]t a time when the current feeling was that 'Europeans must lead if there is to be any genuine substantial Christianity in the Niger', it was not surprising that Wood should blackball the mission agents and recommend that the African agents should be replaced by white missionaries". Events took a drastic turn and a lot of African agents were dismissed, and many white agents sent to the Niger missions. The first group of white missionaries sent in 1890 to take over the Niger Mission include "the new Mission Secretary, Rev. F. N. Eden (aged 32), Henry Dobinson, with Philip A. Bennett, John Alfred Robinson and Graham Wilmot Brooke" (Fulford 2002: 460-461). The attitudes of this group to the African mission agents in the Niger Mission were quite confrontational. For example, Fulford (2002: 461) reports that

> [t]heir activities came to a head with their suspension of Archdeacon [Dandeson] Crowther during a session of the Finance Committee of the Lower Niger Mission in August 1890, over which Bishop Crowther was presiding – effectively usurping his [Bishop Crowther's] authority. Bishop Crowther resigned in protest. He died in December 1891.

In protest to this purge of Africans on the mission field, the Upper Niger mission, led by Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther, seceded from the parent CMS in London. Sanneh (2009: 176) reports that "in 1892, the Niger Delta Pastorate was established. It was staffed by Africans and supported entirely from local contributions. Five of those dismissed from the Niger Mission joined it". This prevailing atmosphere has some impact on Bible translations, as the next sub-sections would elucidate[43].

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[43] Ekechi (1972) and Tasie (1978) give detailed accounts of this period in the history of the Niger missions.

3.1.1.5 Translations at Bonny and the Niger New Testament

At this period, the inability of Bishop Crowther and other missionaries to locate the part of Igboland where Isuama was spoken forced them to abandon translating into the dialect. In the words of Hair (1967: 94),

> Isuama was supposed to be the dialect spoken by all the Ibos is Sierra Leone, whatever their individual origin, but Crowther began to realize that it was more a mixed than a central dialect, and that whereas a mixed dialect was inevitable in the small Ibo community in Freetown, and was possible because whole stretches of cultural vocabulary relating to traditional practices had been abandoned, it was not easily acceptable in Iboland.

Thus, the Niger missions gave up the attempt at using one dialect for the Igbo country. While the Upper Niger mission situated at Bonny translated into the Bonny dialect, the Lower Niger mission at Onitsha translated into the Onitsha dialect. However, Isuama studies did not stop at this point, for in 1883, Crowther and Schön jointly reviewed and updated Crowther's *Vocabulary of the Ibo language*. It was Crowther's death in 1891 that marked the end of Isuama Igbo studies (Oraka 1983: 27).

Despite the relative progress made in translating Christian texts into Igbo, church services were done mainly in English. Ekechi (1972: 228) attributes this to the missionaries' "uncertainty about the proper Igbo to be used". This could also be attributed to the fact that the missionaries were used to preaching in English and still struggled with Igbo terms for Christian concepts. The 1882 Education Ordinance enacted by the British government for her West African colonies was another challenge for the missionaries' studies and use of Igbo[44], for the Ordinance "made English the language of instruction in schools and government grants conditional on the teaching of English language" (Adegbija 2004: 27). Therefore, there was some pressure to use English as the language of instructions in the mission schools. This situation was resisted a bit with the arrival of Archdeacon Henry

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[44] Nwadike (1983: 14) identifies this 1882 Ordinance as a major factor that led to the crumbling of Isuama Igbo Studies.

Johnson. Henry Johnson was born in Sierra Leone of re-settled slaves. He taught at Fourah Bay College before going to Palestine to study Arabic. His linguistic studies at the Niger missions earned him an honorary MA of the University of Cambridge (Ajayi 1965: 164). Interestingly, Johnson himself could not speak Igbo very well nor could he preach without an interpreter (Ekechi 1972: 275). Yet after a visit to Onitsha, he reports that

> we shall bear in mind the fact that the Christianity of Onitsha will grow weak and sickly, and that it will be devoid of all inherent vitality, if English language be allowed to supersede the native tongue. By all means let the English language be taught at Onitsha, but only as an extra accomplishment. (Johnson 1877: 18)

Elsewhere, he emphasizes his resolve to forestall the domination of Igbo by English:

> My great ambition is to see every station conducting services in the vernacular of the country. People can't feel if they do not understand what we say. For the same reason that the Church of England at the Reformation knocked off reading Prayers in Latin is why we in this country should adopt, not a foreign language, but the tongue 'understanded of the people'[45].

He, assisted by Isaac Mba, translated several texts into Igbo, including the gospels of Mark and Matthew in 1889. Isaac Mba was a native catechist with very good linguistic skills.

Henry Johnson is reported to have used a unique system of orthography to mark various supra-segmentals in his translations. Apparently, these were aspects not covered in the Lepsius orthography being used at the time. Incidentally, this did not get the full support of Henry Hughes Dobinson, the new Secretary of the Niger Mission. Dobinson rejected part of this unique orthography. As reported in Ogharaerumi (1986: 212), Dobinson later wrote that some aspects of the orthography "are, I think, quite necessary, all the others may be dispensed with"[46].

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[45] Johnson to Hamilton, March 20, 1884, CMS G3/A3/0 (quoted in Ekechi 1972: 229)
[46] Dobinson to Wm. Wright, (BFBS Editorial Supt.) Oct 27, 1892. Ex BFBS Corres. Box 29 p. 353.

Johnson's misunderstanding with Dobinson heightened, which brought an end to his contributions to translations into Igbo. He alleged that Dobinson criticized his translations too adversely and then requested that the manuscripts of his translations be sent back to him. At that time, Dobinson had also employed Mba as his Igbo teacher. Consequently, Johnson maintains that, "[p]erhaps as you have taken Mr. Isaac Mba as your Ibo teacher, you will probably make a far better translation than I ever did: if so I am happy to think that your being deprived of mine will be of no less of any material importance to you"[47]. Dobinson did not acquiesce to this request, insisting that "I was, and still am under the impression that translations made by agents of our Society are the property of the Society and not of the persons who made them"[48]. Disappointed and frustrated, Johnson did not continue with linguistic works after leaving the Niger (Hair 1967: 229).

Henry Hughes Dobinson was an Oxford graduate who joined the Niger missions during the great purge. However, he later regretted the mass dismissal of the African agents and privileging of European leadership in the missions. Ajayi (1965: 270) reports that Dobinson "showed more appreciation of the local customs he previously despised and pleaded for more educated Africans to work on the Niger, as they did most of the work, even if Europeans supervised". To some extent he practiced what he preached. For instance, when Isaac Mba was dismissed during the great purge, Dobinson retained him as his private Igbo teacher and translator and even tried to re-employ him, but Mba had then accepted a government job elsewhere (Ekechi 1972: 230). Dobinson persisted and offered Mba free use of the mission house, which Mba reciprocated by dictating his translations of two books of the gospels to Dobinson (Ekechi 1972: 230). However, his treatment of Henry Johnson which led to Johnson's withdrawal from the missions reflects the spirit of the great purge.

Dobinson is usually credited with translating the NT into the Onitsha dialect (c.f. Azikiwe 1961: 337), but records show that the work was done by African agents and his role was mainly supervisory. These African agents include Thomas David Anyaegbunam and Julius Spencer. Anyaegbunam was a CMS catechist and a native of Onitsha (Bosah 1984: 68). He was converted into Christianity when there was no British colony and, being a first-

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[47] Johnson to Dobinson, November 21, 1890, CMS G3/A3/0 (quoted in Ekechi 1972: 229)
[48] Dobinson to Johnson, December 29, 1890, CMS G3/A3/0 (quoted in Ekechi 1972: 229)

generation Christian convert, had "known direct contact with Igbo culture without the filtering influence of a Christian mindset" (Fulford 2002: 477). He was involved in most of the translations done this period, even after the death of Dobinson. On his part, Spencer was born in Sierra Leone of recaptive Africans. His father was Yoruba and his mother Igbo. He trained as a pastor and school teacher at Fourah Bay College before being ordained priest in 1896. Spencer was assigned to the Niger Mission in 1886 and met Thomas John Dennis while on furlough in 1893. That was where he taught Dennis (discussed shortly) Igbo before the latter was posted to work among the Igbo (Ekechi 1978: 6). Dobinson is said to have "provided the needed guidance and consultant help in revising the translations" made by Anyaegbunam and Spencer before they were taken to England for printing (Ogharaerumi 1986: 213).

Meanwhile, in the same decade, Dandeson Crowther and his team were engaged in translations into the Bonny dialect. A translation committee was formed under the supervision of Dandeson Crowther, and between 1886 and 1893, they printed "translations of two catechisms, the Prayer Book, a Gospel and several Epistles, into the local [Bonny] dialect of Ibo" (Hair 1967: 87).

Apparently in his capacity as the acting Secretary of the Niger missions, Dobinson oversaw all the translations made at the Bonny and Onitsha missions. In 1897, he reports that

> [w]e are quite out of the Igbo Gospels now and my present aim is to revise the Four Gospels in Igbo during this year so as to enable the New Edition to be printed in 1898. In preference to Upper Igbo it would read 'Niger Ibo' and for Lower Ibo, 'Isuama Ibo'. The distinction is clear. Niger Ibo being that spoken on the banks of the Niger River where the C.M.S. are at work, and Isuama Ibo being the term given to the interior dialect which is used at Bonny. I am sure that Archdeacon Crowther would approve of this proposed change[49].

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[49] Dobinson to Wright, Jan 30, 1897, BFBS 35 p. 245 (quoted in Ogharaerumi 1986: 214).

Here, it is seen that Dobinson was revising translations made at the Bonny mission as well as those made at the Niger mission. Secondly, one also observes a unilateral decision on how translations from both missions would read. Ogharaerumi (1986: 215) suggests that there is no evidence to show that Archdeacon Crowther was contacted about the choice of the term "Isuama" for the Bonny dialect, because he would have likely objected to the choice as "Isuama" "properly belongs to the dialect of Central Igboland, spoken in and around Owerri".

Incidentally, Henry Dobinson did not live to see the completion of the translation of the NT into Igbo, for he died in 1897, and his tasks were taken over by Thomas John Dennis, an English missionary who joined the Niger Missions in 1894. Dennis was born at Langley in Sussex, England in 1869. He attended the CMS Preparatory Institute at Clapham in 1889 and the CMS Training College at Islington, London from 1890 to 1893. He studied Greek and Hebrew while at Islington. He obtained a BA (Hons) from Durham University in 1897 and was later awarded an MA degree from Oxford in 1917 in recognition of his translation work in the Niger missions (Ekechi 1978: 2). Dennis served as Acting Vice Principal at Sierra Leone, where he was taught Igbo by Julius Spencer, and while at Onitsha, he employed the services of G. N. Anyaegbunam and Ephraim Agha (Ogharaerumi 1986: 216 – 7).

Under the supervision of Dennis, Anyaegbunam completed the translation of the NT into the Onitsha dialect of Igbo in 1898. In a letter to his father, Dennis reports that Anyaegbunam "has finished the New Testament alone and we are now revising from the Epistle to the Hebrews onwards so that it may be ready for printing"[50]. This translation was published in 1900 after which Dennis and his team embarked on the work of translating the OT into the same dialect of Igbo. He reports that "I am rapidly getting all the Old Testament in hand as some 6 natives are hard at work upon it, but all will need a large amount of revising"[51]. This shows that Dennis worked with at least five Igbo native speakers on the project, in addition to Anyaegbunam. The team made a lot of progress in the translation of the OT into Igbo up till 1904 when emerging events resulted in the

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[50] Dennis to Father, March 1, 1898, CMS ACC 89/FI.
[51] Dennis to Father, March 15, 1901, CMS ACC 89/FI (quoted in Ogharaerumi 1986: 220)

halting of translations into different dialects and the creation of a supposed unifying "Union" Igbo.

3.1.1.6   The Union Igbo Translation

By the close of the 1800s, missionary works had not progressed far into the interior of the Igbo country owing to the limited road access available to the mission agents. However, the Royal Niger Company's loss of its charter in 1899 and the annexing of the Igbo culture area as part of the British Protectorate of Southern Nigeria changed the situation. According to Isichei (1973: 153), the development of colonial rule and its gradual spread over Igboland

> helped the spread of mission work by improving communications and creating a context of 'law and order' … [which led] to missionary penetration of the whole Ibo interior in years to come. The spread of colonial rule gave missions a new prestige and authority, for now towns invited them in the hope of obtaining friends and advocates *vis-à-vis* their new rulers.

Fulford (2002: 463) adds that "[t]he advances won by imperial arms brought greater facility and safety of travel, and protection for converts and churches."

Furthermore, during this same period, other Christian missions had been established in different parts of Igboland and there was fierce competition among them. These missions include the Roman Catholic Missions (RCM) based at Asaba and Onitsha, the then United Presbyterian Missionary Society based at Old Calabar, the Primitive Methodists based at Uzuakoli, in addition to the existing Lower Niger CMS mission at Onitsha and the breakaway Niger Delta Pastorate in Bonny (Fulford 2002: 464). There was some urgency to reach more Igbo converts before other competing missions would do so, and Bible translation was seen as a veritable tool for this campaign. At this period, translations of the Scriptures were being made by the Presbyterians as well as the CMS and the Delta churches (Fulford 2002:464).

Now, as the early Christian missionaries had not penetrated the Igbo interior, they did not realize the extent of the dialectal differences among the Igbo communities. This realization, facilitated by the spread of colonial rule, created the need to have translations of the Bible that would be understood by a larger number of the Igbo population. Thus, Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther wrote to the BFBS suggesting that the Bible be translated into Isuama Igbo. His argument was that Isuama Igbo "extended from Bonny eastwards to Bende and Arochuku and as far north as the 'back of Onitsha'-the southern hinterland of the Onitsha district", all of which, he believed, constituted "the Ibo kingdom proper" (Fulford 2002: 465). Herbert Tugwell, the Bishop of West Africa, acquiesced to this and Crowther was authorized to embark on this translation into Isuama Igbo. One might add that Archdeacon Crowther's choice of Isuama might have been influenced by his father, Bishop Crowther's earlier support of and works on Isuama Igbo before the latter's death. However, this project was soon given a moratorium by Tugwell at the instance of Archdeacon Dennis.

In an article published in July 1904, Dennis writes on the need for "a conference of translators from Onitsha, Bonny and the Cross River, to discuss the feasibility of making a translation that will do for the whole Ibo country." He must have discussed this with Tugwell, for the latter had written a month earlier to the CMS Parent Committee informing them that he had invited Archdeacon Crowther of the Niger Delta Pastorate in Bonny and the Secretary of the Presbyterian mission in Old Calabar to a Conference scheduled for August 1904, the aim of which was to discuss the possibility of one version of the Scriptures for the whole of the Igbo race (Fulford 2002: 465). The Conference was held in October and the delegates included Archdeacon Crowther and Rev. J. Boyle, an African, from the Delta Pastorate, Julius Spencer, George Anyaegbunam and N. Nzekwu, all Igbo-speakers from the CMS Onitsha, and two CMS missionaries based in Onitsha, Smith and Miss E. A. Warner. The conference was chaired by Rev. S. R. Smith. Incidentally, Dennis could not attend the Conference and the Presbyterian mission did not have any delegate present.

Discussions at the Conference centred on the possibility of using either the Onitsha or Isuama dialect for translations for the whole Igbo country. Delegates from each zone resisted the attempt to "impose" another dialect on them and the meeting ended without

any specific dialect adopted. Thus, it was agreed that translations be produced in the different dialects and Tugwell lifted his moratorium on translations into Isuama.

However, Dennis who had been away when the Conference was held, would not accept the outcome of the conference and thus requested for a second Conference. In a letter to Rev. J. H. Ritson, Secretary of the BFBS Editorial Sub-Committee, Dennis expressed his confidence that he could convince the Bonny delegates on the need for "a version of the Holy Scripture that will be intelligible to all Ibo readers whatever their dialect" (Goodchild 2003: 138). The goal was that, "eventually our [the CMS Onitsha] work and that of the Delta Pastorate will be one". This idea of uniformity appealed to the BFBS and they immediately committed funds for the project (Fulford 2002: 468). This second Conference, held in August 1905, was chaired by Tugwell and attended by delegates from the Delta, Onitsha and the Presbyterian station at Unwana. Dennis was also present.

Unlike Bishop Crowther who saw Isuama Igbo as the standard and purest form of the language, and Archdeacon Crowther who believed Isuama to be the dialect with the most spread, Dennis believed Owerri Igbo to be the pure and original dialect of Igbo, and so should be the foundation for the proposed Union Igbo. Fulford (2002: 471) explains that

> [t]his conception was the kernel of the idea of Union Ibo. It involved locating the purest example of the language, and translating under its influence, so to speak, yet not into its dialect; rather the utilitarian principle of comprehension by the greatest number would determine the translation of the sense of the text. It was to be a new, mixed dialect based in some sense on the 'parent' Igbo of Owerri.

Dennis' position was hinged on the belief that although Igbo had (and still has) a lot of dialects many of which are not mutually intelligible, one could still talk about

> "the Igbo language", now dispersed into variant dialects, but possessing sufficient latent coherence for a common translation in a composite dialect. This was possible thanks to the influence of some lost cultural centre – which is implied in the notion of purity and in the parental language invoked by

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> Dennis – whose speech loosely approximated to the speech of the Owerri
> Igbo. (Fulford 2002: 471)

In a sense, Dennis' paradigm is not too different from that of the Crowthers, as they seem to agree that a dialect of Igbo is purer and more original than other dialects. However, while the Crowthers believed this to be Isuama supposedly spoken at Bonny, Dennis believed it to be the Owerri dialect. Furthermore, although the Crowthers' Isuama is a mixed dialect just like Dennis', Isuama evolved naturally and was spoken in Sierra Leone unlike Dennis' Union Igbo which would be "created" from different Igbo dialects and used only in writing.

Be that as it may, the Africans at the Conference again opposed the idea of a Union Igbo. For instance, Rev. George N. Anyaegbunam, brother to T. D. Anyaegbunam, raised doubts as to whether the Union translation would be understood at Onitsha, and Dennis countered that regional variations of vocabulary would be included in the margins to aid the readers. The Rev. Boyle of the Delta churches also feared that the Union translation might be so general that no dialect would understand it. To prove the feasibility of the project, the delegates from Onitsha, Bonny and Unwana were made to present translations of John 8: 28 in their respective dialects. As the translation into Unwana was markedly different from the other two, the Unwana version was set aside and a Union translation was made from the Onitsha and Bonny translations. A boy from Onitsha was called in and, with some help, was able to do a back-translation into English. Though not too convinced, the delegates later acquiesced to Dennis' proposal. It was also agreed that the Unwana dialect be removed from the proposed Union Igbo[52]. Dennis reports to his mother that

> [w]e have today completed the Ibo Language Conference, and I personally
> am deeply grateful to God for His manifest presence and guidance through
> our sittings. We have been able to see eye to eye on the various matters
> discussed as I scarcely dared to hope we should. If the unanimous
> recommendations of the Conference are accepted by the C.M.S. ... it seems

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[52] They later had to rescind this decision and Unwana dialect was included in the Union translation (Ogharaerumi 1986: 239)

that my work during the next few years will be to endeavour to produce a translation of the Scriptures which can be used everywhere in this country[53].

Although Dennis describes the recommendation as "unanimous", the metaphor of seeing "eye to eye" indicates that the consensus did not come easily. The prevailing atmosphere at the missions probably affected the outcome: the leadership positions in the missions were manned by European missionaries and so the African delegates had to agree with the position of their superiors. Besides, the fact that the conference was reconvened after a decision was reached the previous year shows that the authorities had already agreed on an agenda and were only trying to give it an image of a consensus. What is more, all of this happened in the wake of the great purge of the African missionaries and the take-over of power by the European agents. So, in a way, the decision making was a legacy of the purge.

It should also be noted that, at this point, Taylor's translations of portions of the NT as well as translations made by Archdeacon Crowther and his team, all in Isuama dialect, were in circulation. Also in circulation was the translation of the NT and some books of the OT into the Onitsha (Niger) dialect. The Niger NT was then used as the basis for creating the Union Igbo NT, i.e., the Niger NT was re-written into Union Igbo (Bosah 1984: 68).

Furthermore, the Union Igbo NT was translated by a committee set up by Dennis comprising Dennis himself, Anyaegbunam, Onyeabo, Isaac Aneke, and Nzekwu, representing the five major language areas of Owerri, Onitsha, Bonny, Unwana, and Arochukwu (Ekechi 1978: 23). Although Dennis knew Greek and Hebrew, there is no evidence that these Igbo agents were versed in these languages. So, the translations were apparently made from an English based source text and Dennis brought his knowledge of Greek and Hebrew to bear in the revisions of the translations. The task of translating the Union Igbo NT started in October 1906 and was completed in November 1907 and published in 1908.

The reception of the NT of the Union Bible was not encouraging. Some Igbo natives would not read it because it was difficult to comprehend. Thus, a number of steps were taken to

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[53] Dennis to Mother, August 16, 1905, ACC 89/FI

enforce its acceptance and use. First, it was adopted by the CMS as the medium of instruction in religious education. Second, the CMS organized classes to teach young people to read in Union Igbo. Sequel to this was the organization of examinations and prizes awarded to the best readers. Over time, owning a copy of the NT became somewhat of a symbol of enlightenment (Ogharaerumi 1986: 246).

However, this was not a pervasive sentiment, as the Onitsha mission continued to resist the Union translation. A test of the Union NT at Onitsha revealed serious resentment for the translation:

> They felt that the Union Bible [NT], good as it seemed, would not meet the needs of the speakers of the Onitsha dialect. They recommended the retention of the Onitsha version which had been in circulation for many years. Then they suggested the printing of a bilingual Bible which would incorporate the translations in the Onitsha and Owerri dialects or an Onitsha translation with Owerri in the margin or vice versa. (Ogharaerumi 1986: 251)

When all efforts to persuade the Onitsha missions to accept the Union translation failed, the CMS were forced to print

> an edition of 4,000 copies of the adapted Union Version N. T. to be sold at l/6d, or (2) an edition of 4,000 of the old Onitsha Version N.T. [to be sold at l/6d] or (3) permission to print a large edition of the old Onitsha Version N.T. on trade terms; and (b) 500 copies of the Old Onitsha Version Pentateuch[54].

The translation of the Union Igbo OT which started in May 1909 was completed by May 1911. However, it was not produced until 1913. Like Schön and Taylor before him, Dennis and his team had a lot of difficulty expressing Christian concepts in Igbo. For instance, Dennis reports that they spent a long time in resolving how to express "visit the sins of the fathers upon the children" in Igbo, and that "[m]any of the words with which we get hung up in the part of the Bible are names of objects entirely unknown in the Ibo Country. We

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[54] Smith to Kilgour, February 3, 1912, BFBS Editorial Dept. Igbo File (quoted in Ogharaerumi 1986: 254)

are compelled to transliterate at times and at other times manage by a sort of paraphrase"[55]. In other words, their translational problems included finding the appropriate terms for Christian concepts like *sin* as well as for items not found in the Igbo culture area and thus for which there were no terms in Igbo.

In the meantime, attitudes towards the Union Igbo Bible remained largely negative. Ogharaerumi (1986: 260 – 276) presents the different shapes this resistance took, which would not be necessary to replicate here. Suffice it to highlight an incident that gave the UIB some victory, albeit temporary. At a conference held in 1919 to decide the future of the UIB, delegates from Onitsha and Awka spoke against the translation. In response, Rev. F. W. Dodds of the Primitive Methodist Mission remarked that "if the Awka and Onitsha people had such difficulty in reading and understanding the U.I. Version, then all he could say was that they showed themselves to be less intelligent than the rest of the Ibos"[56]. This rather intimidating challenge silenced the opposing voices at the conference.

3.1.2   The Native Igbo Era: 1965 - 2007

Unlike translations in the missionary era, translations done in this second stage originated with and were done by native Igbo Christians. So, all the decisions and actions were directed and executed by Igbo native speakers. Possible exceptions to this are instances where the translators are anonymous and so there is no data to account for their background. I begin the discussion here with the attitudes of the Igbo speakers towards the UIB.

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[55] Dennis to Mother, July 15, 1909, CMS ACC 89 (quoted in Ogharaerumi 1986: 242)
[56] Banfield to Kilgour, January 22, 1920, BFBS Editorial Sub-Committee Igbo Bible File (quoted in Ogharaerumi 1986: 270)

3.1.3.1 Negative Attitudes towards the Union Igbo Bible

Union Igbo died with the death of Archdeacon Dennis and T. D. Anyaegbunam as there was nobody to continue producing texts in that dialect of Igbo. Consequently, as nobody could revise the UIB, it remained the only complete Bible translation available in Igbo for almost 8 decades. That notwithstanding, attitudes towards it remained negative, being rejected by Protestants and Catholics alike: "[t]he Catholics rejected it on the grounds that it had many Protestant overtones, the Protestants were also dissatisfied with it, because its language was unnatural" (Ogharaerumi 1986: 291). Igbo scholars also treated it as an unfortunate chapter in the history of Igbo language. For instance, Nwachukwu (1983: 13 – 14) submits that Union Igbo

> lives only in the pages of the old Protestant bible. Its collapse as a literary
> dialect is due to two main factors […] namely (i) its artificiality, and (ii) lack
> of official backing coupled with the indifference of the educated Igbo to their
> language and consequently, the absence of any machinery to propagate it.

To Emenanjo (1975: 117), Union Igbo was bedevilled because it "was based on five discontinuous Igbo dialects – Onitsha, Owerri, Bonny, Arochukwu and Unwana and which was manufactured […] by the superhuman intelligence and misguided over-enthusiasm of Archdeacon Dennis!" Emenanjo (1975) suggests that perhaps the fate of Union Igbo would have been different if the dialects from which it was constructed were continuous, because this would reduce its level of artificiality. The paradox of "superhuman intelligence" and "misguided over-enthusiasm" in Emenanjo's (1975) description of Dennis shows his disdain for the Union Igbo project.

Perhaps, the most critical voice in recent times against the UIB on the one hand, and the Union Igbo on the other, was Chinua Achebe, arguably the most celebrated novelist of Igbo extraction. Achebe (1979: 34) maintains that "the ultimate result of his [Dennis'] task has been more disastrous to the emergence of a creative Igbo language and literature than any other single factor; perhaps more than all the other factors together". His argument is that,

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because Union Igbo was never a spoken language, it stifled literary creativity as the Igbo could not produce literary works in it. Two decades later, Achebe laments that the

> story of Dennis and the Union Bible has been a great regret to me in several ways. But the greatest one of all is how the opportunity the Igbo Bible had to be the headwater of Igbo literature was thrown away. The opportunity was thrown away so Dennis could have a chance to experiment in someone else's language. (Achebe 1999)

Interestingly, Achebe's views were challenged by Nwadike (2005), who insists that the Union Igbo project was "mere intra-language borrowing – introducing certain words from dialects into the mainstream of Igbo in order to enrich it, and adopting the more universal versions of lexicals to become the standard" (Nwadike 2005: 98).

Viewed in relation to the present study, Nwadike's (2005) point is telling for some of the lexical choices of the UIB emerged the standard expressions in Igbo. Besides, the Union Igbo project could be said to have foreshadowed the modernization strategies of the Igbo Standardization Committee discussed in Chapter 2. As noted in Chapter 2, the ISC modernized Standard Igbo by, among others, giving dialectal words specific functions in the standard variety of Igbo.

3.1.2.2 On the Monopoly of the Union Igbo Bible

Despite these negative perceptions of Union Igbo, one wonders why the UIB maintained some monopoly until 1966 when the NT of the Igbo Living Bible appeared and 1988 when the complete ILB was published (Nkwoka 2000: 327). Several factors contributed to this, one of which is the negative attitude of educated Igbo to their language, already highlighted above. Another is the change of language of instructions in missionary schools from Igbo to English and the orthography controversy (Oyali 2015a: 402 – 404). Though the CMS-run schools used Igbo as the language of instruction, the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) opted for English instead. The choice of English was predicated on the economic benefits that

went with proficiency in English. What is more, the 1882 ordinance which favoured English above indigenous Nigerian languages and stipulated that missions would not receive government subvention unless they used English as the language of instruction further made matters difficult for the CMS. Hence, faced with the prospect of losing their converts to the rival RCM, the government policy for English language and the fact that English has become a status symbol and meal-ticket, the CMS had to accede that "no up-to-date gentleman would now think of using his own language to express himself" (Ekechi 1972: 178). This distracted attention from further studies of Igbo, including making new translations of the Bible.

The other factor that drew attention away from Igbo was the orthography controversy. As noted above, the CMS did their translations and publications in the Lepsius orthography and when the government introduced the "African orthography" in 1927, the CMS rejected it. Oraka (1983: 34) identifies the following as some of the reasons the CMS gave for rejecting the proposed orthography: 1) it would mean spending money to re-write all the texts already produced in the Lepsius orthography, 2) it would create some confusion and difficulty as it would amount to learning to read and write anew, and 3) it would slow down the development of a literary Igbo as no typewriters had then been configured with the newly introduced characters. To further worsen the situation, the RCM accepted the new orthography, a move that is said to be inspired by the desire "to discredit and negate any earlier endeavours of their archrival: the CMS" (Igboanusi 2006: 165). Nwadike (1983:19) records that publishing companies like Oxford University Press refrained from publishing in Igbo pending the resolution of the orthography and dialect conflicts, while those that did publish in Igbo could not find buyers due to divided loyalties to the orthographies. They had to abandon the project. The orthography controversy is also cited as one of the factors that delayed the publication of a Catholic translation of the Bible in Igbo: "In the face of no one generally accepted orthography, it was not conducive for the Roman Catholic Mission to translate or publish works especially enduring works like the Bible and related literature in Igbo" (Adiele 1996: 102).

These developments ensured the complete monopoly of the UIB, until several historical incidents heralded a new wave of Bible translations into Igbo.

3.1.2.3   The Igbo Revised Edition

The need for the Igbo Revised Edition (IRE) was predicated on three factors, as explained in the *Okwu Nkọwa*[57] of the complete IRE published in 2007. One is the need to have the Bible in the current Standard Igbo dialect. In an interview with Ogharaerumi, Bishop A. O. Iwuagwu, a key figure in the IRE project, says that the IRE is made in "Common Igbo[58]" because this dialect is current and more acceptable to the wider generality of Igbo people (Ogharaerumi 1986: 300). This became necessary because of the artificial nature of Union Igbo, which resulted in its rejection by majority of the Igbo. The second factor is the need to update the Bible with current Igbo words and idioms. Considering that it was almost a century between the publication of the complete UIB and the IRE, a lot of new words have entered Igbo and/or gained currency in the language and this should be used in the new translation in replacement of the archaic, unpopular and/or non-idiomatic words and expressions in the UIB. A third factor is the need to have the Bible in the current standard Igbo orthography. As observed earlier, the orthography controversy discouraged writing in Igbo, and with its relative[59] resolution, there is need to have the Bible in the official standard orthography.

That said, the story of the IRE has some bearing with the Second Vatican Council of 1962 to 1965. Before Vatican II, it appeared there was some unwritten but observed prohibition of Catholics from reading non-Catholic books, especially the Bible (Adiele 1996: 105). So, the Igbo Catholic faithful were not reading the UIB. Adiele observes that the Second Vatican Council influenced the translation of the IRE in two ways: 1) it relaxed the ban on the use of Protestant books especially the Bible that bore no *imprimatur* and *nihin obstat*, and 2) it introduced three Scripture readings at Sunday mass. Thus, there is increased demand for scripture readings during mass and the only Bible available in Igbo at the time – the UIB –

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[57] Literally "explanatory statement". The points are presented in Igbo, what is given here is a paraphrase in English.

[58] Another term for "Central Igbo" discussed in detail in Section 1.2.2.

[59] Even though there is an official orthography, backed by law and used in school examinations, there are still calls for reviews of this official standard. For example, Echeruo (1998) suggests what he calls the New Standard Orthography (NSO), which has not been approved (yet) as the new standard, yet he uses same in his dictionary and other writings in Igbo

became the only available option. So, when the decision to revise the UIB was made, and it was also agreed that it be an inter-confessional translation, the Igbo Catholic faithful readily and fully supported the idea.

In addition to the fore-going factors, the impetus to have an inter-confessional Igbo Bible can be traced to the founding of the Bible Society of Nigeria (BSN) at the instance of Dr. Akanu Ibiam, the first indigenous Governor of the defunct Eastern Region of Nigeria. Dr. Ibiam had, in February 1965, initiated consultations with representatives of most of the Christian denominations on the need to form a national Bible Society in Nigeria, and this resulted in the inauguration of the Society in February 1966. As stated on the website of the BSN[60],

> The Bible Society of Nigeria is a non-profit-making interdenominational Christian organization whose sole mission is to meet the scriptural needs of every Nigerian in general, Christian Churches and Confessions in particular and to help people interact with the word of God.
>
> BSN is not a Church and does not have bias for or against any particular Church denomination. We serve the Churches by providing the Bible which they need in their task of soul winning. We are partners with the Churches in fulfilment of the Great Commission.
>
> We strive to break any known barrier that makes the word of God inaccessible to Christians. This we do by translating the Bible into different Nigerian Languages, publishing and distributing them.

Here, it is seen that the BSN is not biased towards any specific denomination, which explains their embarking on an inter-confessional Bible translation project. It is also seen that the BSN engages in Bible translations on the one hand, and in making the translations devoid of known barriers on the other hand. Such barriers could be linguistic, as seen in the case of the IRE. In the *Okwu Nkọwa* of the complete IRE, it is stated that "[w]e also

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[60] http://biblesociety-nigeria.org/about-us/the-church-bsn/, accessed July 12, 2016.

consulted earlier translations to give clearer meanings in areas that lack clarity of meaning. Borrowed words are also written the way they are used today" (my translation). Though the technique for giving the clearer meaning is not explicitly stated here, the analysis in the next three chapters accentuate this. The statement also alludes to the idea of a spelling convention or standard, which was non-existent in earlier times, as translators spelt words the way they deemed fit.

The first phase of the IRE project started under the chairmanship of Benjamin C. Nwankiti, who was later consecrated Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Owerri. A prominent representative of the Igbo Catholics in the committee was Anthony Ilonu, who also was later made the Roman Catholic Bishop of Okigwe. The inter-denominational makeup of the committee and the proposed translation were believed to help "bridge the gap between the Protestants and Roman Catholics in Igboland" (Ogharaerumi 1986: 303). The translation committee had started work on the translation when the Nigeria-Biafra War broke out in 1967 and translation work stopped.

By the end of the war in January 1970, Benjamin C. Nwankiti had been made Bishop in 1969, and his increased workload forced him to give up his role in the committee. Rev. Dr. (later Bishop) A. O. Iwuagwu of the Anglican Church became the new chairman while Rev. Dr. Anthony Ilonu remained the representative of the Catholic church in the committee. According to Adiele (1996: 107), Iwuagwu and Ilonu were assisted by twelve reviewers drawn from various Christian denominations. They include Eze Akanu Ibiam of the Presbyterian Church, Bishop B. C. Nwankiti and Rev. A. I. Eneasator of the Anglican Church, Rev. Dr. G. Igwe of the Methodist Church and Mr. Izima of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, among others. This list indicates that at least five Christian denominations were represented in the translation, viz, the Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist and Seventh-Day Adventist churches. It also shows that the team was made up of clergymen as well as lay persons. One obvious gap is the absence of women in this committee, as is also seen in earlier and later committees on Bible translations into Igbo.

Despite the devastating effects of the Nigeria-Biafra War, it is claimed that the manuscripts of translation work done under the leadership of Nwankiti were not destroyed by the war

and were handed over to the new team. According to Ogharaerumi (1986: 306), Iwuagwu edited the manuscript inherited from Nwankiti to standardize the style in Common Igbo. He and his team then translated the remaining portions of the NT that were not translated under Nwankiti. The renewed work on the translation started in 1971 and the NT was launched at Christ Church, Uwani, Enugu on April 10, 1983. In a speech given at the 5th Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Enugu, the Bishop of Enugu, the Rt. Rev. Dr Gideon Nweke Otubelu reiterated that the translation is aimed at presenting "the message of the NT in the Igbo that is meaningful, and intelligible to the wider generality of Igbo speakers and readers" (Otubelu 1983), further re-affirming the desire to have a Bible that would appeal to Igbo speakers irrespective of their Christian denomination. In the same speech, Otubelu also mentions that the translation of the OT "had been completed and we eagerly look forward to having the whole Bible in a new translation", but this was not to be until 2007. The delay in publishing the complete translation is attributed to "logistics and the pressing demands of the new office of the two translators as Diocesan Bishops" (Adiele 1996: 108). In other words, as Bishops, Iwuagwu and Ilonu were given more responsibilities and so had less time to devote to the IRE project.

Interestingly, this translation is said to have been done from Greek to Igbo (Otubelu 1983), a view also re-affirmed by Ogharaerumi (1986: 307) who states that

> [b]eing a mother-tongue Igbo speaker, he [Iwuagwu] was at a great advantage in every way. He teaches Hebrew and Greek at the Alvan Ikoku College of Education. These abilities helped him to translate straight from the original text of the Bible into Igbo. Iwuagwu must have used various translation helps which are produced by the United Bible Societies and the Wycliffe Bible Translators.

It is also stated in the *Okwu Nkọwa* of the IRE that "[w]e also consulted earlier translations to give clearer meanings in areas that lack clarity of meaning. Borrowed words are also written the way they are used today" (my translation). The impression given here is that the bulk of the translation was done from the Greek and Hebrew texts, and that recourse to the UIB was minimal. However, the opposite seems to be what happened, i.e., the UIB

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seems to be the major text used in producing the IRE, and the recourse to texts in Greek and Hebrew was done to correct interpretations deemed to have been faulty. This supposition is predicated on several factors. One, on the publication details page, this translation is described as "Igbo Revised Edition", and a revision presupposes the existence of an earlier text which forms the basis of the revision. Two, the descriptive linguistic analysis in the next three chapters of the lexical items in the corpus used in this study, reveals that there is very little difference between the lexical choices of the IRE and the UIB, unlike the marked differences seen in the other translations studied. The major differences between the IRE and UIB seem to be in the choice of orthography. These notwithstanding, unlike the UIB, the IRE introduces section headings in all the chapters to guide the readers and enhance understanding.

Lastly, it is pertinent to note the translation technique said to have been adopted for the IRE. According to Otubelu (1983), the IRE is

> not a word for word translation or formal correspondence translation. Rather it is a fresh attempt to recapture and convey the meaning, so that the reader or the audience can understand, and have a response that is equivalent to that of the original readers. A translation along these lines is known as dynamic equivalence translation. Short sentences are preferred to long ones. So long and involved sentences are broken and a verse or a passage is restructured where necessary to make the meaning clearer.

Here, it is seen that the goal of this translation is not just to transfer the meaning of the source text, but also to evoke a response from the readers similar to the response of the source text's readers (see Nida's formal and functional equivalence in Section 2.2.2). It is interesting to note that the next translation discussed – the Igbo Living Bible – is claimed to have been done using the same technique. Yet, the ILB is markedly different from the IRE, as is highlighted in the next section.

3.1.2.4   The Igbo Living Bible

The need to translate the Igbo Living Bible (ILB) is summarized in the *Nkọwa Mmalite*[61] of the complete ILB published in 1988. Here, it is reported that many people desire to continuously read the Bible in Igbo, but they are discouraged from achieving this because of the numerous unclear words in the (existing Union Igbo) Bible. The ILB is then presented as a translation that is devoid of those obstacles to a continuous reading of the Bible, with the following presented as the unique features of the translation:

1) it uses words everybody could understand;

2) in situations where the reader would have difficulties comprehending the passage, two or more words are used instead of one potentially confusing one;

3) in situations where the meanings of the expressions used in the old Bible has changed, which in turn would confuse the present-day reader, such expressions are paraphrased such that the present-day reader would get the meaning;

4) for words in the existing Bible translation that would require a dictionary or glossary before the reader could understand the passage, paraphrases are used instead because many readers do not have the time to consult dictionaries

5) scholars in Greek and Hebrew, the original languages of the Bible, as well as scholars in Igbo linguistics, reviewed this translation to ensure that the standard Igbo dialect and orthography are used. (My translation)

The translation of the ILB started under the auspices of the Living Bible International in November 1972 by a group of Igbo mother-tongue speakers, which included Jeremiah C. Okorie (Ogharaerumi 1986: 308). Okorie was a graduate of Wheaton Graduate School,

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[61] Literally "Introductory explanations"

Illinois, and one-time Regional Director of Living Bibles International, Nigeria. One major challenge faced in this project, which contributed to the delay in completing it earlier, was the fact that the translators were all part-timers.

Although the ILB project was started four years after the IRE started, the ILB translators were not aware of the existence of the IRE project, nor were the IRE translators aware of the ILB project. It was when the draft version of a portion of the ILB was being tested that a copy got to the Principal of Trinity College, Umuahia, Rev. Canon Onyemelukwe, who later became the Bishop of the Niger Diocese. It was Onyemelukwe that informed the ILB team that there was another translation going on too. Both projects continued anyway, since their philosophies were different.

Inasmuch as both the ILB and the IRE projects started in reaction to the UIB, which was adjudged to be faulty owing to the artificiality of the dialect it is translated into, and also because of the need to use current Igbo words and the current standard orthography, the goals of both translations seem different. On the one hand, the IRE aims at meaning transfer such that the present-day reader of the Bible in Igbo would have the same reaction as the original audience of the Bible texts. On the other hand, the ILB aims at simplicity of Bible reading, because it is believed that that is the only way the present-day readers of the Bible would have a similar response as the original Bible texts audience. Ogharaerumi (1986: 313 – 4) observes that,

> [t]o achieve this [ILB's] objective, there has to be a simplicity of form, description and meaning. A good translation should simplify the material so as to have an expected significance on the least educated person in the receptor culture. To this end, a level of audience is aimed at. In the case of the Igbo, the target is the production of a Bible which will be readable and intelligible to any Igbo mother-tongue speaker who has about four years of formal education either in English or Igbo. The desire is to produce a "popular" edition which the least educated people in the community can understand.

The translation techniques adopted for the Igbo Living Bible are summarized in the five points highlighted above from the *Nkọwa Mmalite* of the 1988 ILB.

One point that is not so clear is the actual source text from which the ILB was translated. In an interview with Ogharaerumi, Okorie says that they used "a variety of sources" which includes "English, Greek, Hebrew and indigenous texts" (Ogharaerumi 1986: 317). However, in an email correspondence with the present researcher, Akibom Ofoegbu, an agent of the International Bible Society[62] (IBS), Nigeria, states that the English version of the Living Bible is the source text for the ILB. However, Okorie and most of the people on the translation team are reported to be trained theologians and had received formal training in translation principles from the Translation Centre at Jos before or during the Igbo Living Bible project (Ogharaerumi 1986: 319).

3.1.2.5   Igbo Catholic Bible

As noted above, the IRE was meant to be an inter-confessional Bible, and the Igbo Catholic faithful were involved in its production. However, owing to doctrinal differences among the different Christian denominations, especially between the Roman Catholic church and the Protestant churches, the Igbo Catholics felt the need to produce a translation that reflects their doctrines. Thus, after the publication of the New Testament of the IRE and while the complete version of the IRE was being delayed by logistics and the exigencies of duties of the key agents who had been made bishops, the Igbo Catholics embarked on their own translation.

In the *Okwu mmalite* section of the Igbo Catholic Bible (ICB) signed by Archbishops Anthony V. Obinna and Albert K. Obiefuna, reference is made to the Second Vatican Council as the incident that reinforced the need for an Igbo Bible for the Igbo Catholic faithful:

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[62]   Information got from the website of the International Bible Society, Nigeria (http://biblicaafrica.com/nigeria/about-us/) indicates that the Living Bible, Nigeria was formed in 1977 and, following a merger with the International Bible Society in 1993, was renamed the International Bible Society of Nigeria.

> For over a century since the gospel of Christ came to our people, the Igbo Christians have yearned to have the Gospel of God in their language. The ideas and directives of the Church Fathers of the Second Vatican Council satisfied that yearning by emphasizing the need for every nation to have the Gospel in their language. (Obinna and Obiefuna 2000: v, my translation)

As observed earlier, this Council introduced three scripture readings during Sunday mass, and, in the absence of an existing translation that suits the Catholic liturgy, individual Catholic dioceses and parishes started doing *ad hoc* translations of the weekly and daily readings (Ezeogu 2012: 174). However, at a meeting of Igbo Catholic bishops on February 5, 1991, presided by the Archbishop Stephen Nweke Ezeanya, the decision was taken to produce an Igbo Catholic Bible (Ifenatuora 2000: vii). Ezeogu (2012: 172) observes that "the bishops wanted an Igbo Bible that is suitable for Catholic liturgical use" and this entails five things:

1. the translation will follow the Catholic canon of forty-six and not the Protestant canon of thirty-nine books of the Old Testament.
2. the order of the books of the Old Testament, and the numbering of the Psalms, will have to follow the traditional Catholic order in the Vulgate, which follows the Septuagint rather than the Masoretic Text.
3. the translation will have to include "necessary and sufficient explanatory notes" as required by the Catholic Church law.
4. where there are textual variants, the translators should follow the variant in the official Catholic Bible, namely, the Vulgate or one of its modern English incarnations, such as the Jerusalem Bible or the New American Bible.
5. this translation will have to be approved "by the Apostolic See or the Episcopal Conference" as demanded by the same Catholic Church law.

Ezeogu (2012: 172) adds that, because this translation would be read in sacred worship, it should "avoid shocking and explicit language, especially in reference to human sexuality".

Ifenatuora (1983) mentions the following as the translators of the ICB: Rev. Fr. Christopher Ifenatuora, Rev. Fr. Chudi-Peter Akaenyi, and Rev. Fr. Ernest Ezeogu. Rev. Fr. Fidelis K.

Obiora compiled and edited the translation, assisted by Rev. Fr. Bernard Nwokeleme and Rev. Fr. Lawrence Eke. Other members of the translation/editing team were G. U. Ukairo, P. A. Nwachukwu, S. U. Oruchalu, I. A. O. Ume, G. A. Dike and M. C. Ngoesi, all of whom are linguists and have published research on Igbo language. This list of Igbo clergy and linguists notwithstanding, Ezeogu (2012: 173), who himself is listed as one of the translators, submits that the translation committee ran into financial difficulties and could not pay the translators adequately. Midway through the project, "the Igbo language experts recruited from departments of Igbo studies in various institutions of higher learning in Nigeria had to withdraw their services because they could not be paid", and the committee had to resort to "the use of interested seminarians". So, the ICB is a product of the combined efforts of the clergymen and Igbo studies scholars listed above as well as the unnamed seminarians mentioned by Ezeogu (2012). Ezeogu (2012) also observes that some portions of the ICB were poorly translated, and he attributes this to the use of non-professional translators and the poor funding of the project.

On the source text used for the ICB, Ifenatuora (2000: vii) submits that a number of texts were used, which include: Biblia *Hebraica Stutttgartensia* (in Hebrew), Septuagint (in Greek), Vulgate (in Latin), the Revised Standard Version (Catholic Edition) and the Jerusalem Bible (both in English). However, Ezeogu (2012) suggests that the use of texts in Hebrew, Greek and perhaps Latin would have been minimal and that texts in English, apparently the Catholic edition of the Revised Standard Version and the Jerusalem Bible, were used. In his words, a "translation from the original languages had been ruled out from the outset, as this would make the project too time-consuming and too expensive" (Ezeogu 2012: 175). Talking specifically about the seminarians' role, Ezeogu emphasizes that the "seminarians […] did not have sufficient knowledge of Hebrew and Greek to work from the original Biblical languages" (Ezeogu 2012: 176). He attributes the portions supposedly translated poorly to this non-proficiency of the seminarians in the original "Biblical languages".

Furthermore, Ifenatuora (2000: vii) also highlights some special features of the ICB. One, the chapters of the various books are broken into subsections each with a heading. Two, the ICB texts are accompanied with drawings to aid the comprehension of the texts. Three,

there are numerous footnotes that explain difficult concepts encountered in the text. What is more, this translation is made into Standard Igbo and also using the recommended Standard Igbo orthography. It should be noted that these special features of the ICB are also used for ideological purposes. For instance, one of the footnotes given in the ICB to clarify difficult concepts is this, provided to clarify the concept of *Ekwensu*:

> This name means a wrongful accuser, a liar, whose work is to lead people into sin. The translation of the name in Hebrew is ekwensu, [...] The bearer of this name is the person held guilty for all the things he did in the works of God and of Christ [...] Defeating him is the last indication of God's final victory. (Footnote c, p. 1495, my translation)

This characterization of *Ekwensu* does not reflect the original Igbo conceptualization of the deity. Rather, it is a transfer of the character of the Christian Devil on an Igbo deity. The footnote is thus a reconceptualization of the *Ekwensu* deity not only to solve a translation problem as there was no Igbo cultural equivalent for the Christian Devil and *Ekwensu* was appropriated to fill the gap. It is also an ideological move to completely change the original meaning of the deity, as not doing so would result in a perception of *Ekwensu* as a heroic deity, which would not be in sync with the character it is used to represent in the IBTs. This elaboration of *Ekwensu* is expatiated in Chapter 5.

3.1.2.6   Igbo New World Translation

The Igbo New World Translation (INWT) of the Bible was published in 2007 by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Brooklyn, New York (Watch Tower, henceforth). The Watch Tower is a society of the Jehovah's Witnesses, a Christian denomination. The website of the Society stipulates that it (the Watch Tower) "is used by Jehovah's Witnesses to support their worldwide work, which includes publishing Bibles

and Bible-based literature"[63]. The Society's translation of the Bible is called *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* and it is reported that this translation has been made, in whole or in part, in over 150 languages[64]. The Igbo version, *Baịbụl Nsọ: Nsụgh.arị Ụwa Ohụrụ nke Akwụkwọ Nsọ*, is one of such translations.

In the *Okwu Mmalite* page of the INWT, it is stated that the Igbo translation was made from the 1984 version of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (INWT: 5). Additional information clarifies that the INWT contains the 39 books of the Hebrew scriptures and "a reprint of the 27 books of the Christian Greek scriptures in Igbo published in 2001" (my translation). This suggests that the New Testament of the INWT was published in 2001, six years before the complete translation was published. The expression *Nsụgharị Ụwa Ohụrụ nke Akwụkwọ Nsọ* in the title of the Bible is a literal translation of "New World Translation of the Holy Book". There is no available information on the committee that did the translation and the background of the translators themselves. These are kept anonymous by the Society, which makes it difficult to comment on the history of this translation. However, since the New World Translations, in whatever language, are all produced by the Watch Tower with the same ideology, certain information on the English version of the New World Translation could be applied to the Igbo version, especially as regards translation policies and principles.

In an article titled "Why have we produced the *New World Translation?[65]*, the Watch Tower submits that, although they were using other translations of the Bible, they later "saw the need to produce a new translation that would better help people to learn the 'accurate knowledge of truth'". In other words, the main motivation for the translation is the belief that other translations of the Bible contain certain perceived inaccuracies, which the *New World Translation* (NWT henceforth) is meant to correct. These perceived inaccuracies are

[63] https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/watchtower-society/, accessed July 12, 2016.
[64] "The Word of Our God Endures Forever" https://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/watchtower-study-september-2017/word-of-our-god-endures-forever/, accessed July 12, 2016.
[65] Published online at https://www.jw.org/en/publications/books/jehovahs-will/new-world-translation/

explained in the Foreword[66] to the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures* (1985). Here, it is stated that existing translations of the Bible into English

> have fallen victim to the power of religious traditions in varying degrees. Consequently, religious traditions, hoary with age, have been taken for granted and gone unchallenged and uninvestigated. These have been interwoven into the translations to colour the thought. (Watch Tower 1985: 7)

In other words, other translations of the Bible are perceived by the Watch Tower as being inaccurate, having been affected by the ideologies of other religious traditions. Thus, the NWT was produced to correct these perceived inaccuracies.

Another perceived inaccuracy is the traditional division of the Bible into Old and New Testaments. On this, the Watch Tower insists that the Latin word translated as "testament" in English refers to "covenant", which makes "testament" misleading. Hence, the Watch Tower prefers to identify these parts of the Bible by the language in which the original texts were written: "Hebrew and Aramaic scriptures" for the "Old Testament" and "Greek scriptures" for the "New Testament" (c.f. Appendix 5d of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*). The INWT has the same titles for the divisions. In the *Okwu Mmalite* it is stated that "the Bible is indeed one book, there is no part of it that has passed its time, or that is now 'old'. There is agreement among its content, starting from the first book in the Hebrew section, to the last book in the Greek section" (INWT 2007: 5, my translation).

Furthermore, another motivation for the translation of the NWT is the need to update the language of the Bible, as languages do "change over time, and many translations contain obscure or obsolete expressions that are difficult to understand" ("Why have we produced the *New World Translation*"). The NWT is meant to present the obscure expressions in a

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[66] Although the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures* is different from the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, both texts were published by the same Society. Besides, the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is one of the three Bibles contained in this publication and so the Foreword contains information on it.

way the reader would understand them, and use current idioms in place of the obsolete ones:

> We have disposed of archaic language altogether, even in prayers and addresses to God [...] The original Bible was written in the living languages of the people of the day, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek; and so the Bible characters addressed God and prayed to him in the same everyday language that they employed in speaking to their fellow creatures on earth. The translation of the Scriptures into a modern language should be rendered in the same style, in the speech forms current among the people. (Watch Tower 1985: 9)

This statement presupposes the existence of an earlier Bible translation whose language has become obsolete and in need of updating. Watch Tower (1985: 7) acknowledges the existence of earlier translations into English, which the NWT is meant to correct. However, regarding the INWT, no reference is made to an earlier translation of the Bible into Igbo. This is clearly an indication of the Watch Tower's rejection of these earlier translations because of the ideologies they are believed to portray. Despite this silence on the existence of earlier translations, findings in this study show that the INWT also used terms created in these earlier translations, which is an indication that they accept some of the lexical innovations of these other translations.

Furthermore, the Watch Tower claims that there are recent discoveries of "ancient manuscripts that are more accurate and closer to the originals", which make for a "a better comprehension of Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek". This translation is then presented as the best translation of the Bible available. Be that as it may, the Igbo version of this translation is made into Standard Igbo and in the Standard Igbo orthography.

This chapter has demonstrated that translations are produced within a given temporal and spatial setting and these settings are factors that influence the whole translation process and product. The chapter has revealed not only the impact of history on Bible translations into Igbo, but also how the choices, actions and inactions of the agents involved in the

translation enterprise have affected the Bible translation landscape on the one hand, and Igbo language on the other.

Although the Bible translations are all made for use in Christiaan religious activities, the motivations for the translations are not necessarily the same. In the missionary era, the driving force was to have the Bible in the language of the people so that it would facilitate their conversion to Christianity. Being that the Igbo language was not yet reduced to writing, it behoves the missionaries to study and reduce the language to writing, an arduous task indeed. With little linguistic experience and poor knowledge of the Igbo language, the missionaries were faced with more challenges than just transferring meaning across languages. They had to create new words to cater for concepts that were not in the people's cosmology or use existing words but complemented with extra teachings so that the people would understand the sense meant in the given context. However, the case was different for translations done in the second epoch, this time by native Igbo Christians. At this point, there were existing translations and so the translators' motivation was not to have a Bible in the language. Rather, they were concerned with simplifying or updating the language of the Bible to reflect current usages. Importantly too is the fact that the Bible became a site to front the ideology of the translating denomination. This point is seen mainly in the translations done by the Igbo Catholics and the Jehovah's Witnesses reflected in their choice of Bible texts – to include or not to include the Apocryphal texts – and in the techniques of representing certain concepts (expatiated upon in the following chapters). It is also not mere coincidence that the translations in the second era started in the height of nationalistic activities across Africa. Bible translation at the time became a site for nationalistic identity and activism, a point further demonstrated in Chapter 6.

Furthermore, the dialects into which the translations were made are also a reflection of the prevailing situation at the time of translation. The first set of translations were made in Sierra Leone, and so the dialect studied and translated into was the Isuama spoken at Freetown. After the missionaries arrived Igboland in the mid-1800s, they were not able to penetrate the Igbo hinterland and so they operated from the fringes. Surprisingly, rather than work with the dialects they encountered, they worked with the dialect they knew from Freetown in the hope of locating where it is spoken in Igboland. With their inability to

locate where Isuama was spoken, they had to discontinue with it and started translating into the dialects of the parts of Igboland where they situated their headquarters, namely, Bonny and Onitsha. Again, with the success at penetrating the Igbo hinterland in the late 1890s, there was the need to have a translation understood by every Igbo speaker. Consequently, an artificial dialect– Union Igbo – was created into which the Bible was translated. This Union Igbo was based on the dialects spoken in areas the missionaries were able to penetrate. According to Achebe (1979: 35), the dialects of Igbo spoken in "the whole territory from Awka through Enugu to Nsukka and Abakaliki and also all the Igbo speaking area west of the Niger" were not included in the Union Igbo project. Clearly, the dialects chosen and included in creating Union Igbo were perceived to be the main dialects spoken in the parts of Igboland known to the missionaries. By the time the translations in the second era began, a lot of progress had been made at evolving a standard dialect of Igbo. So, this became the dialect into which the later translations were made.

A similar situation is seen in the choice of orthography. During the missionary era, the prevailing orthography was the Lepsius orthography of 1855, the Igbo section of which was expanded with the works of J. F. Schön, the major voice in Igbo language studies at the time. The introduction of the African orthography in 1927 created some conflicts as the CMS, which was the major institution involved in Bible translation into Igbo would not accept the new orthography for economic reasons. Their rival, the RCM accepted the new orthography, and so, both orthographies became associated with specific Christian denominations – the Lepsius orthography seen as the CMS orthography and the government's African orthography identified as the Catholic orthography. This rivalry impinged on further productions of texts in Igbo, including Bible translations. However, when this squabble was settled with the introduction of the Ọnwụ orthography, Bible translation works were resumed in earnest and all the subsequent translations were done in the new orthography. Besides the politics in the choice of the Lepsius or the African orthographies, there is also a lot of politics in the power tussle between the European missionaries and the Africans which culminated in some translations being encouraged and others stifled. First, the translations being done by Taylor in the 1860s were questioned by the German Schön who had the backing of the CMS Parent Committee. Frustrated, Taylor

abandoned working for the missions and this marked the end of what would have being the first translation of the complete Bible into Igbo. Perhaps if this translation had succeeded in being completed and published, the future of Igbo Bible translation would have been different. Perhaps, like the Yoruba Bible of the same period which contributed in evolving the Yoruba literary standard, this suppressed translation would have evolved an Igbo literary standard, based on a living dialect of Igbo unlike the UIB whose biggest drawback was that it was an artificial dialect. A second example of a suppressed translation was also a result of some misunderstanding between the African Henry Johnson and the European Henry Dobinson. Again, the African discontinued the translation project, which were inherited and completed by Dobinson and his team. A third instance of Bible translation projects suspended mid-way was the translations into the dialects of Bonny and Onitsha, which had reached advanced stages before the order to discontinue was given. There was already an NT translation into the Onitsha dialect published and the OT was already completed when the English man T. J. Dennis advanced the idea of a Union version. Although the Igbo representatives on the translation committees vehemently opposed the Union translation, they were intimidated by the prevailing power and authority of the Europeans. A Union Bible was not only produced, it was also imposed on the Igbo Christians. Put simply, the final decisions on translations and translation techniques were taken by the Europeans, and at times imposed on the dissenting voices of the Africans.

One does not witness such power tussles, suppression of on-going translations or imposition of disparate opinions in the native Igbo era. The power relations among the different agents and institutions were symmetrical, such that the Bible Society of Nigeria that started their translation before the Living Bible Nigeria could not dissuade the latter from producing their own translation. Besides, although the Igbo Catholics were involved in the translation of the New Testament of the IRE, they could not be discouraged from producing an Igbo Catholic Bible fit for the Igbo Catholic faithful. So, the symmetrical power relations between the different institutions made for the production of four complete Bible translations into Igbo in two decades, after experiencing over five decades without a single Bible translation published.

In conclusion, the era in which the Bible translations into Igbo were made does not only determine the motivations for the translations, it also reflects the prevailing power relations and tussles among the agents and institutions involved. These also greatly affected the translation techniques adopted in the various Bible translations. In the following three chapters, I explore the techniques for creating lexical items in the translations and the representations of Christian concepts in the Bible, first from a synchronic perspective (Chapters 4 and 5), and then from a diachronic viewpoint (Chapter 6).

CHAPTER 4

LEXICAL EXPANSION IN IGBO BIBLE TRANSLATION

Having presented the historical and political background to the different Bible translations into Igbo in Chapter 3, this chapter investigates the different lexical processes employed in the IBTs in expanding the Igbo lexicon to make it able to express the ideas in the Bible. I adopt Crystal's (2003: 118) definition of the lexicon as "the total stock of meaningful units in a language – not only the words and idioms, but also the parts of words which express meaning, such as the prefixes and suffixes". Thus, studying the lexicon of a language entails studying "all aspects of the vocabulary of the language – how words are formed, how they have developed over time, how they are used now, how they relate in meaning to each other, and how they are handled in dictionaries and other word books" (Crystal 2003: 118). Lexical processes refer to the techniques for creating new lexical items, in this context during Bible translation. Three main lexical processes are identified in the research corpus, viz – compounding, direct lexical borrowing and the use of descriptive phrases. However, there are instances where more than one process can be identified in one lexical innovation. An example is *onye amụma*, used by all the IBTs for the Christian concept of *prophet.* The term *amụma* was originally used to refer to being in a frenzy. This meaning is extended to embrace prophecy apparently because Biblical prophets tend to be in a frenzy when they prophesy. Thus, the compound *onye amụma* involves two levels of elaboration: a semantic extension of *amụma* to also mean *prophecy*, and a lexical compound *onye amụma* with a new signification as *prophet*. Such examples are analysed in this chapter under the three major processes. However, the series of lexical processes involved are highlighted in the analysis.

Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 3, the different IBTs were done in different orthographies, using different spelling conventions. Since this chapter is not concerned with the spelling conventions of the different translations, I represent the lexical items

using the Standard Igbo spelling irrespective of the spelling convention adopted in the translations. For example, the IIB represents *faith* as *okukwe* while all the other translations spell the word as *okwukwe*. In this chapter, I use the Standard Igbo spelling, *okwukwe*. There are also different spellings of lexical borrowings, as some of the translations retain the English spellings of the borrowed items while others adapt the spellings to reflect the Igbo grapho-phonological system. For illustration, the word *table* is spelt *tabili* (IIB), *tebil* (NIB), *tebel* (UIBN), *table* (UIB), *tebulu* (ILB, ICB), *tebụl* (INWT). For consistency, the English spelling *table* is used in this Chapter, since interest here is in lexical borrowing. Orthography and spelling convention are analysed in Chapter 6 which partly focuses on their significance in language elaboration. The remaining sections of this chapter discuss in detail the different forms of compounding, descriptive phrases and lexical borrowings found in the research corpus. For each lexical item analysed, I first define the source text term to show whether the concept was foreign to the Igbo or not, which would also indicate whether there were existing equivalent terms in Igbo or not. Then I explain the lexical process involved in creating the word, followed by an analysis of the ways the use of the Igbo term has engendered lexical and semantic elaboration of the Igbo language.

4.1 Compounding

Compounding is the process of joining two or more words to form a new word. According to Crystal (2003: 135), a "real compound acts as a grammatical unit, has a unified stress pattern, and has a meaning which is in some way different from the sum of its parts". Incidentally, Igbo is a tonal language, unlike English that is a stress-accent language. Thus, as Oluikpe and Nwaozuzu (1995:235) have observed, tone is not distinctive in differentiating between a nominal compound and a genitival structure in Igbo. Compounds in Igbo may be seen as a combination of two or more words that form a grammatical unit and has a meaning which might be slightly related to the meaning of its component parts, but distinct all the same.

Although some compounds may involve more than two words, Plag (2003: 133) argues that these, like other polymorphemic words, could be analysed "as hierarchical structures involving binary (i.e. two-member) subelements". He illustrates this point using the compound *university teaching award committee member*, which he first analyses using bracketing representation thus:

1. [[[university [teaching award]] committee] member]

In his words,

> the five-member compound can be divided into strictly binary compounds as its constituents. The innermost constituent [*teaching award*] 'an award for teaching' is made up of [*teaching*] and [*award*], the next largest constituent [*university teaching award*] 'the teaching award of the university' is made up of [*university*] and [*teaching award*], the constituent [*university teaching award committee*] 'the committee responsible for the university teaching award' is made up of [*university teaching award*] and [*committee*], and so on. (Plag 2003: 134)

Plag's (2003) idea of binary structure of compounds seems to apply to Igbo. For instance, the UIB uses the compound *izu ụbọchị asaa* "week of seven days" to represent *week* (the traditional Igbo week or *izu* is a four-day cycle). Using Plag's (2003) assertion, the compound could be analysed using brackets thus:

2. [izu [ụbọchị asaa]]

This compound is made up of the noun *izu* "Igbo four-day week" and the compound *ụbọchị asaa* "seven days". The element *ụbọchị asaa* is itself made up of the nouns *ụbọchị* and *asaa.* Thus, *izu ụbọchị asaa* means "seven-day week".

4.1.1 Endocentric Compounds

Compounds could be endocentric or exocentric. Endocentric compounds are compounds that have an "internal 'centre'" (Carstairs-McCarthy 2002: 65) in the sense that the head

element of the compound can be identified within the compound. An example is *nkịta* in *nkịta-ọhịa*

3. *nkịta ọhịa*
   dog bush (wild dog)

Here, *nkịta* is post-modified by *ọhịa*, which makes the compound *nkịta ọhịa* a type of dog. On the contrary, exocentric compounds have an "external centre" in that their head is not found in the compound. The compounds in the corpus are mainly endocentric. One possible exception to this is *nkpuru-obi*, the UIB equivalent for *soul* in Gen. 2: 7:

> ... *madu ahu we ghọ **nkpuru-obi** di ndu*[67]
>
> ... and man became a living **soul**.

This is a compound formed from the Igbo nouns *mkpụrụ* (the Standard Igbo spelling of *nkpuru*) "kernel" or "seed" and *obi* "chest" or "heart". Literally, it means the seed of the heart or chest and is grammatically modelled on other existing Igbo compound words formed with *mkpụrụ* as one of their components. Example 4, 5 and 6 are compounds formed by combining *mkpụrụ* with *anya* "eye", *osisi* "tree" and *mmiri* "water"

4. *mkpụrụ anya* (eye balls)
5. *mkpụrụ osisi* (fruit)
6. *mkpụrụ mmili* (drops of water)

Mkpụrụ obi is also used to refer to the "heart as an organ" (Echeruo 1998: 99). In all these instances, the referents are concrete and the compound endocentric. However, the use of *mkpụrụ obi* to represent *soul* is abstract and exocentric as one cannot account for the head in the compound. One then wonders how these other compounds remain concrete and their head can be identified while *mkpụrụ obi* "soul" behaves differently. This is clarified by investigating the different usages of *obi* in Igbo. Williamson (1972: 350) defines *obi* as

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[67] Unless otherwise stated, all Bible quotations in English are from the King James Bible (KJB) and those in Igbo are from the Union Igbo Bible.

"heart; chest; bosom; breast; centre". These usages are both literal and figurative, as a brave person could be described as having a heart:

7. *Emeka nwere obi*
   Emeka has heart
   Emeka is brave

Likewise, shock could be described as having one's heart jump out of them:

8. *Obi   ma-pụrụ   ya*
   heart   jump-out   him/her/it
   He/she/it was shocked

Incidentally, in the Bible, *soul* is used in contexts that relate to love. For example, in Genesis 27: 4 and 25, Isaac asks his son Esau to prepare him food so that his "soul" may bless Esau. Likewise, in Genesis 34: 8, Hamor states that the "soul" of his son longs for Dinah. So, *soul* seems to be the source for expressing love (and, of course, hate). The nearest cultural equivalent for *soul* in this context in Igbo is *obi* as seen in such Igbo personal names as

9. *Obioma*   "good heart" "kindness"
10. *Iwedinobi*   "anger is in the heart"

However, the extension of *mkpụrụ obi* to also refer to the non-corporeal and immortal form of human beings is apparently informed by instances in the Bible where the separation of the soul from the body connotes the death of the person: "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni." (Gen. 35: 18). Such passages call to mind the importance of the organ heart to the physical body of an animal, for the animal dies once the heart is removed. Thus, the UIB translators metaphorically extend *mkpụrụ obi* to also embrace the abstract *soul.* This way, a word with a concrete referent is made to also refer to an abstract concept. Incidentally, while *mkpụrụ obi* "soul"

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has been lexicalized in Igbo, *mkpụrụ obi* (the organ heart) has not. It is common to see instances where just *obi* is used to refer to the heart, but for *soul* the full compound word must be used.

The endocentric compounds in the corpus are categorized according to what they denote: persons, animals, locations, abstract concepts and time.

4.1.1.1   Endocentric Compounds Denoting Persons

The compounds analysed here refer to persons. Interestingly, these referents could be said to have existing cultural equivalents in Igbo for which Igbo has existing terms. Perhaps the only concept in this category that may not have an existing equivalent in Igbo is *angel*. However, despite the existence of Igbo terms to designate the concepts, the Bible translations use different terms formed via compounding to designate the concepts. Furthermore, the compounds used in the translations might have existed in the language prior to the translations. However, their use in the Bible translations involve elaboration in that they are used to designate concepts in a different religion and register. Such register extension (c.f. Tamanji 2004) also distinguishes these terms from the terms used to designate similar concepts in the Igbo traditional religious practices. Examples include *onye ama* "witness", *onye amụma* "prophet", *onye ozi* "apostle", *onye nketa* "heir", *mmụọ ozi* "angel" and *mmụọ ọma* "angel". These compounds could be grouped into two categories – those that refer to human persons and those that refer to non-corporeal persons. The compounds in the first category were formed by combining *onye* "person" with another noun that indicates the attributes or functions of the referent, while the compounds in the second group were formed by combining *mmụọ* "spirit" with another noun that identifies the attributes of the referent.

a. *Onye Ama* (Witness)

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines witness as 1) a person who sees an event happening, especially a crime or an accident, and 2) someone who is asked to be present at a particular event and sign their name in order to prove that things have been done correctly. The Igbo words for this concept are *akaebe* and *osialị*. However, the UIB and IRE represent *witness* as *onye ama.* The compound *onye ama* was formed by combining *onye* "person" with *ama*, defined in Echeruo (1998: 22) as:

> **ama** *n* [LL]   1 information; intelligence; 2 informant – *onye-ama = spy; informant*

So, *ama* is a special type of information, more of intelligence than just any type of information. Thus, the compound *onye ama* means "an informant", i.e., a person that gives intelligence. The use of the compound in the UIB and IRE involves the semantic extension of the compound to embrace a person that sees something happen and who could be called to testify about it. This semantic extension is probably motivated by the usage of *witness* in the KJB. For, apart from referring to people that are present when an event takes place, *witness* also has an element of foreshadowing, as this text from John 1: 15 illustrates:

> John bare *witness* of him, and cried, saying, *This was he of whom I spake*, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. (Emphasis added)

John's witness is his speaking about Jesus before Jesus appeared on the scene. Also in the Book of Acts 1: 8, Jesus tells his disciples,

> But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Here, bearing witness of Jesus' activities also involves preaching about his second coming. The Igbo words *akaebe* and *osialị* do not connote foreshadowing, but *ama* does. For

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example, among the Oko people of Delta State, there is a bird called *nnụnụ mgba ama* "the bird that gives *ama*". It is believed that rain would fall when this bird chirps in a certain way. The bird is thus seen as one that foreshadows rainfall. In Season 6 of *Nwaanyị Nnewi*, a 2015 Igbo movie[68], a character addresses his sister as *nnụnụ ọgba ama* because she snitched on him by reporting to their father that he beat her in their father's absence. Furthermore, Oko elders use the same image when warning an errant child against some possible danger:

11. *Nke m bụ ịgbalị yị ama mmili tupu o zoe*
   My duty is to warn you about the impending rain before it falls

The image of rainfall here connotes a possible negative event that might confound the addressee. Thus, the choice of *ama* in the UIB and IRE for witness is apparently informed by the use of *witness* in the KJB to also connote foreshadowing. This semantic extension of *ama* is made popular among the Igbo by the Jehovah's Witnesses whose practice of preaching from door to door made their name in Igbo – *Ndị Ama Jehovah* – known even in the remotest of Igbo communities. Incidentally, this usage of *onye ama* for *witness* seems to be restricted to the Christian context as Igbo speakers seem to prefer *akaebe* and *osialị* to *onye ama*. In other words, the semantic extension of *onye ama* in the IBTs had contributed towards the expansion of the Igbo Christian register.

b. *Onye Amụma* (Prophet)

The concept of *prophet* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "a person who is believed to have some special power that allows them to say what a god wishes to tell people, especially about things that will happen in the future". A functional equivalent of *prophet* in the Igbo traditional religious practices is *dibịa*, defined in part in Echeruo (1998: 38) as

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[68] The movie can be watched here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IAV9CGWf_k

"diviner or spiritualist; one who can intercede (through divination or sacrifice) with the spirit world on behalf of clients; fortune-teller". However, none of the IBTs uses represents *prophet* as *dibịa*. Rather, they all use the compound *onye amụma.* Like *onye ama*, *onye amụma* is also formed by combining the Igbo noun for person *onye* with another semantically extended Igbo word. *Amụma* is a rather complex word in present-day Igbo. Echeruo (1998: 22) gives this entry for the word:

> *n* [HHH] prophecy; warning – *onye-amüma = prophet*

However, Igwe (1999: 63) gives this as the first entry for *amụma*:

> *n.* Staggering due to great emotional excitement; frenzy; ecstasy; prophecy (from ma[8]) *igbu amụma* to stagger *onye amụma* prophet; frenzied person

Igwe's (1999) entry stresses that, in addition to also meaning prophesy, *amụma* has a lot to do with the body jerking due to great emotional excitement. More importantly, his clarification that the word derived its meaning as prophet from the root *ma[8]* is very revealing:

> **ma**[8]. *V.t./intr.* shake, shake up, shake forcefully; agitate; wobble; sift (by shaking forcefully (e.g. sand, gravel, bread-fruit, etc.) usually in water). (Igwe 1999: 380)

Igwe (1999) then lists eleven different contexts where the root *ma* is used in Igbo to describe different forms of shaking, none of which suggests any form of prophesy or divine prediction. This missing link between "shaking vigorously" and "divine prediction" indicates that the latter was derived during Bible translations, as the use of *amụma* for *prophesy* and *onye amụma* for *prophets* is almost exclusively within the Christian faith. In other words, the use of *onye amụma* to mean *prophet* is an outcome of the semantic elaboration of the compound in the IBTs.

The Bible provides two possible links between *amụma* and prophesy. Firstly, Igwe's (1999: 63) "frenzied person" includes persons suffering from epileptic seizures comparable to the

boy described in Matthew 17:14–18, Mark 9:14–29 and Luke 9:38–42 whom Jesus cures. So, it could be that the term for a person suffering from epileptic seizures is extended to include the curer of such seizures, who happens to be a prophet. Secondly, the way Biblical prophets prophesy is also reminiscent of a person staggering due to great emotional excitement, as illustrated in 1 Sam. 10: 5:

> After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy:

Commenting on this Bible passage in *Prophets: Soul Catchers*[69], a 1994 documentary on Biblical prophets, Prof. Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, a professor of Old Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary, observes that prophets "worked by building themselves into a frenzy. They used musical instruments; they danced…The goal was to become in an ecstatic state in which one would have access to the presence of God". This building of self into a frenzy is a fitting example of being under the spell of *amụma*. Thus, it could be said that *onye amụma* is used to denote prophets because prophets generally act like people under some spell and in a frenzy, like Igwe's (1999) "frenzied person". This semantic elaboration of *onye amụma* in the IBTs has spread into the Igbo language and is used to refer to Christian prophets. Very importantly too, it differentiates Christian prophets from traditional Igbo diviners.

c. *Onye Ozi* (Apostle)

The Apostles is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "the group of early Christians who travelled to different places telling people about Jesus Christ". This concept was foreign to

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[69] The documentary can be watched here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuUZYMCgcyM

the Igbo prior to their encounter with Christianity. Apart from the IIB, all the IBTs represent *apostle* with the compound *onye ozi*, a compound formed by joining *onye* "person" with *ozi* "message". So, *onye ozi* literally means messenger. Like *onye ama* and *onye amụma*, the compound *onye ozi* already existed in the language prior to its use in the IBTs. However, its use in the IBTs for *apostle* is an instance of register extension, i.e., using a secular term to represent a Christian concept, thereby giving the secular term a religious signification. With the spread of Christianity among Igbo speakers, both the secular and religious meanings of the term also spread.

d. *Onye Nketa* (Heir)

Heir is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as

a) a person who will legally receive money, property, or a title from another person, especially an older member of the same family, when that other person dies;
b) someone who now has responsibility for dealing with a problem or situation that existed or was created earlier; and
c) someone who continues to do the work of someone important who has died, or someone who has the same position as the previous person who held that position

Echeruo (1998: 219) defines *heir* as *ọkpala*, literally a person's son, or specifically firstborn son. Echeruo's (1998) definition is restricted to heirship in a nucleus family whereby a man's firstborn son takes over headship of the household at the death of the man, i.e., a man's firstborn son is the man's heir. There seems to be no Igbo word that embraces the concept of heirship in the nucleus family and in other institutions. Every institution seems to have a name for an heir to a position within the institution. For instance, among Oko people of Delta State, the oldest man in each clan is the *Onowu* or *Okakwu*, who has special religious and cultural duties. The second oldest man takes the *Uzi* title. So, the *Uzi* is

automatically the heir to the *Onowu* or *Okakwu* seat in the event of the death of the oldest man.

Interestingly, the concept of *heir* is represented as *onye nketa* by the UIBN, UIB, IRE and INWT. Morphologically, *nketa* is formed by prefixing the syllabic nasal /n/ to the verb root *ke* "share" and the directional extensional suffix –*ta.* This extensional suffix indicates the direction of the action of the root. So, while *ke* means share (vb), *keta* means "get or receive a share" and *nketa* means "the act of getting a share (of something)". The share to be received is not necessarily one that is inherited. It could be earned, inherited, or even stolen. When *nketa* is the second component in a compound where the first word in the compound is the head, the head word usually refers to the item that is received. For example, *akwa nketa* (*akwa* meaning "cloth") and *ego nketa* (*ego* meaning "money") are the portions of clothing and money a person receives as their share from a bigger portion. So, the use of the compound *onye nketa* in the IBTs entails some formal and semantic elaboration of *nketa*. For one, *onye nketa* introduces a new form whereby the head element of the compound is not what is received but who receives the item in question. Consequently, *onye nketa* is inherently ambiguous because, in addition to its intended meaning of "heir", it could also be interpreted as "a person received as one's share".

Perhaps the ambiguity in *onye nketa* informed its low spread among Igbo speakers. As demonstrated in Section 7.2.2.4, the elaboration of *onye nketa* in the IBTs has not gained popular usage among Igbo speakers as they use other terms to designate heirship and rarely use *onye nketa*. Secondly, instances where *onye nketa* is used outside the IBTs are all translations from English and not texts originally written in Igbo. These translated texts feature two usages of *onye nketa*, namely 1) instances where the compound is used with the object received not stated, and 2) instances where the compound is used with the object received stated after the compound. The first scenario is seen in some Bible commentaries and in online English-Igbo dictionaries. For instance, the Sunday School text of the Apostolic Faith Church, West and Central Africa titled "Our Liberty in Christ"[70] takes

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[70]   The   English   text   and   its   translation   into   Igbo   could   be   got   here http://www.apostolicfaithweca.org/content/our-liberty-christ

its Bible reading from Galatians 4: 1-31. In the commentary, the Igbo version uses *onye nketa* for *heir* and *ndị nketa* for *heirs* (*ndị* being the plural form of *onye*). Two online English-Igbo dictionaries[71] also list *onye nketa* as the Igbo word for *inheritor*. An instance of the second usage is seen in the Igbo translation of *Guide to the Scripture[72]*, a text of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS). In this text, *heir* is translated as *onye nketa-oke*, *oke* meaning share. Thus, the compound means "a receiver of a share". The addition of "oke" is significant because it clarifies the ambiguity in *onye nketa*, i.e., it clarifies that the person (*onye*) is not what is received as inheritance but the person who receives the inheritance. In other words, the LDS further elaborates the lexical innovation of the IBTs by adding an extra word to the compound.

Some observations could be made regarding the use of *onye nketa* outside the IBTs. Firstly, the texts that use the compound are translations and not texts originally written in Igbo. The fact that it is not used in original Igbo texts suggests that the compound has not been integrated into the language. This is supported by findings in Chapter 7 where Igbo speakers indicate that they use other terms to represent *heir* more than they use *onye nketa*. Thus, it could be inferred that the use of the compound in the translation arose because it was necessary to supply a term for *heir*. Since no other word in Igbo embraces heirship in different contexts, the translators used the lexical innovation of the IBTs. Secondly, the usages seem to be restricted to the Christian religious context. The Sunday School text of the Apostolic Faith Church, for example, is a commentary on a Bible passage on heirship. So, the translators of the Sunday School text into Igbo retained the same term used in the Bible text, which is *onye nketa*. What is more, the LDS entry is also based on the denomination's interpretation of "heirship" in the Bible. It could then be concluded that the lexical innovation of the IBTs did not spread beyond the Christian context. Rather, it has contributed towards expanding the Igbo Christian register. However, its inherent ambiguity has necessitated further elaboration of the compound by adding *oke* to make the meaning clear.

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[71] The relevant entries in both dictionaries could be viewed here http://www.igboenglish.com/igbo-nigerian-words-k.php and here https://igbo.english-dictionary.help/english-to-igbo-meaning-inherit
[72] The English entry for *heir* could be found here https://www.lds.org/scriptures/gs/heir?lang=eng while its translation into Igbo could be found here https://www.lds.org/scriptures/gs/heir?lang=ibo

e. *Mmụọ Ozi* and *Mmụọ Ọma* (Angel)

Two compounds are analysed in this section because they were both used for *angel* in the IBTs. The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *angel* as "a spiritual being in some religions who is believed to be a messenger of God, usually represented as having a human form with wings". For this Christian concept, the NIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT use *mmụọ ozi* "spirit messenger" while the ICB uses *mmụọ ọma* "good spirit". The first compound *mmụọ ozi* could be juxtaposed with *onye ozi* "apostle" in that both compounds have *ozi* as one of their second component. The difference between them is that *onye ozi* suggests that the messenger is human while *mmụọ ozi* suggests that the messenger is a spirit. Thus, the IBTs differentiate between two Christian concepts with similar functions by clarifying that one is human while the other is a spirit.

As expatiated in Chapter 5, the compounds *mmụọ ozi* and *mmụọ ọma* created new hyponyms for *mmụọ*, i.e., their creation and use in the IBTs added new categories of spirits, thereby expanding the conceptualization of spirits in Igbo. Secondly, the ICB's choice of *mmụọ ọma* as against *mmụọ ozi* seems to be an attempt to capture the contrast between *angel* and *demons*, the second referring to messengers of the Devil, represented in the IBTs as *mmụọ ọjọọ* "evil spirit". While *mmụọ ozi* identifies *angel* as a messenger, it does not clearly show that *mmụọ ozi* is the contrast of *mmụọ ọjọọ*. However, *mmụọ ọma* immediately shows the contrast by indicating that *angels* are good spirits while *demons* are evil spirits.

4.1.1.2   Endocentric Compounds Denoting Animals

This section discusses endocentric compounds elaborated during Bible translation to refer to animals. The compounds analysed include *anụ ọhịa*, used for *beast* and *nkịta ọhịa* used for *fox.*

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a. *Anụ Ọhịa* **(Beast)**

The concept of *beast* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "an animal, especially a large or wild one". For this concept, apart from the IIB, all the IBTs use *anụ ọhịa*, a compound formed from *anụ* "animal" and *ọhịa* "bush". Thus, *anụ ọhịa* literally means bush animal. This compound existed in the language prior to its use in the IBTs. However, the use in the IBTs elaborates the compound at two levels.

Firstly, in *anụ ọhịa*, *anụ* is the head of the compound while *ọhịa* modifies the head. So, *anụ ọhịa* is a hyponym of *anụ*, alongside other hyponym like *anụ ụlọ* "house animal" or pets and *anụ mmiri* "aquatic animals". The distinguishing feature of these hyponyms of *anụ* is their habitat - *anụ ọhịa* are animals that live in the bush, *anụ ụlọ* animals that live in the same house as humans and *anụ mmiri* animals that live in the water. However, the definition of *beast* in the *Cambridge Dictionary* is not based on the habitat, but on the size or behaviour of the animal. Thus, the use of *anụ ọhịa* semantically extends the meaning of the term to include other co-hyponyms, as illustrated in this excerpt from Revelations 13: 1:

12. *o we guzo n'ájá oké osimiri. M'we hu* **anu-ọhia** *ka ọ nēsi n'oké osimiri rigoputa*

    And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a **beast** rise up out of the sea

The fact that the "beast" rises up out of the sea indicates that it is aquatic. However, the UIB version represents *beast* as *anụ-ọhịa*, which is a semantic extension of the term to also mean aquatic animals.

Secondly, the use of *anụ ọhịa* in the IBTs is an instance of register extension. *Beast* in this context belongs to the Christian register. So, representing the Christian concept with a secular compound gives the compound a new signification in the religious sense. Consequently, outside the Christian context, *anụ ọhịa* retains its restricted meaning as an animal that lives in the bush, but within the Christian context, this meaning is extended and the term also has a religious sense.

b. *Nkịta Ọhịa* (Fox)

A *fox*, according to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, is "a wild mammal belonging to the dog family that has a pointed face and ears, a wide tail covered in fur, and often reddish-brown fur". Incidentally, fox is not found in Nigeria and there was no word for it in Igbo. Thus, the UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT use the compound *nkịta ọhịa* for *fox. Nkịta ọhịa* is formed by combining *nkịta* "dog" with *ọhịa* "bush". Literally, *nkịta ọhịa* means bush dog. The use of *nkịta ọhịa* in the IBTs for *fox* entails a semantic extension of the term and an extension of the Igbo Christian register.

For one, *nkịta ọhịa* is a hyponym of *nkịta* "dog". Generally, *nkịta* refers to the dog that is raised at home as pet. Other animals of the dog family that live in the bush have specific names, e.g., *edi* is used for the "African civet; Genet; hyena" Igwe (1999: 142) and *ufu* is the "Gambian mongoose (which preys on fowls) (Igwe 1999: 775). However, Igwe (1999: 487) defines *nkịta ọhịa* as a) a tree bear; wolf; 2) hunting-dog", while Echeruo (1998: 108) defines it as "[1]hyena; [2]hunting dog". In other words, *nkịta ọhịa* is also used for dogs that live in the bush and dogs used in hunting. Elaboration of *nkịta ọhịa* in the IBTs is seen in the use of the term to also mean *fox*, an animal not found in the Igbo culture area. Secondly, unlike the dog which has a long history of being domesticated, the fox is a wild animal and "may have only been kept as pets for something like 30 or 50 years" (Reid 2013). Thirdly, although foxes do live in forested areas, some are "found in mountains, grasslands and deserts" (Bradford 2014). Furthermore, unlike dogs, foxes dig burrows or dens in the ground to provide a cool environment to sleep, to store food and raise their kids. Thus, the IBTs semantically extended the meaning of a term used for dogs that live in forests to also include dogs found in mountains and deserts. The usage also covers a category of *nkịta* that has traits that are not seen in dogs found in the Igbo culture area, e.g., digging burrows to store food and raise kids. What is more, the usage in the IBTs further extends the Igbo Christian register with a non-religious term. It is not clear whether this Biblical innovation has spread into the language. The referent is not an animal found in the Igbo culture area

and, as such, it is difficult to find Igbo texts that feature the fox as a character. So, the usage may be said to be restricted to the Christian context.

4.1.1.3   Endocentric Compounds Denoting Locations

Endocentric compounds analysed in this section are compounds that refer to places or locations. Examples of locative compounds in the research corpus include *ọkụ mmụọ* "hell", *ọkụ ala mmụọ* "hell", *eluigwe* "heaven", *alaeze* "kingdom", *ebe nzute* "synagogue", *ụlọ nsọ* "temple", and *ebe ịchụaja* "altar". Apart from kingdom and altar, the other concepts are distinctly Christian concepts and as such Igbo had no words for them. Below I present how the use of these compounds in the IBTs entails the elaboration of Igbo.

a.   ***Ọkụ Mmụọ* and *Ọkụ Ala Mmụọ* (Hell)**

Hell is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "in some religions, the place where some people are believed to go after death to be punished forever for the bad things they have done during their lives". This conceptualization of life after death was different from what the Igbo believed prior to their encounter with Christianity (c.f. Section 1.1.1). In the Igbo cosmology prior to their encounter with Christianity, at death people who lived a good life and for whom complete funeral rites have been performed go to *ala mmụọ* or land of the dead and join the ranks of the ancestors called *ndị ichie*. However, dead persons for whom complete funeral rites were not performed for some reasons (see Section 1.1.1) hover in the land of the living as *akalogeli*.

For the concept of *hell*, the IIB, NIB, UIBN and ICB use *ọkụ mmụọ*, a compound formed from *ọkụ* "fire" and *mmụọ* "spirit". On their part, the UIB, ILB and IRE use *ọkụ ala mmụọ*, *ala* meaning "land". So, *ọkụ mmụọ* means "the fire of the spirits" while *ọkụ ala mmụọ* means "the fire of the land of the spirits". Both compounds have *ọkụ* as the head element, but

while *ọkụ mmụọ* emphasizes that the fire is associated with spirits, *ọkụ ala mmụọ* places the emphasis on the land of the spirits. These require expatiation.

The concept of *mmụọ* is complex and is discussed in more details in Chapter 5. It will suffice here to highlight two implications of the use of *mmụọ* as one of the components of the compounds. As mentioned in Section 1.1.1, the Igbo believe that the dead continue to live in another world and engage in activities similar to those of the living. It is also believed that the dead eat similar food like the living, which explains the categorization of certain food items as belonging to the *mmụọ.* According to Williamson (1972: 291), when *mmụọ* post-modifies an object, usually a plant, it denotes "a poisonous, non-edible, degenerate, or abnormal variety, as opposed to the non-poisonous, edible, normal kind". An example is *ede mmụọ – ede* being cocoyam. *Ede mmụọ* is defined in Williamson (1972: 291) as "inedible plant similar to cocoyam". This supposed variety of cocoyam is not good for human consumption and is thus believed to be edible to the *mmụọ*. By inference, *mmụọ* is used in such contexts for items the people do not know their use or items they do not understand. So, they attribute these items to the spirits. *Ọkụ mmụọ* is apparently coined to suggest that the fire is such that humans do not understand such that it can only come from the spirits. On the one hand, it is possible that the term had been used as a hyperbole for a wildfire before the IBTs were translated. In that case, the use of *ọkụ mmụọ* in the IBTs designates a Christian concept, thereby extending the Igbo Christian register. On the other hand, *ọkụ mmụọ* might be a novel coinage first used in the IBTS, in which case its creation also expands the vocabulary of the Igbo language.

As mentioned above, *ọkụ ala mmụọ* places the emphasis on the land of the spirits, and not on the spirits like *ọkụ mmụọ*. The choice of emphasis might be linked to the Igbo veneration of the ancestors:

> Igbo traditional religion was a way of life which involved reciprocal rights and obligations between the material world of the Igbo and the immaterial world of the spirits, the objective being to maintain harmony between both worlds, ensure peace and prosperity for the people and the survival of their lineages through time. (Ubah 1988: 71)

The word *mmụọ* is also used for masked spirits or *egwugwu* (c.f. Achebe 1958:29)*.* These *egwugwu* are seen as incarnates of the dead ancestors who visit the living from *ala mmụọ* "the land of the dead". This belief system of the Igbo posed a serious obstacle to the teachings of the Christians and so they (the Christians) devised ways of circumventing this obstacle, one of which is to denigrate the existing system of worship. Ubah (1988: 76) summarizes this attack on the Igbo belief in the ancestors thus:

> The religious attention paid to ancestors was also of no value. These dead people, it was contended, had lost all connections with the world and were incapable of influencing the affairs of men one way or the other. All those sacrifices made to them, like those to the deities, were a waste of time and resources, and the people should neither look up to the ancestors for help nor believe that they had ever been, or would ever be, reincarnated.

The choice of creating the word for *hell*, using *ala mmụọ* as a component of the innovated compound might then be seen as part of the ideological move to denigrate the Igbo reverence of the ancestors. In fact, *ala mmụọ* is used in both the Igbo Anglican and Catholic catechisms for *hell* in their renderings of *hell* in the line of the Apostles' Creed that reads "He descended into hell". This is a subtle but powerful attack on the Igbo veneration of the ancestors to associate *ala mmụọ*, the abode of the ancestors and where the Igbo elders and young men initiated into the *egwugwu* cult tell the women and non-initiates that the *egwugwu* comes from. So, rather than see *ala mmụọ* in a positive light considering that the ancestors are said to dwell there, *ala mmụọ* is now portrayed as the place where evil doers get punished for their evil deeds, or the place that contains the fire that burns evil doers as punishment for their evil deeds. On the one hand, the compound *ọkụ ala mmụọ* is an addition to the Igbo lexicon. On the other hand, it changes the perception of a place that had a positive image.

Although both *ọkụ ala mmụọ* and *ọkụ mmụọ* are used in the IBTs for *hell*, it appears the latter has gained more spread among Igbo speakers than the former. Among Igbo children in parts of Anambra State like Ogidi, it is very common to witness this ritual when a child wants to confirm that another child is saying the truth:

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13. Child A: True to?

   Child B: God.

   Child A: *Ọkụ mmụọ*? "Hell?"

   Child B: *Ebeebe* "Forever"

   Child A: *Onye ga-anwụ* "Who will die?"

   Child B: *Mụ* "Me"

In this conversation, Child A asks in whose name Child B swears that they are telling the truth, and Child B responds that it is in the name of God. God is seen as the highest authority in whose name one can swear, and so swearing in his name is serious. The second question reinforces that if B is telling a lie, they would end up in hell and B affirms that they would stay in hell forever. The idea is that if the swearer would take the authority of God for granted, they would not joke with the idea of burning in hell. So, affirming that they are ready to burn in hell forever further reinforces their claim of innocence. The third question is to know whether B willingly accepts that they would die if they are telling a lie and B affirms that too. Often when the person being questioned is being untruthful, they refrain from answering the last question, because it would mean wilfully invoking disaster upon oneself. This ritual demonstrates that *ọkụ mmụọ* is used by Igbo children for the concept of *hell*.

b. *Eluigwe* (Heaven)

The concept of *heaven* contrasts with *hell*. The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *heaven* as "in some religions, the place, sometimes imagined to be in the sky, where God or the gods live and where good people are believed to go after they die, so that they can enjoy perfect happiness". As suggested in the preceding section, the idea of a place good people go to be rewarded for their good deeds was foreign to the Igbo prior to their encounter with Christianity. In fact, the traditional Igbo conceptualization of what constitutes good and bad behaviour that could affect a person's fate when they die is different from the Christian

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conceptualization. For this concept, all the IBTs use *eluigwe* apart from the IIB. *Eluigwe* is a compound formed from *elu* "above" and *igwe* "sky", literally meaning "above the sky".

This perception of the location of heaven as being somewhere above the sky is contrary to the traditional Igbo worldview highlighted above. Perhaps, it would suffice to illustrate this worldview from Igbo folklore. In "Udeze", one of the folktales collected in Ogbalu (1973), a famous wrestler is asked by the king to clear the bush in a specific piece of land where spirits live (Ogbalu 1973: 39). This suggests that the boundary between the land of the living and that of the dead is somewhere in the human world. The other location of dead ancestors espoused in Igbo folklore is the earth:

> At such times the ancestors of the clan who had been committed to Mother Earth at their death emerged again as egwugwu through tiny ant-holes. (Achebe 1958: 60)

So, the use of the compound *eluigwe* in the IBTs, like its opposite *ọkụ mmụọ*, not only expands the Igbo lexicon with an additional term but also expands the Igbo Christian register. It also introduces a new conceptualization of life after death, whereby it is now believed that good people go to *eluigwe* to be rewarded for their good deeds and no longer to *ala mmụọ* where they serve as ancestors.

c. *Alaeze* (Kingdom)

Kingdom is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "a country ruled by a king or queen". This concept was not foreign among the Igbo, for there were many known Igbo kings prior to the arrival of the missionaries, for example, the Obi of Onitsha, Obi of Aboh, Asagba of Asaba, among others. As mentioned in Section 1.1, the Igbo were a decentralized and politically fragmented group of people for whom the "largest political unit is the village group (the town) which the Igbo call *obodo*, *ala* or *mba*. This is composed of a number of contiguous villages which believe that they are the collective descendants of a common

ancestor" (Oguagha and Okpoko 1993: 124). Igbo kings variously called *Eze*, *Obi*, *Igwe*, *Akor*, and *Asagba* have their respective villages or towns as their kingdoms. So, a king's kingdom is identified in Igbo by the name of the village or town, hence expressions like *Asagba Asaba* "Asagba of Asaba", *Obi Onitsha* "Obi of Onitsha", *Igwe Ogidi* "Igwe of Ogidi". However, *kingdom* in the Bible often stretches beyond single village or town units as seen in this text from Genesis 10: 10:

14. *Mmalite **ala-eze**-ya bụ Bebel, na Erek, na Akad, na Kalne, n'ala Shaina.*

And the beginning of his **kingdom** was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar

This is part of the description of the kingdom ruled by Nimrod. Here, it is seen that Nimrod's kingdom covers at least four cities, unlike what obtains in Igbo kingdoms. It would then seem awkward for the IBTs to use the Igbo words for village or land for *kingdom.* Thus, the compound *alaeze* was created from *ala* "land" and *eze* "king" and used for *kingdom* in all the IBTs apart from the IIB. *Alaeze* means "the land of the king".

This innovated compound is used in the Bible to denote both heavenly and earthly kingdoms. However, the use of the term outside the Bible seems to be restricted to references to the kingdom of heaven. During this research, I asked an Igbo man, aged 38, living in Bayreuth, Germany, for the Igbo word for *kingdom* and he supplied *alaeze eluigwe* "the kingdom of heaven". Although I did not make any reference to heaven or God in the question, the respondent unconsciously added that bit of information, suggesting that *alaeze* is associated more with the kingdom of God or heaven than the kingdom of mortals. Indeed, throughout the period of this study, I did not encounter the use of *alaeze* for a human kingdom. Rather, there are numerous uses of the compound for the kingdom of God or of heaven. This indicates a lexical differentiation of human kingdoms from the kingdom of heaven, i.e., outside the Bible, Igbo speakers use *alaeze* for the kingdom of heaven and *ala* or *obodo* for human kingdoms.

In addition to this lexical differentiation, there is also evidence of the semantic extension of *alaeze* to also embrace any place of happiness and plentifulness. In a recent telephone conversation with a friend in Nigeria, my friend asked how I was and I responded in Igbo "*A*

nọ m ọfụma, sọọsọ agụụ", meaning "I am fine but for hunger". At this she retorted jokingly, "*Biko ka m nụlụ gị ife! Ginwa nọ n'anaeze*[73]. *Ọkwa Germany ka Ị nọ?*", which loosely translates as "Spare me that tale! You that are in *alaeze.* Are you not in Germany?". The idea is that I was not expected to complain of hunger because I live in a country with a strong economy and am expected to have my basic needs met. She captured this idea in the word *alaeze*, thereby extending the meaning of the word beyond meaning *kingdom*. Secondly, Nkeonye, an artist from Oko, an Igbo community in Delta State, has this line in one of his songs:

15. *Oko bụ obodo m*   Oko is my town
     Oko bụ anịeze   Oko is *anịeze* [74]
     Ife dị mma dị n'Oko anyị   Good things are in Oko
     Anyanwụ alashụ n'ụzọ   The sun does not sleep on the road

In this song, the artist uses *alaeze* to emphasize that Oko is a blessed community. The semantic extension of *alaeze* from *kingdom* to embrace this second meaning might have resulted from the fact that many of the occurrences of the word in the Bible, especially the NT, refer to the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is believed in Christianity to be filled with only positive things, where good people get rewarded for their good deeds. Thus, *alaeze* is a metaphor for any place deemed to be a paradise of some sort.

Alaeze presents a case of directional equivalence that has evolved into natural equivalence. The term did not exist prior to the arrival of the Christian missionaries and was created to solve a translation problem. However, it has taken a life of its own in the language and evolved other meanings beyond the original usage in the IBTs. In effect, back-translating the word into English would result in two meanings depending on the context. On the one hand, it would give the original source text word *kingdom* if the referent is to the kingdom of God or of heaven. On the other hand, it would give terms like "paradise", "heaven" or any other term that connotes wealth and good life. This is the meaning seen in the song and

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[73] The substitution of /n/ for /l/ is just an indication of dialectal difference. Both words, *alaeze* and *anaeze*, mean the same thing
[74] *Anịeze* is also a dialectal form of *alaeze*

telephone conversation mentioned above. This meaning is not found in the IBTs where the compound was formed but was evolved by Igbo speakers outside the Bible. In other words, the lexical elaboration of *alaeze* in the IBTs was further elaborated by Igbo speakers beyond the use in the IBTs.

d. *Ebe Mmụta, Ebe Nzute, Ụlọ Nzukọ, Ụlọ Ọgbakọ* and *Ụlọ Ekpere* (Synagogue)

Synagogue is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "a building in which Jewish people worship and study their religion". The fact that the concept is associated with Judaism means that it was foreign to the Igbo people prior to their encounter with Christianity. Table 4.1 presents the compounds used in the IBTs for *synagogue.*

Table 4. 1: The representations of *synagogue* in the IBTs

Compound	Meaning	IBTs that used them
Ebe mmụta	Place of learning	IIB
Ebe nzute	Meeting spot	UIB, IRE
Ụlọ nzukọ	Meeting house	NIB, UIBN, UIB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Ụlọ ọgbakọ	House for congregating	ICB
Ụlọ ekpere	Prayer house	ILB

The diversity of terms used for *synagogue* in the IBTs suggests some level of uncertainty among the IBTs about the most apt term to use, and, perhaps, dissatisfaction with terms used by other IBTs. From Table 4.1, while the first two compounds use the general term *ebe* "spot" as the head of the compounds, the last three emphasize that a synagogue is a house. The components modifying the heads in each case also suggest different ideas of what a synagogue is. While *ebe mmụta* and *ụlọ ekpere* suggest that a synagogue is a place for learning and prayer respectively, *ebe nzute*, *ụlọ nzukọ* and *ụlọ ọgbakọ* see it as a meeting spot.

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These compounds probably existed in Igbo prior to the Christianization of the Igbo people. For one, apart from *ụlọ ekpere*, these compounds used for *synagogue* are all secular terms that could refer to other concepts. For illustration, *ebe mmụta* could refer to any school or place of learning, *ebe nzute*, *ụlọ nzukọ* and *ụlọ ọgbakọ* could refer to any venue where members of any association hold their meetings, while *ụlọ ekpere* could be any house where prayers are held, including churches. So, the use of these terms in the IBTs is an extension of the Igbo Christian register. In addition to their secular or non-Biblical (in the case of *ụlọ ekpere*) meanings, these terms are now given a Christian religious signification in the IBTs. Incidentally, there is no evidence to suggest that these innovations and the meanings they have in the IBTs spread into the Igbo language beyond their use in Bible readings.

4.1.1.4   Endocentric Compounds Denoting Abstract Concepts

The compounds analysed in this section are used to represent certain abstract Christian concepts. These compounds apparently existed in Igbo prior to the Bible translations. Their use in the Bible showcases instances of register extension. They were used for secular concepts prior to the Bible translations where they were given a religious signification. Compounds in this category include *abụ ọma* used for *psalm*, *ozi ọma* and *okwu ọma* for *gospel*, and *ezi omume* for *righteousness.* One feature of these compounds is that they all feature the use of *ọma* and *ezi*, Igbo words for "good" to describe the head component of the compounds. In other words, there seems to be a conscious attempt at linguistically identifying Christian concepts as good. Although this subtly suggests that non-Christian concepts may not be good, there is no evidence to support the view. That notwithstanding, overtly identifying Christian concepts as good suggests a desire to improve the perception of the concepts so named.

a. *Abụ Ọma* (Psalm)

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *psalm* as "a holy poem or song, especially one of the 150 collected in the Bible". Apart from the IIB, all the IBTs use *abụ ọma* for *psalm.* The compound *abụ ọma* is composed of *abụ* "song" and *ọma* "good", literally meaning good song. The use of this compound in the IBTs gives it specificity as a Christian religious term. Furthermore, the head of the compound is *abụ*, which makes *abụ ọma* a hyponym of *abụ*, contrastable with *abụ ọjọọ* "bad songs". As noted above, this does not necesarilly suggest that all other songs are bad songs, but rather it is a conscious step to improve the perception of the concept of *psalm*. Interestingly, *abụ ọma* is not used to refer to all forms of Christian songs, as demonstrated in Ephesians 5: 19:

16. *nēwere abù ọma na ukwe na abù nke Mọ Nsọ gwarita onwe-unu okwu*

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs

"Hymns" and "spiritual songs" are also categories of Christian songs. In the Igbo translation, *ukwe*, another Igbo word for "song", is used for "hymns" while "spiritual songs" is translated as "songs of the Holy Spirit", which, in a way, is another hyponym of *abụ* (the concept of the *Holy Spirit* is discussed in Section 5.3.1.1C). In effect, using *abụ ọma* for *psalms* does not suggest that all other songs are bad. Rather, it is used to identify the genre of *psalms,* found mainly within Christian contexts.

b. *Okwu Ọma* and *Oziọma* (Gospel)

Gospel is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "any of the four books of the Bible that contain details of the life of Jesus Christ", and as "the teachings of Jesus Christ". This concept is represented as *okwu ọma* in the IIB and as *oziọma* in all the other IBTs. *Okwu ọma* is a compound created by joining *okwu* "word/talk" and *ọma* "good", thus meaning good words or good talk. On its part, *oziọma* is formed from *ozi* "message" and *ọma* "good",

meaning good message. These were terms that were probably in use in Igbo prior to the Bible translations to refer to any well delivered speech or any form of good news respectively. Their use in the IBTs, however, gives them specificity as Christian religious terms, thereby extending the Igbo Christian register.

Etymologically, *gospel* is derived from the Old English "godspel" meaning "good story/message". So, both renderings could be said to be based on the etymology of the term. Like *abụ ọma*, the use of *okwu ọma* and *oziọma* in the IBTs entails some semantic restriction of the compounds. *Okwu ọma* is not used to refer to any positive speech but to the restricted meaning of the teachings of Jesus Christ or to the books of the Bible that contain stories about Jesus Christ. On its part, *oziọma* is not used to mean any positive message. Rather, it is used to refer to the four Bible stories about Jesus Christ and also to the teachings of Jesus Christ, which are here presented as messages from God. Of the two compounds elaborated to mean *gospel*, *oziọma* seems to be the one that has been integrated into the language as the term for *gospel*. *Okwu ọma* is a nonce word used only in the IIB, but *oziọma* is used by all the other IBTs.

c. *Ezi Omume* (Righteousness)

The noun "righteousness" is derived from the adjective "righteous", which is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "morally correct". For this concept, all the IBTs apart from the IIB use *ezi omume*, a compound formed from *ezi* "good" and *omume* "behaviour". Thus, *ezi omume* means good behaviour. Incidentally, the Christian conceptualization of moral correctness is different from the traditional Igbo conceptualization (see Section 5.3.1.1Ci). In other words, the compound *ezi omume* is used in the IBTs to refer to a uniquely Christian conceptualization of moral correctness. For one, this restricts the meaning of the compound from any form of behaviour adjudged to be good, to specifically referring to the Christian idea of moral correctness. In effect, the use in the IBTs is an extension of the Igbo Christian register. The use of *ezi omume* in the IBTs does not strip the term of its secular

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and more general meaning. It only created a distinct meaning for the term used only within Christian contexts.

4.1.1.5   Endocentric Compounds Denoting Time

In this section, I analyse compounds used to denote concepts about time. Six compounds from the research corpus belong to this category, namely *esi-eke* and *ụbọchị izu ike* both used for *sabbath*, *izu ụbọchị asaa* and *izu ụka* used for *week*, *mgbe oyi* used for *winter*, and *mgbe okpomọkụ* used for *summer*. The first two compounds were created and used in the IBTs to represent a conceptualization of weekly cycle that is different from the traditional Igbo's conceptualization. The next two were created to represent an idea of day of rest different from the traditional Igbo's. On their part, the last two compounds were created to represent seasons that are not experienced in the Igbo culture area. Thus, the concepts were foreign to Igbo speakers and representing them in Igbo entailed elaborating the lexicon of the language.

a. *Izu Ụbọchị Asaa* and *Izu Ụka* (Week)

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *week* as "a period of seven days, especially either from Monday to Sunday or from Sunday to Saturday". Incidentally, this 7-day cycle was foreign to the Igbo who have a 4-day cycle called *izu*. An Igbo *izu* is a period of four days chronologically named *orie, af*ọ, *nkwọ* and *eke.* In Igboland, every market is associated with one of these four days, hence the days are sometimes called market days, and a cycle is called *izu ahịa* "market week". The compound *izu ahịa* distinguishes the market cycle from the Christian 7-day cycle (expatiated below).

Faced with the challenge of representing a 7-day cycle to a people familiar with a 4-day cycle, the UIB used the compound *izu ụbọchị asaa* "7-day izu", while the ILB, ICB and IRE used *izu ụka* "church izu" for *week*. *Izu* is the head component in both compounds while *ụbọchị asaa* "7 days" and *ụka* "church" modify the head. The word *ụka* requires further expatiation. Literally, *ụka* means "talk". According to Goodchild (2003: 154), at Onitsha, Christians were called *ndị ụka*, meaning discussers. The compound *ndị ụka* was formed from *ndị* "people" and *ụka* "talk". This was apparently derogatory, for it suggests that the Christians only gathered to talk as opposed to non-Christians who went to the farm to work. Apparently because of its derogatory connotations, it was agreed at the Igbo language conference of 1905 that the term be dropped and *onye otu Kristi* "a member of Christ's group" used for *Christian* in the Bible translation (see Section 5.3.1.2A). However, despite the abandonment of *ndị ụka* in the Bible translations, it continued to be used in common speech. It must be stated that the current use of *ụka* for *church* does not have any negative connotations. The word is also used in combination with other words to represent some Christian concepts, which include *izu ụka* "church week" and *ụbọchị ụka* "Sunday" (literally "church day").

The use of *izu ụbọchị asaa* and *izu ụka* in the IBTs for *week* features various forms of elaboration. Firstly, both terms enriched Igbo lexicon. Secondly, the terms made *izu* a superordinate term, with *izu ụbọchị asaa* and *izu ụka* as its hyponyms. Thirdly, in order to differentiate the 4-day cycle from the 7-day cycle, a new compound *izu ahịa* was formed by Igbo speakers for the 4-day cycle, i.e., the lexical elaboration in the IBTs informed the creation of a new compound to differentiate the two cycles. For the Igbo 4-day cycle, *izu* is joined with *ahịa* apparently because each of the 4 days is used to name an Igbo market. The definition of *izu* in Echeruo's (1998: 74) further illustrates the elaboration of *izu* that resulted from the introduction of a 7-day cycle to the Igbo:

> **izu** *n* [HL] [1]week of four days (Eke, Orie, Afö, and Nkwö); [2]week (of seven days) – *izu üka = seven-day week (beginning with Sunday).*

Four observations could be made from Echeruo's (1998) definition. One, *izu* has two meanings in Igbo – week of four days and week of seven days – which confirms that it is

now a superordinate term with two hyponyms. Two, the fact that the week of four days is presented first, and that the prepositional phrase "of four days" post-modifying "week" is not put in brackets suggest that this meaning is the given or original meaning. For the second meaning, Echeruo (1998) presents the post-modifying phrase "of seven days" in brackets, which suggests that this usage is optional. Three, *izu ụka* is presented in full and it is clarified that this weekly cycle begins with Sunday. As mentioned above, the association of *ụka* with Christianity has also been extended to Sunday, which is called *ụbọchị ụka* "church day". So, *izu ụka* not only refers to "church week" but also marks *ụbọchị ụka* as the beginning of the cycle. Four, *izu ụbọchị asaa* is not mentioned in the definition. It is also not mentioned in Igwe (1999: 265) which also identifies *izu ụka* as "week of seven days reckoned on church calendar". This indicates that *izu ụbọchị asaa* did not spread beyond its use in the UIB. Thus, *izu ụbọchị asaa* is a nonce term for *week* but *izu ụka* is used in three IBTs. *Izu ụka* has entries in Igbo dictionaries which indicates that it has been integrated into the language.

b. *Esi-Eke* and *Ụbọchị Izu Ike* (Sabbath)

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *sabbath* as "the day of the week kept by some religious groups for rest and worship. The Sabbath is Sunday for most Christians, Saturday for Jews, and Friday for Muslims". As noted in the preceding section, the Igbo week is a period of four days namely *orie, afọ*, *nkwọ* and *eke*. In the traditional Igbo *izu*, *eke* day is the day of rest. I observed that among the Oko people of Delta State, especially among non-Christians, the *eke* day is observed as a day of rest. The people do not go to the farm on this day. They also do not observe Sunday as a day of rest as they engage in their normal daily activities on Sundays, except when Sunday falls on an *eke* day. So, the Bible translators were faced with the challenge of representing the day of rest of a 7-day cycle to a people who were familiar with a day of rest of a 4-day cycle. To achieve this, the IIB created the compound *esi*

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eke by joining *ezi*[75] "good" with *eke* "day of rest of the Igbo 4-day *izu*". Thus, *ezi eke* means "good *eke*". According to Crowther (1882: 30), *eke* is

> The first day of the Ibo week. The Ibos reckon four days in their week. Eke, Oye, Afo, Nkwo. In the interior of the Ibo country, Eke is the general day of rest; the natives engage in no warfare or any kind of contest in it.; enemies would shake hands together in it, although they might kill each other the next day. Perhaps it is for these reasons that Mr. Taylor[76] gives Eke as a translation for the Sabbath in the Prayer-book.

J. C. Taylor did not use *eke* for *sabbath* only in the Prayer Book, but also in his translation of the IIB.

Like in the compounds analysed in Section 4.1.1.4, in *esi eke*, the head word *eke* is modified by an Igbo word for "good". This further illustrates the Bible translators desire to improve the perception of the Christian concepts by describing them as good. It is also a linguistic marker of sacredness, especially sacredness associated with the Christian religion. This style of distinguishing Christian concepts from non-Christian concepts is one of the earliest attempts at creating a distinct Christian register.

However, *ezi eke* did not spread beyond Taylor's usages in the Bible and Prayer Book. According to Echeruo (2005: 44), "Taylor's translation, had it survived the Christian purists would have given us Eke, as the meta-term for Sunday: 'ezi Eke'". In other words, the Christian purists apparently wanted to avoid representing Christian concepts with terms for traditional Igbo concepts. Thus, all the subsequent IBTs use *ụbọchị izu ike* instead. This compound is composed of *ụbọchị* "day" and *izu ike* "to rest". *Ụbọchị izu ike* apparently existed in Igbo prior to its use in the Bible translations to refer to any day a person chooses not to engage in any serious activity. Its use in the IBTs is a case of register extension. It gives the secular term a Christian religious signification. It also gives the term specificity as it now refers to a specific day of rest in the Christian religion as against any day a person

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[75] *Ezi* is the Standard Igbo spelling of the word.
[76] J. C. Taylor translated the Book of Common Prayers and portions of the New Testament into Igbo.

chooses to rest. The infinitive phrase *izu ike*, post-modifying the head *ụbọchị*, suggests a second category for *ụbọchị*, which is *ịrụ ọrụ* - to work. So, the compound *ụbọchị-izu-ike* effectively distinguishes this day from other days.

c. *Mgbe Oyi* (Winter) and *Mgbe Okpomọkụ* (Summer)

Summer and *winter* are two of the four seasons (the other two being spring and autumn/fall) experienced in the North and South Temperate zones. Incidentally, the Bible features only these two seasons and not the four seasons apparently because, according to Esposito (2015: 18), Biblical Israel experiences only two seasons. Nigeria is in the tropical region and experiences two seasons, namely rainy and dry seasons. These are expressed in Igbo as *udummili* and *ọkọchị* respectively. Thus, translating *summer* and *winter* presented a peculiar challenge to the Igbo Bible translators. In the first place, the Bible presents two seasons just as seen in the Igbo culture area. However, as noted in Chapter 3, all the IBTs were done from English based source texts all of which use *summer* and *winter*, terms associated with the four seasons of Western Europe. Secondly, *summer* and *winter* do not correspond with the two seasons found in the Igbo culture area, e.g., the Igbo *udummili* is not as cold as *winter* and has more heavy rainfall than is experienced in *winter*. Thus, the UIB and IRE translated *summer* and *winter* as *mgbe okpomọkụ* and *mgbe oyi* respectively. Both compounds have *mgbe* "period" as the head element. *Okpomọkụ* is formed by attaching a derivational prefix *o* to *kpo*, a form of BE, and then joining this new form *okpo* and *ọkụ* "fire" with an infix *m.* Literally, *okpomọkụ* means heat and *mgbe okpomọkụ* heat period. On its part, *oyi* means "cold" and *mgbe oyi* means "cold period". Unlike *udummili* and *ọkọchị*, rainy and dry season respectively, that reflect the presence or absence of rain, *mgbe okpomọkụ* and *mgbe oyi* reflect the absence and presence of heat. Again, these two compounds apparently existed in Igbo prior to the IBTs for any period of heat or cold. Their use in the Bible translations on the one hand gives them specificity in that they refer to specific periods of heat and cold. On the other hand, the use gives them a religious signification, thereby extending the Igbo Christian register.

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Interestingly, the UIB and IRE are not consistent in their use of these lexical items to refer to *summer* and *winter*. For example, *udummili* and *ọkọchị* are used in Genesis 8: 22:

17. *Rue ubọchi nile nke uwa, ọghigha-nkpuru na owuwe-ihe-ubi, na oyi na okpom-ọku, na udumiri na ọkọchi, na ehihie na abali, agaghi-ebì*[77]*.*

    While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease

However, in Psalm 74: 17, *mgbe okpomọkụ* and *mgbe oyi* are used:

18. *Gi onwe-gi emewo ka ókè-ala nile nke uwa guzo ọtọ: Mḅe okpom-ọku na mḅe oyi, Gi onwe-gi akpuwo ha.*

    Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.

Furthermore, in Psalm 32: 4, *ụgụrụ* is used for *summer*:

19. *N'ihi na ehihie na abalị aka-Gi di arò n'arum: Umem ḅanwere n'ihe-ikpọ-nku nke uguru*

    For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.

In the passage from Genesis above, the Igbo expressions for rainy and dry seasons are used for summer and winter. This may be because the Igbo words for cold period and heat period have already been used to represent "cold and heat". Consequently, using the same terms to represent "summer and winter" would be repetitious. Thus, the IBTs use the Igbo words for rainy and dry season to represent "summer and winter" in the passage. In Psalm 32: 4, the translators use *ụgụrụ* "harmattan" for *summer.* Harmattan is defined by the *Collins English Dictionary* as "a dry dusty wind from the Sahara blowing towards the W African coast, esp from November to March". The harmattan period, viewed as part of the

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[77] The UIB and IRE use the same terms in the cited Bible passages, which makes it unnecessary to repeat the text from the IRE.

dry season, is a period of dry temperature and intense heat. *Ụgụrụ* is used here apparently because the Igbo resonate with it as the term for extreme drought.

In all, *mgbe okpomọkụ* and *mgbe oyi* did not seem to spread beyond their use in the Bible apparently because, on the one hand, the Igbo do not experience summer and winter and, on the other hand, the Igbo terms for rainy and dry seasons are in use in the language. Consequently, the need to use the elaborated terms in common speech does not arise, except, perhaps, when discussing the seasons in the temperate zones. It is observed that Igbo speakers resort to direct borrowing of the English terms in their discussions.

4.1.2 Hybrid Compounds

Hybrid compounds are also called lexical hybrids (Ngula 2014) or loan-blends (Igboanusi 2002). These are compounds formed by combining one (or more) elements from one language and another from another language. According to Igboanusi (2002: 63), in loan-blends, "the item from the source language and its partial equivalent from the target language are placed side-by-side to form a nominal compound". This section analyses lexical hybrids used in the IBTs to represents concepts that are not found in the Igbo culture area and for which Igbo had no words. The compounds were then created and used to solve the translation problem.

In the hybrid compounds in the research corpus, the Igbo component functions as the head element while the English component modifies the head. The partial equivalent relationship between the Igbo and the English elements is such that the English component is a hyponym of the Igbo element. There are nine hybrid compounds in the research corpus, one used to refer to a definition of time foreign at the time to the Igbo, five used for animals not found in the Igbo culture area, and another three for plants not found in the Igbo flora.

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a. Hour

Before Christianity and colonialism in Igboland, the Igbo, like many other African communities, measured time with natural phenomena like sunset and sunrise, cockcrow, among others. Clock time was introduced by Europeans and so representing time with such specificity was a challenge to the Bible translators. For *hour*, the UIBN, UIB and IRE used the lexical hybrid *oge hour*, as illustrated in this excerpt from Matthew 20: 3:

20. *Ọ we pua dika oge hour nke-atọ, hu ndi ọzọ ka ha nēguzo n'ọma-ahia nālughi ọlu*

And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace

This hybrid compound is formed from *oge* "time" and *hour*. The point is that *oge* could refer to any time frame. For instance, *oge* is sometimes used for the Igbo four-day week, such that *oge atọ*, *atọ* meaning three, is used in speech to refer to three Igbo *izu*, or a period of twelve days. So, to specify the exact time being referred to, the Bible translators post-modified *oge* with the borrowed term, thereby making the compound a hyponym of *oge*. This specification forestalls the potential ambiguity that could have resulted. For instance, if the translators had simply used *oge nke atọ* for "third hour" in the Bible passage above, it could be interpreted as "the third week" and not "the third hour", except for Bible readers who are aware of the context in English. This lexical elaboration did spread beyond its use in the IBTs. However, the spread seems to be restricted to Christian settings, mainly during Christian prayers rendered in Igbo. What is seen in common speech is *elekere*, the Standard Igbo word for *hour*, or the direct lexical borrowing *hour*. Thus, the hybrid compound *oge hour* expands the Igbo Christian register.

b. Wolf, Mule, Quail and Camel

The loan blends analysed in this section were created to represent animals that were not found in the Igbo fauna, namely *wolf*, *mule*, *quail* and *camel.* Thus, there were no words for these animals in the Igbo language. Translating them in the Bible resulted in the creation of the following hybrid compounds in Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2: Hybrid compounds used in the IBTs for *wolf*, *mule*, *quail* and *camel*

Concept	Hybrid Compound	Meaning of the Igbo Component	IBTs that Used them
Wolf	*Anụ ọhịa* wolf	Bush animal	UIB, IRE, INWT
Quail	*Nnụnụ quail*	Bird	UIB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Mule	*Ịnyịnya mule*	Horse	UIB, IRE
Camel	*Ịnyịnya kamel*	Horse	ILB
Camel	*Ịnyịnya ibu kamel*	Horse that carries loads	ICB

Table 4.2 displays two forms of loan blends. On the one hand, in the first three examples, the Igbo term for the general category of the animal is given as the head of the compound while the English word for the concept modifies the head. For *wolf*, the Igbo compound *anụ ọhịa* "bush animal" indicates that the animal being referred to is a wild animal, while the English word *wolf* specifies that it is the wolf species of wild animals. For *quail*, the Igbo *nnụnụ* shows that the animal is a bird, while the English *quail* restricts it to quails. For *mule*, *ịnyịnya* indicates that the animal is a horse or donkey, for, according to Echeruo (1998: 76), *ịnyịnya* is used in Igbo for both donkey and horse. The English word *mule* specifies that the kind of horse is the mule, a mule being a hybrid from a donkey jack and a horse mare. So, although the same word is used in Igbo for both donkey and horse, a hybrid of these is unique and so the need to mark the distinction informs the post-modification of *ịnyịnya* with the English word.

The other form of loan blend displayed in Table 4.2 is such that the Igbo term for an animal that is different from the concept is given as the head and the English term for the concept modifies the head. This is seen in the two loan blends used for *camel*, namely *ịnyịnya kamel*

and *ịnyịnya ibu kamel*. As stated in Table 4.2, *ịnyịnya* means horse and *ịnyịnya ibu* means horse that carries loads. This is interesting because a horse is different from a camel and both animals are represented with distinct terms in English. Apparently because *camel* is used in the Bible as a beast of burden, the IBTs then represent the concept with the Igbo word for *horse*, a familiar but different concept that performs the same function as beast of burden. While *ịnyịnya kamel* identifies a camel as a variety of horse, *ịnyịnya ibu kamel* clarifies that it is a variety of a beast of burden. That is, although *ịnyịnya* refers to a horse or donkey, the complement *ibu* indicates that it is a beast of burden.

There is no evidence to suggest that these different loan blends did spread into the language beyond their use in the Bible. *Anụ ọhịa wolf*, *nnụnụ quail*, and *ịnyịnya mule* may be seen as neologisms adopted by some other IBT. However, *ịnyịnya kamel* and *ịnyịnya ibu kamel* are nonce terms because they are used only in one Bible translation.

c. Vine, Cedar and Apple

The hybrid compounds analysed in this section were created in the IBTs for some plants that were not found in the Igbo flora, e.g., *vine*, *cedar* and *apple*. Table 4.3 shows the hybrid compounds created as Igbo counterparts for these terms in the IBTs. Again, the Igbo components of the compounds identify the general category of plant while the English components identifies the specific plant.

Table 4. 3: Hybrid compounds used in the IBTs for *vine*, *cedar* and *apple*

Concept	Hybrid Compound	Meaning of Igbo Component	IBTs that Used them
Vine	*Osisi vine*	Tree	UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE, INWT
Cedar	*Osisi cedar*	Tree	UIB, ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Apple	*Mkpụrụ osisi apple*	Fruit	UIB, ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT

From Table 4.3, the Igbo component of the first two examples shows that the referents are trees, while the English component specifies the kind of trees. Thus, *osisi vine* is a vine tree while *osisi cedar* is a cedar tree. In the third example, the Igbo compound *mkpụrụ osisi*, literally "the seed of a tree", clarifies that the referent is a fruit, and the English component *apple* specifies the kind of fruit as an apple fruit.

As noted earlier, the referents of all these hybrid compounds were not found in the Igbo flora. Using hybrid compounds, the Bible translators could communicate the specific ideas intended. This lexical process is particularly helpful to monolingual Igbo speakers who would not know what the English words refer to if the terms were given without the Igbo components. Hence, the Igbo components relate the concepts to referents that Igbo speakers are familiar with, while the English components show what distinguishes the concepts from the known referents or equivalents. Thus, the use of these hybrid compounds in the Bible translations not only introduced new concepts into the language but also added new terms in the language.

4.2 Descriptive Phrases

Descriptive phrases are phrases, mainly nominal phrases, that describe a quality or an attribute of the concept being translated. The descriptive phrases analysed in this section were used in the Bible translations to represent some Christian concepts. These phrases possibly existed in the language prior to their use in the Bible translations. Their use in the IBTs thus gives them specificity and a religious signification. The descriptive phrases in the research corpus were used for the concepts of *virgin*, *messiah*, *miracle* and *tithe*.

a. Virgin

A virgin, according to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, is "someone who has never had sex". This concept is not foreign to the Igbo. According to Echeruo (1998: 269), a female virgin is called *ikporo* or *okporo* while a male virgin is called *oke okporo* (male *okporo*). It is significant to note that the female virgin is not pre-modified with any gender marker, while the male virgin is pre-modified with *oke*. The pre-modification of *okporo* with *oke* to refer to male virgin gives the impression that *okporo*ness is by default associated with females alone. Furthermore, the terms provided in Echeruo (1998) do not make any reference to the fact that the referent must not have had sex before. Besides, they are also used to refer to maidens and young men. For the concept of *virgin*, the two descriptive phrases used in the Bible translations are *nwaanyị na-amaghị nwoke* "a woman who does not know a man" (UIB, ILB, ICB, IRE) and *nwa agbọghọ na-amaghị nwoke* "a maiden who does not know a man" (NIB, UIBN, INWT). Both terms describe a virgin as a woman or young maiden who has not known a man, the imagery of "knowing a man" being a euphemism for having sex. This euphemistic use of the verb "know" for sex apparently comes from Bible passages like Genesis 4: 1 – "And Adam knew Eve his wife" – where the verb "to know" is used euphemistically to mean "to have sex".

These descriptive phrases for *virgin* feature different forms of elaboration. Firstly, they clarify that the referent is someone that has not had sex, i.e., they emphasize that a virgin must not have had sex, which the other terms do not clarify. Secondly, the descriptive terms result in the lexical differentiation of a virgin from a young person who might have had sex. In other words, with the introduction of these descriptive phrases through the Bible translations and their use over time, Igbo speakers use them to refer to virgin and restrict the other terms mentioned in Echeruo (1998) namely, *okporo* and *oke okporo* for maiden and young man respectively. In fact, an informant (male, aged 58) informed me that *oke okporo* means "unmarried man" and not a man that has not had sex. Fourthly, the descriptive phrases transferred a Biblical euphemism for having sex into the Igbo language, i.e., the euphemistic use of "to know" to denote "to have sex" is transferred into Igbo. This euphemism has spread among Igbo speakers and is used even outside the Christian

context. As shown in Section 7.2.1A, the euphemistic use of "to know" for sex has become the base on which other descriptive terms are created to express virginity. Thus, the use of the descriptive terms in the IBTs has extended the meaning of the Igbo verb *ma* "know" to also mean having sex.

b. Messiah

According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, *messiah* means "a leader who is believed to have the power to solve the world's problems". The *Cambridge Dictionary* adds that in the Christian religion, *messiah* refers to Jesus Christ, while in the Jewish religion it refers to "the King of the Jews who will be sent by God". The *Online Etymology Dictionary* gives this etymology for *messiah*:

> c. 1300, *Messias*, from Late Latin *Messias*, from Greek Messias, from Aramaic (Semitic) meshiha and Hebrew *mashiah* "the anointed" (of the Lord), from *mashah* "anoint."

> This is the word rendered in Septuagint as Greek *Khristos* (see Christ). In Old Testament prophetic writing, it was used of an expected deliverer of the Jewish nation. The modern English form represents an attempt to make the word look more Hebrew, and dates from the Geneva Bible (1560). Transferred sense of "an expected liberator or saviour of a captive people" is attested from 1660s.

The *Online Etymology Dictionary* demonstrates how the term evolved from meaning "the anointed one" to meaning the person believed to have the power to solve the world's problems. Interest here is on its meaning in the Christian and Jewish religions. For the concept of *messiah*, the UIB, ICB, IRE and INWT use the descriptive phrase *onye etere mmanụ*, literally "a person on whom oil is rubbed", i.e., the anointed one. In other words, the IBTs represent the concept with a phrase that reflects the etymology of *messiah*.

The use of this descriptive phrase in the IBTs is an instance of register extension. For one, the act of *ite mmanụ* "rubbing oil" ordinarily refers to applying oil to the body after bath. So, the Biblical usage semantically extends this secular meaning by adding a religious meaning. Thus, the context of usage determines which meaning is used. The religious meaning is therefore an extension of the Igbo Christian register. Besides, the idea of anointing as a marker of installation to office was foreign to the Igbo, for a person is usually installed into an office by being given an *ọfọ* "staff of office". So, this descriptive phrase *onye etere mmanụ* introduces a new concept into Igbo and is used in Christian contexts for Christian priests and pastors.

c. Miracle

Miracle is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "an unusual and mysterious event that is thought to have been caused by a god because it does not follow the usual laws of nature". From this definition, the Igbo concept of *anwansị* is a functional equivalent of *miracle*. *Anwansị* is defined in Echeruo (1998: 23) as "magic; necromancy". Echeruo's (1998) definition gives *anwansị* negative connotations[78] it did not have prior to the Christianization of the Igbo. This negative attribution of *anwansị* apparently stems from the missionaries' denigration of the concept, which probably informed their opting to use descriptive phrases for *miracle* in order to distinguish the Christian *miracle* from the traditional Igbo *anwansị*. The NIB used *ezi ihe nnukwu egwu* "a positive awe-striking/fear-inspiring phenomenon" while the UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT used *ihe ịrịba ama* "a remarkable phenomenon" or "a sign".

The NIB presents *miracle* as a positive awe-striking or fear-inspiring phenomenon. Again, like the terms analysed in Section 4.1.1.4, *ezi*, the Igbo word for "good" is used as an attribute of *ihe nnukwu egwu* "fear-inspiring phenomenon" to improve the image of the concept of *miracle*. This emphasis that the phenomenon is good contrasts with Echeruo's

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[78] *Necromancy* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "the act of communicating with the dead in order to discover what is going to happen in the future, or black magic (= magic used for bad purposes)".

(1998) definition of *anwansị*, which has negative connotations. In other words, the Igbo functional equivalent *anwansị* was not used for *miracle* apparently because it is perceived to be negative, and the descriptive phrase *ezi ihe nnukwu egwu* was created, with the adjective *ezi* emphasizing that the phenomenon in question is positive.

Incidentally, the IBTs done after the IIB opted for another descriptive phrase *ihe ịrịba ama* "a sign" instead. The phrase ordinarily refers to any item that signifies something else. This literal meaning of *ihe ịrịba ama*, interestingly, is also used in the Bible as seen in this passage from Exodus 12: 14:

21. *bú ihe-igu-ọku nke ndi-nmehie ndia ndi megidere nkpuru-obi-ha, ka ewere kwa ha kpu mbadamba ihe ibu ihe-nmachita diri ebe-ichu-àjà: n'ihi na ha wetara ha nsọ n'iru Jehova, ha di kwa nsọ: ha gābu-kwa-ra umu Israel* **ihe-iriba-ama**

    The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a **sign** unto the children of Israel.

Here, *ihe ịrịba ama* is the Igbo equivalent for *sign*. The use of this phrase for *miracle* apparently stems from the use of *sign* as a synonym for *miracle.* Mark 16: 17, for instance, presents a use of *sign* as a synonym for *miracle*:

22. And these **signs** shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongue.

It is seen here that *sign* is a polysemous word, which *ihe ịrịba ama* was not until its use to represent *miracle* in the IBTs. In other words, the use of *ihe ịrịba ama* for *miracle* extends its meaning to refer not only to items used to stand for other items, but also to miraculous phenomena. This extended meaning has spread among Igbo speakers such that the context of use determines which meaning is used.

In summary, both descriptive phrases used for *miracle* exhibit some forms of elaboration. Their use in the IBTs adds a religious meaning to their secular meaning. This semantic

extension is also a form of register extension in that it extends the register of the phrases and also expands the Igbo Christian register.

d. Tithe

Tithe is defined in *the Cambridge Dictionary* as "a tenth part of someone's produce or income that they give or pay as a tax to the Church". The practice of giving a tenth of one's produce or income to the church is a Christian practice that was foreign to the Igbo prior to their encounter with Christianity. For this Christian concept, the IIB used *otu ibe iri* "one part of ten", the NIB used *oke nke ili*[79] "tenth portion", and the UIBN, UIB, ILB, ICB, IRE and INWT used *otu ụzọ n'ụzọ iri* "one part out of ten parts". These phrases existed in Igbo before the IBTs were made. Their use in the Bible translations however gives them a different signification as religious terms. That is, they were secular terms prior to their use in the IBTs. Their use in the Bible extends their register from secular terms to Christian religious terms. It gives them specificity in that they no longer refer to any tenth part of something but the part that is given to the church as a religious obligation.

4.3 Lexical Borrowing

Haspelmath (2009: 36) defines lexical borrowing 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*)". That is, lexical borrowing refers to situations where a word in a language is adopted by or transferred into another language. The term "borrowing" is problematic because it gives the impression that the borrowed word no longer exists in the donor language and that the recipient language would at some point return the word to the donor. However, as Haspelmath (2009: 37) has noted, "*borrowing* is so well established in linguistics, going

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[79] This is a dialectal spelling of Standard Igbo *iri* "ten"

back at least to the 18th century, and [...] the metaphor does not lead to any misunderstandings". So, it is used in this study.

Often, lexical borrowings have phonological, orthographic, morphological and syntactic features from the donor language which may not be found in the receiving language. The borrowed word is then sometimes adapted to reflect the features of the borrowing language. Chapter 6 investigates, *inter alia*, the different forms of adaptation or integration the borrowed items in the research corpus have undergone in the various IBTs. Interest in this section is to highlight the different items that were borrowed in the translations and to reflect on the possible reasons behind the choice of borrowing. So, for uniformity, all the borrowed items are presented here in the English spellings.

On why languages borrow words from other languages, Haspelmath (2009) presents two simple dichotomies: cultural borrowing and core borrowing. Cultural borrowing refers to instances where the concept borrowed does not exist in the receiving culture and as such the receiving language does not have a word for it. On its part, core borrowing involves cases where the borrowed lexical items refer to a concept that exists in the recipient culture and for which the culture has a word. However, it is not always easy to clearly establish whether a given loanword is cultural or core. For example, apart from the ICB, all the Bible translations in Igbo borrowed the word *table*. Incidentally, Echeruo (1998: 262) gives *oche* and *oche nkwago* as Igbo terms for *table*. The noun *oche* is generally used for any form of chair. Echeruo's (1998) entry suggests that the same word is also used to refer to table, or that the Igbo *oche* also performed the functions of table. The compound *oche nkwago* "elevated chair" seems to be a compound created to distinguish a normal chair for sitting from a higher furniture that is similar to the chair. On its part, the ICB uses *okporo*, defined in Echeruo (1998: 126) as "stem; trunk of tree; bar; length of wood or metal". From this definition, an *okporo* does not necessarily have the same shape as the *table* but might have been used for the same functions as the table. So, the lexical borrowing of the other Bible translations might not have introduced a completely new concept but one with a distinct shape different from what Igbo speakers were familiar with. I treat such borrowings as cultural borrowings because, despite the existence of similar concepts in the Igbo culture, the borrowings introduce a markedly different form of the concept. With this

clarification, I see all the borrowed items in the research corpus as cultural borrowings. This is because all the borrowed items have features that are markedly different from their near equivalents in Igbo.

There are 20 cases of direct lexical borrowings in the research corpus. These are categorized into four broad groups, namely units of measurement, currencies or financial values, Judeo-Christian religious concepts and ecological terms.

4.3.1 Units of Measurement

A unit of measurement is a scale "defined and adopted by convention, with which any other quantity of the same kind can be compared to express the ratio of the two quantities as a number" (JCGM 2008: 6). Prior to their encounter with the Christian missionaries, the Igbo had distinct units of measurement in line with the products of the economic activities they engaged in (see Section 1.1). Ahamefuna (2013) identifies some of the measurement units and the items they are used to measure. For example, palm-oil is measured in containers called *ọba*, *eju*, or *ite Lokpa*, palm-wine in gourds called *okpokoro* or *awarịba*, food items in baskets called *ọba* or *nkata azoro*, etc.

Incidentally, the Bible features many units of measurement that are different from the ones used among the Igbo. Probably because there were no established Igbo equivalents of the Biblical measurement units or in their bid to reflect the cultural contexts of the Bible texts, some of the IBTs borrowed the terms rather than use the Igbo units of measurements. The units of measurement borrowed in the IBTs include *pound* (UIBN, UIB, IRE, INWT), *litre*, (NIB, ICB), *talent* (unit of value) (IIB, NIB, UIBN, UIB, ICB, IRE, INWT), *shekel* (UIB, ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT), and *kilogram* (ICB, IRE). Borrowing these terms into the IBTs introduces the new units of measurement into Igbo and engenders their spread across generations of Igbo speakers.

4.3.2 Currencies or Financial Values

Currency, according to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, is "the money that is used in a particular country at a particular time". Before colonialism, the Igbo did trade by barter and later used cowries and other items like salt as currencies for trade (Aghalino 2009). However, during the colonial period up to December 31, 1972, they used the British pound. From January 1, 1973, they started using the Nigerian Naira.

The research corpus features three currencies or financial values that were borrowed in the IBTs, namely *farthing* (UIBN, UIB), *pound* (UIBN, UIB) and *mina* (NIB, INWT). The UIBN and UIB borrowed *farthing* and *pound* apparently because they were the currencies in use in Nigeria when these translations were done. The NIB borrowed *mina* probably because there was no known equivalent of the currency when the translation was done or to reflect the cultural context of the Bible. The Naira was already in use when the INWT was done. So, the choice of borrowing the term could be attributed to a desire to reflect the cultural context of the Bible. There is no evidence to suggest that these borrowed lexical items are used in Igbo beyond Bible readings, especially as Nigeria no longer uses the British pound as currency. So, the use of the borrowed items in the Bible only shows the cultural contexts of the Bible texts and did not spread into the Igbo language.

4.3.3 Judeo-Christian Religious Concepts

The Judeo-Christian concepts that were borrowed in the Bible translations were all foreign to the Igbo culture and so there were no words for them in their language. They include *Jehovah* (UIB, ILB, IRE, INWT), *Satan* (NIB, UIBN, UIB, IRE, INWT), *Paradais* (all the IBTs), *manna* (all but the IIB), *gentile* (NIB), *baptism* (IIB, NIB, UIBN, UIB, INWT), *rabbi* (NIB, UIBN, UIB, IRE, INWT), *tetrarch* (IIB, UIBN, UIB, IRE) and *angel* (IIB, NIB). These were apparently borrowed to show the cultural context of the Bible. Being Judeo-Christian concepts, their use seems to be restricted to Judeo-Christian contexts and not beyond.

4.3.4 Ecological Terms

Ecological terms refer to terms for items found within the physical ecology of a society, precisely the flora and fauna. In this section, focus is on ecological terms in the Bible whose referents were not found in the Igbo flora and fauna, and so there were no terms for them in the Igbo language. Ecological terms in the research corpus that were borrowed include *mustard* (IIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT), *hyssop* (all but IIB) and *camel* (IIB, NIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB, INWT). Like the other categories of loanwords, these ecological terms were borrowed probably to reflect the cultural contexts of the Biblical texts. Borrowing these terms not only introduced the concepts into the Igbo worldview but also introduced the borrowed terms into the Igbo language. Thus, although the concepts were not part of the Igbo worldview, their presence in the Bible introduced them to the Igbo speakers and through constant Bible readings, made it necessary that the borrowed terms be used in Igbo at least in Bible readings.

It is interesting to note that most of the lexical items that are borrowed in the IBTs are terms that were also borrowed in English from Greek (*talent*, *baptism*, *shekel*, *paradise*, and *tetrarch*) or Hebrew (*manna*, *Rabbi*). Perhaps the use of these loanwords in English had become widespread among the Igbo Christians such that they were already used to them. Consequently, coining new terms for the concepts might have seemed cumbersome for the Bible readers. Incidentally, not all the borrowed items are retained in all the translations. The decision to replace the borrowed items might be because they did not spread into popular usage and the other translations opted for the terms in popular use, or because the translators want to reduce the foreign elements in the Bible as much as possible (see Chapter 6 for details).

In conclusion, this chapter has explored in detail the three major lexical processes adopted in the Igbo Bibles to create new lexical items, i.e. compounding, lexical borrowing and descriptive phrases. As noted in Section 2.5, evangelizing in Igbo expanded the functions of the language to include use in the Christian domain. Translating the Bible resulted in the creation of new terms and the introduction of new concepts in the language. From the

corpus, compounding was the most frequently used strategy. Two types of compounds were identified, those involving only existing Igbo words and hybrid compounds, i.e., those consisting of Igbo and English words. However, some of the compounds, loanwords and descriptive phrases seem to have existed in the language prior to their use in the Bible translations. Their use in the IBTs involves extending their original meanings to polysemously embrace a new meaning or giving them new significations as Christian religious terms, i.e., extending their registers from being secular terms to also functioning as religious terms. Consequently, the lexical and semantic elaborations in the IBTs not only expanded the Igbo lexicon but also created an Igbo Christian register by giving existing Igbo terms new meanings within the context of the Christian religion.

CHAPTER 5

THE REPRESENTATION OF CHRISTIAN CONCEPTS IN IGBO BIBLE TRANSLATION

Chapter 4 explores the lexical processes adopted by the Igbo Bible translators in creating new terms in Igbo, thereby expanding the vocabulary of the language. This chapter focuses on how specifically Christian concepts are represented in the Igbo translations of the Bible. As the analysis below illustrates, these erstwhile foreign concepts are translated into Igbo by appropriating existing Igbo expressions in predominantly two ways: changing their form or changing their meanings. The goal of this chapter is to explicate how this form/meaning change is achieved and how the concepts become couched in Igbo.

Given that concepts are couched in lexical items and that it is difficult to discuss one without referring to the other, it is imperative that I distinguish between lexical items and concepts in order to demarcate the focus of this chapter from that of the preceding one. This distinction is done in Section 5.1. It is followed by a clarification of the use of "Biblical concepts" and "Christian concepts" (5.2). In the last part of the chapter, I focus on the strategies used in representing the Christian concepts in Igbo.

5.1   Concepts and Lexical Items

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines concept as "a principle or idea". The term "concept" is therefore used in this study for the ideas associated with a term. According to Eifring and Theil (2005: 5), many concepts are socially constructed since they are "formed by the child (or, sometimes, the adult) in the process of learning how to relate words and grammar to reality". So, a child raised in Nigeria where there are only two seasons – rainy and dry

seasons – and a relatively temperate weather will have a different concept of season and weather from a child raised in Germany where there are four seasons and with very different temperatures.

Concepts are also shaped and reinforced by language (Eifring and Theil 2005: 7). Languages conceptualize the same reality in different ways. For instance, for the concept for which English assigns the word *we*, the Tagalog speakers in the Philippines have three words: "*kita*, which means 'just the two of us, me and you', *tayo*, which means 'me and you and someone else', and *kami*, which means 'me and someone else, but not you'" (Deutscher 2010: 15). So, an English speaker who is learning Tagalog will have to learn these conceptual distinctions as well. However, the fact that concepts are expressed in words might give the impression that a people are ignorant of a concept for which their language has no word. This is not necessarily so. For illustration, as demonstrated in Section 4.1.1.3C, the Igbo had no word for the concept of *kingdom* before the arrival of Christian missionaries. An Igbo king normally rules over his town. So, *obodo*, the Igbo word for town makes it redundant to have a word for kingdom. However, during Bible translation, the Christian missionaries created the compound *alaeze* "the land of the king" for *kingdom*. Incidentally this lexical innovation is used to denote *kingdom* only in Christian contexts. Outside such contexts, the word is used for a place of plentifulness, almost synonymous with paradise. In other words, lexical blocking could be a reason why a language may not have a label for a concept even though speakers of the language are aware of the existence of the concept.

Furthermore, beyond having labels for concepts, in the words of Deutscher (2010: 19)

> in order to communicate subtle thoughts involving intricate relations between different concepts, language needs much more than a list of concepts – it needs a grammar, a sophisticated system of rules for organizing concepts into coherent sentences.

Put differently, a language also contributes to conceptualization through its grammar. This happens when "a morphological or syntactic construction is used to represent" the concept (Eifring and Theil 2005: 8). In Igbo, for instance, the concept of "brother" is represented as

nwanne nwoke, a lexical compound that has undergone a series of lexico-grammatical processes:

23. *nwa-nne   nwoke*
    child-mother male
    male child of (one) mother

First, the compound *nwanne* is a combination of the nouns *nwa* and *nne*, the former also denoting singularity; the plural form would be *ụmụnne* "children of (one) mother". This compound is then further joined with *nwoke* to indicate the sex of the referent. The grammatical aspect is crucial here as a transposition of *nwa* and *nne* would give a different meaning: *nne nwa* "mother of (a) child". This point is important for this study because, although the English forms of the concepts studied are largely mono-lexical, the Igbo forms are more of compounds and descriptive expressions whose interpretation depends on the lexico-grammatical system of Igbo.

Crystal (2003: 118) defines the lexicon as "the total stock of meaningful units in a language – not only the words and idioms, but also the parts of words which express meaning, such as the prefixes and suffixes". The distinction between lexical items and concepts is seen in the fact that concepts do not necessarily refer to the meanings of the lexical items but to the ideas the lexical items evoke in the mind of the speaker or listener. This is illustrated when one compares the concepts associated with given referents in different languages. For instance, the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* records that the word "tortoise" is used in English to refer to "someone or something regarded as slow or laggard". This conceptualization of the tortoise is different from what obtains among the Igbo to whom the concept of the tortoise (*mbe* in Igbo) encompasses a clever and very smart person, as can be seen in the Igbo folktales compiled by F. C. Ogbalu titled *Mbediogu: About the Controversial Tortoise.* In the analysis below, I demonstrate how some lexical items that have similar referents in the Igbo society as some English words in the Bible are not used as equivalents of the Biblical concepts apparently because such lexical items are believed to evoke ideas deemed to be negative or not good to be associated with the Christian concept.

5.2   Biblical or Christian Concepts?

Many Christian groups claim the Bible as the source of their teachings and practices. However, some of them, e.g., the Catholic Church, do admit that their teachings are not based on the Bible alone. Catholics, in the words of Carr (2004),

> recognize that the Bible does not endorse this view [of the Bible as the only rule of faith] and that, in fact, it is repudiated in Scripture. The true "rule of faith" – as expressed in the Bible itself – is Scripture plus apostolic tradition, as manifested in the living teaching authority of the Catholic Church, to which were entrusted the oral teachings of Jesus and the apostles, along with the authority to interpret Scripture correctly.

It is then pertinent to clarify that focus here is on Christian concepts expressed in the Bible and not so much on concepts outside the Bible. This should not suggest that the Christian denominations have the same interpretation of the Biblical concepts. For instance, although the concept of *hell* is found in four of the five complete IBTs, the concept is missing in the translation by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. In their *Insight on the Scriptures 1*, the Society explains that the concept of *hell* was introduced via a misrepresentation in earlier Bible translations of the Hebrew *she'ohl* and the Greek *hai'des* and *ge'enna*. They therefore advocate for a

> transliteration and consistent rendering [of these expressions in the belief that it] does enable the Bible student to make an accurate comparison of the texts in which these original words appear and, with open mind, thereby to arrive at a correct understanding of their true significance. (Watch Tower 2004: 1086-7)

While the Society's definition of "transliteration" is not clear, they did not create new terms to represent these Biblical terms. Rather they borrowed the Hebrew and Greek words in their translations of the Bible into English and Igbo. That notwithstanding, the belief in the concept of *hell* is real among Igbo Christians and is enshrined in the other translations of

the Bible into Igbo. So, "hell" is included in the corpus of concepts studied. Such problematic cases are few in the corpus and so do not cause any major challenge to this study. For clarity, focus here is on Christian concepts espoused in the Bible.

Finally, the focus of this chapter is on distinctly Christian concepts which were unknown to the Igbo before the arrival of Christian missionaries. The missionaries introduced these concepts into the Igbo language during evangelism and propagated them via Bible translation. Perhaps the Igbo would have come in contact with these ideas later in their history through some other source, but their history indicates that the ideas came to them through the Christian missionaries.

5.3   Presentation and Analysis of Concepts

For each concept analysed, I first identify the equivalent(s) of the concept as given in the IBTs, and then do a descriptive linguistic analysis of the lexical items that convey the concept in Igbo. Furthermore, I reconstruct the concepts behind the components of these lexical units from the contexts they are used. Many of the concepts in the corpus are represented with existing Igbo terms for religious concepts, which are extended to also embrace the Christian concepts. Sometimes, the appropriation of the Igbo concepts in the IBTs gives them pejorative meanings. In other cases, secular lexical items are given a religious signification, thereby making them a different linguistic sign. The sections are grouped according to the nature of the concepts analysed, namely concepts about agents, concepts about locations and sacred spaces, concepts about Christian beliefs, and concepts about Christian rituals and practices.

5.3.1 Concepts about Agents

Here, I discuss concepts about agents who are believed to have the abilities to take actions or make things happen. Concepts in this category have or are ascribed human abilities to speak, talk, move, and so on. I identify two sub-categories of such concepts in the research corpus. The first category comprises of divinities and supernatural beings while the second is made up of human characters.

5.3.1.1   Divinities and Supernatural Beings

The divinities and supernatural beings in the research corpus include the Supreme God and "smaller" or "inferior" gods, the Devil, Satan, Lucifer, the Holy Spirit, angels and devils or demons. These are analysed under three broad categories: a) *God* and other *gods*, b) *the Devil*, *Satan* and *Lucifer*, and c) *Holy Spirit*, *angels* and *devils.*

a. God and Other Gods[80]

In Christianity, it is believed that the world was created by the Supreme God and that other deities or gods were created by this God. Thus, in English a distinction is made between these two categories of deities by spelling one with a capital *G* and the others with a small letter *g*. In this section, I analyse the representation of these deities in the IBTs. Meanwhile, I should clarify that the concept of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is central in Christianity. The focus of this section is on God the Father. The *Holy Spirit* would be analysed in a subsequent section.

The Christian Bible begins in Genesis 1:1 with the following sentence:

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[80] Some of the findings in this section have been published in Oyali (2016)

24. *Na mbu **Chineke** kere elu-igwe na* uwa[81]
   In the beginning ***God*** created the heaven and the earth

In the excerpt, *God* is translated as *Chineke.* This other excerpt from Exodus 22: 20 shows a representation of other *gods*:

25. *Onye nāchuru **chi** àjà, ma-ọbughi ichuru Jehova, nání Ya, agēwezuga ya ka ebibie ya*
   He that sacrificeth unto any **god**, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

The smaller *god* is translated as *chi* in the excerpt. Although the UIB and all the subsequent translations of the Bible into Igbo are consistent in using *Chineke* for God and *chi* for the "smaller" gods, earlier translations had different representations as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5. 1. The representations of *God* and *god* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *God*	Terms for *god*
IIB	*Tsuku*	*Tsuku*
NIB	*Cuku*	*Cuku*
UIBN	*Cineke*	*ci*
UIB	*Chineke*	*chi*
ILB	*Chineke*	*chi*
ICB	*Chineke*	*chi*
IRE	*Chineke*	*chi*
INWT	*Chineke*	*chi*

From Table 5.1, it is seen that the same word, spelt *Chukwu* in Standard Igbo, is used for both concepts in the IIB and NIB. In other words, the IIB and NIB did not make any distinction between the Supreme God and the smaller gods. Goodchild's (2003) report on the second Igbo Conference held in 1905 to discuss the UIB project explains why *Chukwu* was replaced with *Chineke* in the later Bible translations:

> There followed a long discussion on the word for *God. Ci* was used both for
> the Supreme Being and also for a number of inferior deities. Every man had

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[81] As in Chapter 4 above, unless otherwise stated, Bible verses in English are from the KJB and verses in Igbo are from the UIB.

his own *ci*. Dennis thought that formerly the sun was regarded as the supreme *ci*, as the word was used in some connections for the sun both at Onitsha and at Ungwana. At Ungwana the word *cicinda* was used for a star. *Cineke*, God the Creator or Divider, was used for the Supreme Being at Bonny. *Ci-uku*, the Great God, was used at Onitsha. *Ci-uku-okike*, God the great Creator was used at Ungwana. *Abasi*, an Efik word, was used for God at Calabar and by several tribes in the Cross River, and at Ungwana and other districts in the Ibo country. The word *n'enu* or *n'elu* might be added. *Olisa*, a Yoruba word, was used for God in Onitsha, sometimes with *belu uwa*, who divides the world, added. The words *uku*, *okike*, *abiama* when joined to *ci* were descriptive of the attributes of God, the great Entertainer (giver of hospitality) or Provider, *Cineke* as used at Bonny was considered by Green to be an abbreviation of *Ci-uku-neke* or *Ci-uku-okike*. The Bonny delegates explained that the people of Aro-Cuku claimed to be the sons of *Ci-uku*, and by their atrocities brought the name into disrepute. If *Ci-uku* was used in Owerri, Bonny and other parts of the Isuama Ibo country God would be confused with the Aro Oracle. (Goodchild 2003: 153)

The above passage first confirms that the concept of a Supreme God was foreign to the Igbo, else there would not be problems identifying it and having a name for it. The fact that the word *Ci* (*Chi* in Standard Igbo) is also reportedly used for both the Supreme God and other gods further indicates that the distinction was a result of the Igbo contact with Christianity. Although there is little comment on the concept of *chi*, it is stated that every individual has his own *chi* and that the word is used in relation to the sun, points expatiated below. The word *chi* is also used as the root to which expressions like "*uku*, *okike*, *abiama*" could be added to describe "the attributes of God". The analysis below shows that this use of *chi* as root for other lexical items gained popularity first among Igbo Christians. Meanwhile, the association of *Chukwu* with the Arochukwu people and the negative connotations that go with this association made some delegates at the conference to protest the continued use of the word to represent the Christian Supreme God. It is feared that the continued use of *Chukwu* would create some confusion between understanding it

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as the name for the Christian Supreme God and as the name of the Arochukwu deity. Meanwhile Goodchild (2003: 153) adds that:

> [a]fter long discussion it was agreed in the new version [UIB] to use the word *Tsineke* and *Tshukwuokike*, one in the text and the other in the margin. Voting on which should be in the text was equal so the decision lay with the chairman who adjourned the meeting so that he could re-read the evidence and give his judgement after lunch. He later reported that *Cineke* was a genuinely Ibo word, was used in certain districts before the introduction of Christianity, was used by people wholly unacquainted with Christianity, although unknown in some parts its meaning was obvious to thoughtful persons, admitted of no serious misunderstanding or misrepresentation, was believed to be an abbreviation of *Cuku-Okike*, and satisfied all the requirements. Regarding the alternative, *Cuku-Okike*, the employment of the word *Cuku* in any connection was liable to be seriously misunderstood in Isuama Ibo country. The expression *Cuku-Okike* did not convey clearer or better ideas of God than *Cineke*, and required more type space. He therefore favoured *Cineke* for the text *Cuku-Okike* for the margin.

This report shows how *Chineke* was voted in as the term for *God*. Several observations could be made from it. One is that *Chineke* was reportedly "unknown in some parts" of Igboland. To this statement I ask: is it that the expression is not known at all or that its use in reference to one singular concept (as against a duality) is not known? I believe the concepts *chi na eke* (*chi* and eke) were known in every part of Igboland, but the use of the expression to refer to a singular concept was not. Be that as it may, the statement indicates that the use of *Chineke* in the Bible engendered its spread across Igboland. A second observation is that the meaning of *Chineke* "was obvious to thoughtful persons". This indicates that the meaning the conference had in mind was not yet a generally understood one. Rather, it was one that could be deciphered only by thoughtful persons. The thoughtful persons here were the Igbo Christians who have been exposed to the concept of a creator-God (discussed shortly). One further observation from the passage above is that *Chineke* does not admit any "serious misunderstanding or misrepresentation", which implies there

was some misunderstanding in the first instance, but one that could be ignored. Perhaps a key word that requires unpacking is the adverb "genuinely" in the description of *Chineke* as "a genuinely Ibo word". Does the adverb imply that the word was in existence among the Igbo before its use in the Bible? Or does it mean that the word is a coinage that nonetheless fits the Igbo morphological system and gives a meaning that would not appear strange to a native Igbo speaker? Both questions could be answered in the affirmative. The expression *chi na eke* existed before the arrival of Christian missionaries, but it was used to denote a duality. The compound *Chineke* as denoting one concept is a Christian innovation but it fits into the Igbo language in the sense that it is not difficult to interpret the intended meaning. These submissions are expatiated below in the analysis of the concepts *Chukwu*, *Chineke* and *chi* – the three lexical items used to refer to the Supreme God and other gods in the IBTs (see Table 5.1).

The lexical item *Chineke* is a compound comprising three words: *chi*, *na* and *eke*. The combination of these three lexical items is open to three interpretations depending on the grammatical class and function of *na*:

(a) *Chi na-eke* (chi does create). Here *na* is an auxiliary verb modifying *eke*, interpreted here to mean "create" [82].

(b) *Chi n'eke* (chi that creates). Here *na* is a relative pronoun with *chi* as its antecedent.

(c) *Chi na eke* (chi and eke). Here *na* is a coordinating conjunction linking the nouns *chi* and *eke.*

Eke is a verb in the first two instances and a noun in the last one. On its part, *chi* is a noun in all three cases.

Chi generally has three meanings in Igbo. One is daylight, or specifically, the period between day and night, as could be seen in the Igbo expression for "good night":

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[82] The concept of creation will be discussed shortly, as there is evidence that creating something out of nothing might also be foreign to the Igbo.

26. *Ka chi foo* "May the day break"

The other two meanings of *chi* are seen in Nwoga's (1984; 64) presentation:

> What is in agreement in Igboland is the concept and function of *chi* but there are quite a few distinctions as to the nature and form. In most areas *chi* remains a pure abstraction of the *alter ego*, that counterpart of man which satisfies the structural conception of reality as dualistic. In other areas however, *chi* is identified as the *olo uwa…*'the person who has reincarnated in the individual'.

Here, Nwoga (1984) submits that *chi* could mean a person's *alter ego* in the spirit world and the person who reincarnates in another individual, i.e., the first person is the *chi* of the second person.

One point of agreement among many scholars that have studied *chi* is that it is not collectively or communally owned. Rather every individual has their own *chi*, as illuminated in this Igbo proverb *otu nne na-amụ mana otu chi adịghị eke*:

27. *otu   nne   na-amụ   mana otu   chi   adi-ghị   eke*
    one   mother   Prog-birth   but   one   chi   does-neg   apportion
    one mother gives birth [to many children] but their lot in life is apportioned by different *chi*s

This proverb is usually used in situations where siblings display different levels of expertise in different crafts or have different tastes, morals, values, temperaments, and so on. The proverb accentuates that although they may have the same biological mother, each of them has a different *chi*. According to Achebe (1975: 97), the Igbo believe that before coming to the human world, a person usually agrees with their *chi* on what fate awaits them. This agreement is reiterated in this rhetorical question, used mainly at the funeral of a person who has encountered a tragic or an untimely death:

28. *Ọ bụ ihe gị na chi gị kpeta?*
    Is it [the death] the agreement you had with your *chi*?

The place of *chi* in an individual's life is so central that it is believed that no harm can befall an individual if their *chi* does not support that, as reflected in this Igbo proverb used by Ozoemena Nsugbe in his song *Omenana*:

29. *Ọbụlụ na chi onye adịrọ n'izu na ife ara akwakọ ime ya*
    If a person's chi is not in a meeting [where a person's fate is decided], nothing [evil] would happen to the person, i.e., the decision taken at the meeting is void

Furthermore, if a person experiences some good fortune, they are said to have *chi ọma* "a good chi".

On the relationship between the meanings of *chi* as daylight and as a person's alter ego in the spirit realm, Achebe says that:

> among the Igbo of Awka a man who has arrived at the point in his life when he needs to set up a shrine to his *chi* will invite a priest to perform a ritual of bringing down the spirit from the face of the sun at daybreak. Thereafter it is represented physically in the man's compound until the day of his death when the shrine must be destroyed. (Achebe 1975: 94)

In Achebe's (1975:94) view, this shows that "a person's *chi* normally resides with the sun, bringer of daylight, or at least passes through it to visit the world".

Just like *chi*, *eke* is also a complex concept in Igbo. In Nwoga's (1984: 56) words, "Eke has its standard meaning in tradition, referring to the share or lot each person is apportioned, the destiny, and agency of destiny, in each person's life". Achebe (1975: 101) observes that there might be no significant difference between *chi* and *eke* as *eke* "does seem to have more or less the same attributes as *chi*". He uses some Igbo personal names to illustrate this:

> Chinwuba – *chi* has increase
>
> Ekejiuba – *Eke* holds increase
>
> Nebechi – look to *chi*

Lemeke /Leweke – look to *eke*

Nwoga (1984: 56) also presents a similar list of *chi*-names that have *eke* equivalents:

Chilaka = Ekelaka

Chiledo = Ekeledo

Ekeoma = Chioma

Achebe (1975: 101) adds that "the *chi* versions of these names occur more in the northern and western parts of Igbo land while the *eke* names tend to occur more in the southern and eastern parts". In sum, Achebe (1975) and Nwoga (1984) hold that the concept of a Supreme God was foreign to the Igbo, that *Chineke* is an appropriation of "*chi* and *eke*" to give "*chi* that creates". To them, the attribution of creation to *chi* is an invention of the Christian missionaries.

Interestingly, some scholars do not support the view that the idea of a Supreme Deity among the Igbo was introduced by the Christian missionaries. However, the submissions of these scholars are not convincing. Rather, they seem to be imposing Christian ideologies or paradigms on the traditional Igbo beliefs. I now present four of such scholars, namely Bews (1985), Uchendu (1965), Metuh (1973) and Umezinwa (2014), and highlight why I consider them tobe biased or not convincing.

The first sentence of the abstract of Bews (1985) betrays the bias of the author: "How applicable is the OT [Old Testament] to reaching particular unreached people groups?" (Bews 1985: 315). This opening sentence shows that the author's aim is how to preach the message of Christianity to the "unreached people groups" and not to understand the practices of the people. A few paragraphs into the introductory section of the article, the author says:

It is the contention of this author that Almighty God placed within the Igbo culture a seed of truth concerning Himself, a bridge to acceptance of the

specific revelation of the truth of the Judeo-Christian scriptures…It will be shown that the Igbo concept of the High God, if used with care, can pave the way to an understanding of the one true God of the Bible. (Bews 1985: 316)

The "High God" Bews refers to is *Chukwu*, generally interpreted as *chi ukwu* "big/great *chi*". Ezekwugo (1987: 87) however disagrees with the view that *Chukwu* is a compound. He insists that *Chukwu* is a proper name referring to "one particular deity – the oracle of Aro Chukwu, and cannot be predicated on any other deity". The "other deity" Ezekwugo (1987) refers to is *Chi*, which he believes is the true Igbo equivalent of the Christian Supreme God. This is expatiated shortly.

Meanwhile, the compound *chi ukwu* has *chi* as head and *ukwu* as modifier of head. The implication is that *chi* is a superordinate term with different hyponyms, one of which is *chi ukwu*. Furthermore, *the* adjective *ukwu* suggests that *chi ukwu* is greater than other hyponyms of *chi.*

One of the attributes of *Chukwu* listed by Bews (1985: 317) is that "Chukwu is entirely good", a fact that "logically implies the existence of a devil". While I accept that there is an Igbo deity called *Chukwu* which had been in existence before the arrival of Christian missionaries, I do not accept the view that this *Chukwu* occupied the position of a Supreme Deity in the pre-Christian Igbo culture (illuminated below). I also do not agree that *Chukwu* "is entirely good" as there are folktales which present *Chukwu* in a negative light (also discussed shortly).

Despite the supposed parallels or echoes of the OT that Bews (1985) suggests could be found in the Igbo culture, he maintains that "the traditional Igbo does not know the true God, nor does he believe that God can be known". Thus, he advocates that these parallels be used "to bring all those unreached peoples to a knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Bews 1985: 320). The implication of these statements is that Bews has no intention to understand the Igbo the way they are, but rather he is searching for ways of penetrating the Igbo culture and converting the Igbo to Christianity.

Bews' (1985) source for the assertion that "Chukwu is entirely good" is Uchendu (1965: 94) who states that:

[t]he idea of a creator of all things is focal to Igbo theology. They believe in a supreme god, a high god, who is all good. The logical implication of the concept of a god who is all good is the existence of a devil (*agbara*) to whom all evil must be attributed. This is not peculiar to Igbo thought. It is a characteristic of all known religions which accept the doctrine of a high god who does no evil.

Two observations could be made from this excerpt. The first is that one is not told with what data Uchendu (1965) arrives at his conclusions, for there are Igbo folktales that present *Chukwu* as a cruel and trickster deity who appears to take delight in inflicting pain on, or making life difficult for, people. In one of the tales gathered in Ogbalu (1972: 1-5), *Chukwu* offers the tortoise a stone to break as kolanut, but he is outwitted by the tortoise who offers him a pad and asks that he (*Chukwu*) carry the earth with it. The whole of the story is about the different tricks introduced by *Chukwu* to outwit the tortoise and how the tortoise beats him to his game in every instance.

The other observation from Uchendu's (1965) statement above is the logic behind his assertion of the existence of the "devil (*agbara*) to whom all evil must be attributed": the existence of an all-good deity implies the existence of an all-bad deity which he terms *agbara.* However, there is evidence of a different picture of *agbara*. For instance, in *Things Fall Apart*, the reader is presented with an *Agbala*[83] oracle to whom

people came from far and near to consult [...] They came when misfortune dogged their steps or when they had a dispute with their neighbours. They came to discover what the future held for them or to consult the spirits of their departed fathers. (Achebe 1958: 5)

There is nothing negative presented about the oracle in this passage. Rather, the oracle helps to solve peoples' problem. Furthermore, in a scheme drawn from Koelle (1854)[84], Nwoga (1984) lists *Agbara* as one of the names the freed slaves of Igbo descent claim are the Igbo terms for God (c.f. Table 5.3). One cannot help but wonder how a name given in the

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[83] The difference between *Agbala* and *Agbara* is mere dialectal: some dialects pronounce it as *Agbala* while others pronounce it as *Agbara*.
[84] This is Koelle's (1854) report of his interview in Freetown of freed slaves of Igbo origin.

19th century by the freed Igbo slaves as the Igbo equivalent for God is claimed by Uchendu (1965) in the mid-20th century to be the Igbo name for the Devil. Obviously, Uchendu (1965) fell into the trap of bending the Igbo language and culture to suit the prevailing mold of Christianity. His statement that "[i]t is a characteristic of all known religions which accept the doctrine of a high god who does no evil" confirms that he takes it for granted that since the Igbo supposedly have a Supreme Deity who is all good, they must also have a negative counterpart of this deity, whose attributes he bestows on *Agbara*. Obviously, this assertion is not derived from Uchendu's (1965) ethnographic research but from speculation.

Another scholar who holds that the concept of the Supreme God had always been in the Igbo cosmology is Metuh (1973). One major flaw of Metuh's study is his inconsistency in the use of terms for Igbo concepts. For example, he states that Talbot (1926) "pointed out that *Chi* (God) lives away in the depths of the sky" (Metuh 1973: 1). However, later in the same study, he reports that when asked whether he ever gives gifts or sacrifices to God, his informant says: "Yes […] When one gets a good fortune, one tells him, O God! who created me to come to this world, I greet you. If he has anything to offer him, he places it at the 'Onu Chi' (the altar of the personal spirit) and says, this is to thank you" (Metuh 1973: 10). The different interpretations of *chi* as God and as the personal spirit are in parenthesis and reflect Metuh's (1973) views.

Metuh (1973) also cites the *Aja Eze Enu* "sacrifice of/to the king of the sky"[85] as evidence for the existence of God in Igbo culture. He translates the Igbo expression as "Sacrifice to God, King of Heaven" (Metuh 1973: 6). Here, he inserts "God" in the expression, even though there is no mention of God or *chi* in the phrase. Secondly, he translates *enu* as "heaven" and not as "sky". For one, the Igbo have a god of the sky called *Igwe* who is the source of rain (Uchendu 1965: 97), i.e., *igwe*, not *Chukwu*, is the Igbo god of the sky. In fact, as Rev. Fr. Ugwueze asserts in a private interview with Ezekwugo (1987: 89), "We do not think of Chukwu…as living in heaven. The idea of heaven came with Christianity". Metuh's (1973) use of "heaven" above suggests that the belief that God resides in heaven, a place believed by Christians to be where good people are rewarded at death for their good deeds,

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[85] *Enu* literally means up or above. Its use to refer to a location above invariably points at the sky.

is a view held by the Igbo before their encounter with Christianity. However, he contradicts this implication in another section of the same article where he states that "a person who has lived a bad life generally does not reach the *Ani Mmụọ* 'land of the dead/ancestors'" (Metuh 1973: 4). This implies that people who live good lives do reach the *Ani Mmụọ,* not heaven. Yet in another section, Metuh (1973: 11) states that another name for *Chukwu* "is *Anyanwu na Agbala*, while he is freely referred to as *Chi*". Here again, Metuh not only equates God with *Chi* but also adds another deity to the discourse. *Anyanwu na Agbala* literally means "*Anyanwu* and *Agbala*". *Anyanwu* is a compound formed from *anya* "eye" and *anwụ* "sun", meaning the eye of the sun. *Anyanwu* "is the sun-god. He makes crops and trees grow" (Uchendu 1965: 96).

Lastly, Umezinwa (2014) adds his voice to those that insist that the Igbo had always been monotheistic. On the argument that the Igbo have no altar for the Supreme Being, one of the points Umezinwa makes is that "Christ did not emphasize location as being important in worship. For him, the true believers are those who worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23)" (Umezinwa 2004: 61). Here, the author uses the tenets of Christianity to evaluate the religious practices of the Igbo. On the point that the root *ke* is used to denote creation only within the domain of Christianity, the author again uses an analogy with another religion to make his case:

> The Hebrew word, *bara'* means to create. But "as a special theological term, *bara'* is used to express clearly the incomparability of the creative work of God in contrast to all secondary products and likenesses made from already existing material by man" (Johannes Botterweck, G. and Helmer Ringgren, 1999). It is "a word used in the OT only with the deity as the subject; hence it indicates a work which is distinctively divine, which no agent less than God can accomplish" (J. L. McKENZIE, 1978). In the same vein –*ke* is used to underscore the distinctive feature of the divine action as different from that of man with regard to bringing something into existence. Thirdly, there are a number of myths of creation among the Igbo (T. U. Nwala, 1985). (Umezinwa 2014: 62)

On the argument that every deity has a priest and that the Igbo have no priest for *Chukwu*, he quotes Aristotle (1994) to make his point: "It is the mark of an educated mind to expect that amount of exactness in each kind which the nature of the particular subject admits" (Umezinwa 2014: 63). One again wonders why Umezinwa (2014) does not apply this same argument to his earlier equation of the tenets of Christianity with those of the traditional Igbo practices. That notwithstanding, on the identity of *Eke* in the expression *Eke kere ụwa*, Umezinwa (2014: 63) argues that "[a]mong the Igbo *Eke* is not taken to be the creator of the world. He is simply responsible for the qualities that a child receives at birth…*Eke* in the *Eke kere ụwa* is the short form of saying *Chineke kere Ụwa* (God who created the world)". Just like the other scholars discussed above, Umezinwa (2014) is not consistent in his argument. On the one hand, he rightly observes that *Eke* apportions the qualities a child receives at birth, yet he also submits that *Eke* is the short form of *Chineke.* For the sake of argument, assuming he is correct and *Eke* is the same as *Chineke*, the whole sentence becomes awkward: *Chineke kere ụwa* would now mean "God-who-creates who created the world".

These inconsistencies in the use of terms for concepts and attempts at imposing the tenets of Christianity on the Igbo raise some doubts on the reliability of the positions of these scholars that insist that the concept of the Supreme God among the Igbo predates the advent of Christianity.

A third group of scholars takes mid position on the identities of *chi* and *eke* and their roles in the creation of the Igbo equivalent of the Christian God. The major voice in this group is Ezekwugo (1987). On the one hand, he maintains that *Chukwu* was never a deity recognized in every part of Igboland: "Originally Chukwu, (sic) was just one local god among many; one of a thousand-and-one Igbo 'jujus' or 'alusi' deities" (Ezekwugo 1987: 76). Many such oracles exist in different parts of Igboland and are usually associated with specific communities, e.g., "Chukwu of Aro-Chukwu, Igwe ka Ala of Umunoha in Owerri, and the goddesses Agballa of Agu-ukwu and Idemili of Nnobi" (Ezekwugo 1987: 76). Owing to the widespread dispersion and cleverness of the Aro people as well as the awe-inspiring nature of the *Chukwu* grotto, the fame of the *Chukwu* oracle spread across Igboland (Ezekwugo 1987: 76-80). However, this oracle was destroyed in 1902 by the British

government when it was discovered that its priests were involved in human sacrifice and slave trade (Ezekwugo 1987: 81-82). Ezekwugo (1987) also believes that *Chineke* was a creation of the missionaries. He agrees with Achebe (1975) and Nwoga (1984) that *Chineke* "is a duality" designating "two different spiritual entities: CHI[86] and Eke" (Ezekwugo 1987: 92).

However, unlike Achebe (1975) and Nwoga (1984), Ezekwugo (1987) insists that the Igbo had believed in a Supreme Deity *CHI* before the arrival of the missionaries. He cites several Igbo proverbs and folktales that express the central place of *chi* in the life of the Igbo, and he argues that it is one and the same *chi* that works for every individual and not a separate *chi* for each person (Ezekwugo 1987: 121). One of the evidences he cites to support this claim is a testimony in Arinze (1960) of an informant who associated *chi* with God while reporting on an occasion when "women all over Onitsha area offer special sacrifices to their Creator, the Great God, Chi" (quoted in Ezekwugo 1987: 123). However, this argument is weak because there is no indication that, indeed, it was a sacrifice to one *chi* deity. The fact that the women make the sacrifice at the same time does not mean it is to the same deity. The women apparently make the sacrifices to their respective *chi*s. Another evidence presented by Ezekwugo (1987) was an article published in 1933 by Mr. K. Daniel who argues that the god *chi* "is represented with three pieces of stick of equal size and length – an idea of the Holy Trinity!" (quoted in Ezekwugo 1987: 124). This argument is also tenuous, for Mr. Daniel appears to be looking for parallels between Christianity and the Igbo religious practices that would engender a firmer entrenchment of Christianity among the Igbo. According to him, "if the Christian religion were introduced to the natives through this source [telling the Igbo that *chi* and God are one and the same deity], they would have been more staunch believers" (cited in Ezekwugo 1987: 124). Yet another evidence given by Ezekwugo (1987) for the Igbo belief in a Supreme Deity was a report from a seminarian informant:

> Everyone has Chi because CHI is a name representing the Creator. The old man of about 80 years who gave me this information said that since

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[86] Ezekwugo's (1987) choice of capitalizing *chi* is perhaps to front his belief that *chi* is the Igbo equivalent of the Supreme God and so should be revered.

everyone, be he man or brute animal, has a creator everyone must have CHI
of which there is only one, hence there is a general Chi-feast among the Igbo.
(Ezekwugo 1987: 124)

The fact that everybody has a *chi* does not mean there must be a central *chi*-head; and the
"general Chi-feast" does not necessarily mean that the feast is to a central deity, as
suggested in the excerpt.

Furthermore, Ezekwugo (1987: 141) believes that *eke* is the mediator between man and
chi:

though a new born child is believed to come from CHI, parents hold that for
this transfer of the child from its first world into their hands, there is always
a second person involved, a mediator between them and CHI, a (sic) agent
through whom CHI commits the child to their temporal care. This mediator
or agent is what the Igbo call '*EKE*'.

He cites some Igbo names to support his position that the role of *eke* "is quite subordinate
and dependent for it is CHI himself who appoints an Eke to his office" (Ezekwugo 1987:
144):

Eke-CHI-nyere   Eke given by CHI

Eke-di-na-CHI   Eke is in CHI

CHI-Eke-m   CHI of my Eke (p. 144)

On the Igbo names and proverbs that seem to equate *chi* with *eke*, he explains that: "Like
the Jews, the Igbos always retain the Divine name CHI for any being understood to be
acting solely in the name and authority of the Supreme Being" (Ezekwugo 1987: 132). He
cites several such instances in the Bible, like Genesis 18: 3 where Abraham addresses the
"three men" that appear to him in the singular "My Lord". Ezekwugo (1987: 133) then
concludes that "in the manner of the examples cited above, the Igbos make use of the divine
name 'CHI' to refer immediately to God's agent in the person of a man's Eke".

Like some of the scholars discussed above, Ezekwugo's position is weakened by his use of
Christian precepts to legitimize an arbitrary interpretation of concepts in Igbo, i.e., looking

for parallels between Christianity and the Igbo religious practices and, where none exists, creating one and imposing it on the Igbo. His subordination of *eke* to *chi* is weak, for Echeruo (1998: 45) identifies *eke* on the one hand as "fate, fortune or destiny", and on the other as "the deity that allots fate". It is more plausible to argue that the *eke* that appears subordinate to *chi* refers to Echeruo's (1998) "fate, fortune and destiny" and not to "the deity that allots fate".

The root of *eke* (vb.) is *ke*, a morpheme with a lot of entries in Igbo (-English[87]) dictionaries. The two meanings of this root that have relevance to this discussion are "to share" and "to create". That *ke* means "to share" or "to apportion" is not in contention and so would not be stressed. However, scholars are divided on the meaning of *ke* as "to create". On this, Nwoga (1984: 56) declares that

> In all its known uses, the -*ke* root refers to the act of dividing and sharing. *Oke* = a share*; okike* = the act of sharing; *eke* = one who shares; *kee* = divide. All acts akin to "making" have different roots.

An investigation of dictionary entries for this root lends weight to Nwoga's (1984) position. It is not a coincidence that three of the four dictionaries investigated give the same sentence to illustrate the use of *ke* as meaning "to create": Genesis 1: 1 "God created the heaven and the earth" (Welmers and Welmers 1968: 67; Williamson 1972: 205; Echeruo 1998:80). It is interesting to note that Igwe (1999) does not have any entry for *ke* as meaning "to create", though it does have an entry for *ke* as "predestine" (Igwe 1999: 305). On *eke* (n), Igwe (1999) is not consistent in his entries. The entry for *Chineke* is

> n. God; God-and-Creator (not; God that creates)

> cf. *I wu chi m na eke m?* Are you my god and creator? (Igwe 1999: 111)

Although he accepts that *Chineke* is used to refer to the Supreme God (note the capital G), he rejects the position that the phrase means "God that creates" but insists that *eke* is a noun. However, his switch to a small *g* (god) in the sample sentence seems to reduce this

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[87] There is no Igbo monolingual dictionary yet. Most of the dictionaries available are bilingual – mainly English/Igbo.

character to a local deity, and not the Supreme Deity. Furthermore, one of the entries for *eke* is:

> n. (a) Creator, God: *Eke m* my Creator; my God
>
> *Chineke (Chinaeke)* God and Creator; Creator God. (Igwe 1999: 152)

Here, *eke* takes on an additional meaning – God – one that it was initially denied, and *Chineke* becomes "Creator God", a meaning it was denied earlier.

Williamson (1972: 108) has an entry for *eke* as "God" without giving any further explanation.

In Echeruo (1998: 45), *eke* has these as some of its entries:

> **eke** *n* [HL] fate, fortune or destiny either by choice or by chance.
>
> **Eke** *n* [HL] the deity that allots fate, otherwise known as the creator God – *Eke ji uba = Wealth is in the hands of Eke; Ekeci[88] (or Eke kere Ci) = Eke who created "Ci"; creator – otu nne na-amu, ma obughi otu ci na-eke – children may be born by the same mother, but each is created by a different* "Ci". <"kee" = divide, partition>.
>
> **eke ci** *n* [HL H] destiny; fate; lit: lot assigned from "Ci", that is fate determined from birth.

Here, one observes Echeruo's (1998) attempt at arbitrarily allotting the attribute of *creator* to *eke.* While the first entry makes no reference to creation, the second entry dramatically equates allotment of fate to creation. Echeruo (1998) suggests in the second entry that *ekeci* is a clip of *eke kere ci*, making *ci* the creation of *eke.* He goes further to interpret *na-eke* in the Igbo proverb (*otu nne…na-eke*) as "to create", a meaning that is absent in his etymological note (<"kee" = divide, partition>). In other words, Echeruo (1998) insinuates that the idea of creation as part of the meaning of *eke* is a latter development. In the third entry above, Echeruo (1998) again suddenly presents *ekeci* not as *Eke* who created *"Ci"*, but

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[88] This is Echeruo's (1998) spelling of *ekechi* in his New Standard Orthography (NSO)

as lot assigned from "Ci", with *ci* no longer the Object of the Subject *eke*, but now the Subject and *eke* its Object.

Dictionary entries for *chi* are also illuminating. Welmers and Welmers (1968: 13) have this entry:

> ci: a deity, God (cf,: Cineke, Cukwu); day: ŋgbe ci bọrọ 'when it dawned'; ka ci bọọ 'Good-night'; ị bọọla ci 'Good morning'; ọbụbọ ci 'daybreak'; (more specifically) sky (with reference to weather): ci ruru eru 'The sky is threatening.'; ci taa dị deguu 'It is glowing today'.

It is significant to note that although there is an entry for *chi* as meaning God, there is no single sample sentence to give the context of use unlike the other entries with copious examples.

Williamson (1972: 77-78) has two entries for chi:

> chi 1. A. god; a guardian deity
>
> B. small tree planted near dwelling to represent chi
>
> [...][89]
>
> ofu chi A. one god
>
> B. (fig.) one character, behaviour (of human beings only, to describe two persons with similar character)

Here, Williamson (1972) identifies *chi* as a local deity or god and not as God; *chi* only serves as God when it is part of a compound like *Chineke* or *Chukwu.* Williamson's second entry on *chi* identifies *chi* as day, with copious examples of different contexts in which the word is used.

On his part, Echeruo (1998:34) has the following entries for *chi*:

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[89] As part of entry 1B, Williamson (1972) explains *Chineke* and *Chukwu* as referring to God. However, she does not state that *chi*, standing in isolation, refers to God.

Ci *n* [H] [1]personal god; guardian angel; spirit-self; symbol of personal identity, autonomy, fate and destiny...[2]a spirit with god-like powers...[3]controlling power or force; master [...][*]Short for 'Cukwu' in personal names and non-Christian discourse.

ci *n* [H] dawn; morning; day

Echeruo (1998) gives examples of different contexts where *chi* is used to reflect these two senses. He observes that it is a short form for *Chukwu* (here understood to mean God) but only in personal names and non-Christian discourse. This means that apart from its appearance in personal names, *chi* is not used to refer to God in Christian discourse.

Igwe (1999) has no entry for *chi.*

One picture that emerges from the discourse so far is that the Igbo believe that every individual has their own *chi* and that there is no collective group *chi*; that *Chukwu*, the name of a deity of the Arochukwu people, is now seen as the Big or Great *chi*; and that *chi na eke* has evolved to become *Chineke.* The use of these concepts for the Supreme God is a result of a reanalysis that started with *Chukwu* and then extended to *Chineke*, which culminated in the semantic extension of *chi* to mean any deity that one worships. Although Ezekwugo (1987: 87) insists that *Chukwu* is not a compound of *chi* and *ukwu*, Chukwukere (1983: 528) suggests the possibility of that being the case. First, he insists that

> the idea of a group chi in any fundamental sense (e.g., family or lineage) is not typically Igbo. The few documented exceptions of Igbo subgroups to this general rule open the question as to whether a group chi was not a later accretion to their culture. (Chukwukere 1983: 527)

However, he adds that

> Chukwu rather appears to be the Aro people's name for their "town" deity, which the Aro may well have conceived as a kind of their collective or "national" chi, at first peculiar to themselves and later "adopted" by other Igbo people, which is understandable in the context of collective Aro achievement in Igbo history. (Chukwukere 1983: 528)

As observed earlier, it is common for communities to have a deity for the whole town and it is not in contention that the Aro people have the Chukwu deity. However, I do not think that the interpretation of *Chukwu* as a compound was a reality among the Igbo (including Arochukwu people), else the earliest translations of the Bible (the IIB and NIB) would not have had any difficulty in distinguishing the Christian Supreme God from other gods. The fact that both concepts are represented using the same term indicates that no such distinction existed. However, with the arrival of the Christian missionaries and their message about the Supreme God, the idea of a Supreme Deity was introduced to the Igbo. Furthermore, with the realization of the central place of *chi* among the Igbo, and the fact that *ukwu* happens to have a meaning that affirms the nature of the Christian Supreme Deity as "great" or "big", *Chukwu* was re-analysed as *chi ukwu*, resulting in the semantic extension of *chi* to now also mean *god* or *deity. Chi* is then presented as the root to which other morphemes could be attached to emphasize any attribute intended, in this case greatness. Incidentally, the negative reputation of the Arochukwu deity *Chukwu* plagued the reanalysed meaning of the word and the new context it is used, such that it had to be voted out in favour of *Chineke*. On its part, *Chineke* has been demonstrated to be a re-analysis of *chi na eke* (*chi* and *eke*) to now mean "chi that creates". This interpretation of *chi* as the root of the expression stems from the earlier reanalysis of *Chukwu. Thus, na eke* "and *eke*" is re-interpreted to mean "that creates" and presented as an attribute of *chi*.

However, despite the fact that *Chukwu* was dropped for *Chineke* in the IBTs, the name is used in common speech interchangeably with *Chineke* to refer to the Supreme God. It is also the term used in the prayer books and catechisms of the Igbo Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. Consequently, both *Chukwu* and *Chineke* are used in Igbo for the Supreme God.

b. The Devil, Satan, Lucifer

The identity of the character of *Satan* or the *Devil* in the Bible is quite controversial as different people have different views of this concept. For instance, after investigating the characterization of *Satan* in the Bible, Anizoba (2008: 137) submits that

> (a) Satan is synonymous with Jehovah;
>
> (b) Satan is one of the sons of God, a Benai Elohim;
>
> (c) Satan's job is to tempt;
>
> (d) In spite of Job's holiness, God allowed Satan, His accredited tempter to test Job's faith. Job passed the test and God doubled his blessings;
>
> (e) Before Jesus started his ministry, the Spirit of God brought him before Satan for a test. Jesus passed the test and his ministry began;
>
> (f) Neither Job nor Jesus asked God to spare them from being tempted;
>
> (g) Temptation is crucial in life and particularly in spiritual evolution: it serves to determine what we are capable of.

Thus, Anizoba (2008: 137) concludes that "Satan and his Host constitute the Cosmic Judiciary and Armed Forces. They are the keepers of the Book of Life. The spirits of this hierarchy are responsible for Cosmic Order and the application of incurred Karma".

However, the popular perception of *Satan* is seen in this definition in the *Cambridge Dictionary*: "the name used by Christians and Jews for the Devil (= a powerful evil force and the enemy of God)". The Dictionary here indicates that *the Devil* is seen in Christianity and Judaism as an evil force and God's adversary, and that *Satan* is another name for this "force". The Dictionary also identifies *Lucifer* as "another name for Satan". These three names, seen in Christianity as referring to the same concept, were foreign to the Igbo prior to their encounter with Christianity. They are translated with different terms in the IBTs, as shown in Table 5.2:

Table 5. 2. The representations of the *Devil*, *Satan* and *Lucifer* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for the *Devil*	Meaning	Terms for *Satan*	Meaning	Terms for *Lucifer*	Meaning
IIB	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	-	-
NIB	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Setan*	Loanword from English	-	-
UIBN	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Setan*	Loanword from English	-	-
UIB	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Setan*	Loanword from English	*Lusifa*	Loanword from English
ILB	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Kpakpando ụtụtụ*	Morning star
ICB	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Kpakpando nke ehihie*	Morning star
IRE	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Setan*	Loanword from English	*Lusifa*	Loanword from English
INWT	*Ekwensu*	Personal name	*Setan*	Loanword from English	*Onye na-enwu dị ka ihe*	A person who shines like daylight

Table 5.2 shows that all the translations are consistent in translating *Devil* as *Ekwensu*. However, their choice of terms for *Satan* and *Lucifer* is varied. For *Satan*, while the IIB, ILB and ICB use *Ekwensu*, the other translations borrowed *Satan*, with some graphological adjustment. *Lucifer* is a hapax, as it appears only once in Isaiah 14: 12:

30. How art thou fallen from heaven, O **Lucifer**, son of the morning!

The *Online Etymology Dictionary* suggests that the referent of *Lucifer* in this Bible verse is to the King of Babylon (c.f. Isaiah 14: 4), but the mention of a fall from *heaven* makes Christians give it a spiritual interpretation as God's adversary. The IIB, NIB and UIBN do not have any term for *Lucifer* because it appears only in the OT. The UIB and IRE borrow the term, the ILB translates it as *kpakpando ụtụtụ* "morning star", the ICB prefers *kpakpando nke ehihie* "afternoon/day star", and the INWT uses *onye na-enwu dị ka ihe* "a

person who shines like daylight". These descriptive phrases for *Lucifer* reflect the etymology of the name, given in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* as:

> Old English *Lucifer* "Satan," also "morning star, Venus in the morning sky before sunrise," also an epithet or name of Diana, from Latin *Lucifer* "morning star," noun use of adjective, literally "light-bringing," from *lux* (genitive *lucis*) "light" (see **light** (n.)) + *ferre* "carry" (see ***infer***). Venus in the evening sky was ***Hesperus***

However, beyond the direct lexical borrowing and descriptive phrases, the most remarkable aspect of language elaboration here is the semantic shift of, and pejorative meaning given to *Ekwensu*, an Igbo heroic deity that has been ascribed all the negative attributes of *the Devil* since its use in the Bible as the Igbo equivalent of *the Devil*. The following sections investigate representations of *Ekwensu* in Igbo dictionaries, different attempts at recreating the etymology of the name and some anthropological accounts on the Igbo deity. These help in the reconstruction of the concept of *Ekwensu* among the Igbo prior to the arrival of Christianity and how this concept has been semantically changed to become the Christian *Devil*.

i.   Dictionary Representations of *Ekwensu*

Crowther (1882) does not have an entry for *Ekwensu*, but Dennis (1915) has this entry:

> a malevolent spirit to whom is ascribed evil and calamity; (2) any untoward event attributed to **ekwensu**; (3) Satan

Being such a key concept in Christianity, *Ekwensu* should ordinarily be one of the concepts which Crowther (1882) would be expected to have an entry for. The absence of an entry suggests that the missionaries were not clear about the Igbo equivalent of *Satan*. Dennis (1915) shows that *Ekwensu* is a spirit to whom evil and calamity as well as any untoward

event are ascribed. Then *Ekwensu* is said to be *Satan*. The sequence of Dennis' presentation of *Ekwensu* is note-worthy as this is repeated in subsequent dictionaries.

There is no entry for *Ekwensu* in Welmers and Welmers (1968). In Williamson (1972: 110), *Ekwensu* is defined as

> the god of misfortune or trouble, equated with the devil.

This entry points at two related but slightly different meanings of *Ekwensu*: the first points out that it is an Igbo deity associated with misfortune or trouble, and the second shows that the deity is being equated with the Christian devil. Unlike Dennis (1915) who identifies *Ekwensu* as *Satan*, Williamson's (1972) clarification that *Ekwensu* is "equated with the devil" indicates that *Ekwensu* is not the same as the devil but is regarded as the Igbo equivalent of the deity. In other words, that meaning is relatively recent but has gained some level of acceptance and spread. Being a Christian missionary, T. J. Dennis was evangelistic, concerned with conversion and imprinting Christian concepts in the Igbo people's cognition, but Williamson the linguist was more interested in presenting the usage she observed. Williamson's (1972) separation of the identities of *Ekwensu* and *Satan* and reporting that one is equated to the other indicates that the process was ongoing but perhaps not fully completed. However, almost three decades later, Echeruo (1998: 47) has this entry:

> *n.* [HHHH] [1]trickster spirit; spirit of confusion; figures of this spirit are displayed in many Ngwa festivals; [2]kind of ritual dance in celebration of "Ekwensu", god of mischief; [3]evil spirit; devil; satan – *onye a na-akpọ Ekwensu na Satan = who is called the Devil and Satan (Rev. 12: 9).*

Echeruo's (1998) entry expands Williamson's (1972) by adding that *Ekwensu* is a trickster deity, full of mischief and confusion, that images of the deity are displayed at many festivals among the Ngwa Igbo, and that there are ritual dances to celebrate the deity. On the equation of *Ekwensu* with the devil, Echeruo's (1998) illustrative sentence from the Bible is an indication that this interpretation is an Igbo Christian usage.

Igwe (1999: 157) gives this definition of *Ekwensu*:

n. Satan, Lucifer, god of misfortune; the devil; and evil person, deceiver, misleader, tempter

Igwe's (1999) definition is significant on several levels. First, Igwe (1999) presents the Biblical appropriation of *Ekwensu* as Satan as the first meaning, unlike the other entries that present that meaning last. This suggests that the view of *Ekwensu* as the Christian Devil is the basic meaning of the word, and that the other meanings are metonymies derived from the negative attributes of *Satan*. Second, Igwe (1999) equates *Ekwensu* to *Lucifer*, despite the fact that the name *Lucifer* is a *hapax* in the Bible and that none of the translations of the Bible into Igbo translates *Lucifer* as *Ekwensu.* Igwe's (1999) entry, although not directly from the Bible, shows the popular Christian theology that Lucifer is the same character as the Devil and Satan. Furthermore, the fact that Igwe (1999) does not give more information on the place of *Ekwensu* in Igbo cosmology, unlike Echeruo (1998), suggests that that aspect of the understanding of *Ekwensu* is gradually becoming hazy and the Christian interpretation is taking centre stage. So, the different dictionary entries of *Ekwensu* present the gradual shift in interpretations of *Ekwensu* in Igbo, from an Igbo deity to the Christian Devil or Satan or Lucifer. Thus, it is illuminating to explore etymological and anthropological accounts on this Igbo deity to better understand how it evolved and became the Igbo equivalent of the Christian Devil.

ii. Recreating the Etymology of *Ekwensu*

Many attempts have been made to explain the possible origin of the word *Ekwensu*, at times with contradictory results. Abanuka (cited in Opata 2005: 69 – 70) opines that *Ekwensu* is a compound formed from *ekwe* "gong" and *Nsu*, the personal name of some historical personage known for his mastery of the *ekwe.* This personage is said to have the problem of being irresponsible, for he would make some money from his music but spend same irresponsibly. Thus "he died poor and unfulfilled, without having a place of rest, the abode of ancestors. All the evil or wicked spirits are named after him". The major problem with this narrative is that it goes contrary to established Igbo cultural practices, for, as Opata

(2005: 71) counters, "if the Ekwensu of Abanuka 'died poor and unfulfilled, without having a place of rest, the abode of ancestors', the name could not have been deified". In fact, such personages are thrown into the evil forest and not given decent burial ceremonies (c.f. Section 1.1.1).

Anizoba (2008: 138) presents this linguistic analysis of *Ekwensu* by some unnamed "smart Igbo philologist":

> Ekwensu = E kwe n su = E kwe m su = E kwe o su = E kwe ya e-su
> Let us consider the key terms in the name:
> (1) "E" is the Igbo impersonal subject marker, e.g., E delü = One wrote. E meligo fa = An unspecified subject has defeated them.
> (2) "Kwe" is the Igbo verb "to agree", e.g., Kwe na ï ga-eme ya = Agree that you will do it.
> (3) "Su" is the verb "to begin suddenly" "to break out", usually a commotion, e.g., Agha e-su = War breaks out.

From this analysis, Anizoba (2008: 138) concludes that *Ekwensu* means "If one agrees (E kwe), then something breaks out (ya e-su). The Laws are there and they are equally applicable to all. If you decide to break a law, then you have agreed to the commotion that breaks out inexorably". Thus, Anizoba (2008) accepts that "[t]he Devil or Satan is Ekwensu in Igbo" but, as stated above, that "Satan and his Host constitute the Cosmic Judiciary and Armed Forces. They are the keepers of the Book of Life. The spirits of this hierarchy are responsible for Cosmic Order and the application of incurred Karma" (Anizoba 2008: 137). As impressive as this attempt might be, it also goes contrary to anthropological reports on the character of *Ekwensu* among the Igbo, presented shortly.

Furthermore, Osuagwu (2005: 5-6) presents that *Ekwensu* "is a contraction that comes from two verbs: (i) *IKWE*… to agree, to cohere, to co-operate etc and (ii) *ISU* …to spark a conflagration, ignite strife, initiate fight, instigate chaos, etc" (cited in Opata 2005: 69). Thus, Osuagwu (2005) concludes that

> Like its role, it is a fragmented force, with sparklets spread across the cosmos. Ekwesu is not "*chi*", it is "*Agbara-ojo*"…Evil spirit. Wherever

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coherence wants to develop, it will instigate incoherence. Whenever certainty wants to evolve, it will initiate disharmony... In the Igbo mind; therefore, God is associated with ORDER and TRUTH and the DEVIL with FALSEHOOD AND CHAOS. (Cited in Opata 2005: 24 – 25)

Two observations could be made from Osuagwu's (2005) position. One, he presents *Ekwensu* as an evil spirit, yet there are anthropological accounts that indicate the contrary (discussed shortly). The second issue derives from this first one and is put succinctly by Opata (2005: 26), that "when Osuagwu appeals to 'the Igbo mind'...it is to the contemporary Igbo mind heavily influenced by colonialism and Christianity that he is referring to, not the Igbo mind before that". The contexts in which *Ekwensu* is used in certain Igbo cultural practices do not suggest that it is an evil deity.

On his part, Onwuka Njoku suggests that

Ekwensu could also have been derived from *"ekwe"* and *"nsu"* meaning loss, in which case Ekwensu could mean "don't allow a loss" (to occur to me) or don't allow me to incur a loss, a supplication. (Quoted in Opata 2005: 69)

To Opata (2005: 70), "Ekwensu is also called Ekwesu and Ekwetu". He identifies *kwe* and *su* as the roots of the words that make up *Ekwensu*. Then he suggests the following as relevant expressions for *kwe*:

I kwe	if you agree
E kwè	if it is agreed
E kwé	do not agree

On *osu*, Opata (2005) relies on Igwe's (1999: 70) dictionary entry:

Punching or boxing with the fist; hammering; pounding; ramming (*su* 1), inserting into, putting into (*su* 2); starting up in earnest; provoking; challenging (*su*), trembling, shivering, quaking"; "punch, act of punching, act of hammering, pounding, or ramming", "start off, provocation of, challenge to"; and "tremble, shiver, quake".

From this deconstruction of *Ekwensu*, Opata (2005: 71) suggests that the word could mean "'if one agrees, one will be provoked, attacked, pounded, challenged, punched, etc' or "'do not agree to be provoked, challenged, attacked, punched, etc'". What is clear from these different morphological analyses is that it is now difficult to reconstruct the meanings of the original Igbo terms used to create the word *Ekwensu*. The next section presents some anthropological accounts on *Ekwensu*, most of which are from Opata (2005).

iii.   Anthropological Accounts on *Ekwensu* among the Igbo

In the words of Umeh (1999: 195),

> [w]hat the evil forces and the evil ones among the Igbos are have not been a subject of controversy or confusion until the colonization of Igboland and the importation of foreign religion. Since then, one of the Igbo traditional spirits of war and victory, namely *Ekwensu* has been mistakenly dubbed the devil.

Here, Umeh (1999) suggests that *Ekwensu* was an Igbo spirit of war and victory and not an evil spirit. To support his claim on the known "evil forces and the evil ones", Umeh (1999: 197-200) gives a list of 127 entries for this category of evil forces, and *Ekwensu* is not on the list. Again, in the scheme (Table 5.3) drawn by Nwoga (1984: 50) from Koelle's *Polyglotta Africana* (1854), *Ekwensu* is not one of the names given for the Devil.

Table 5. 3. Igbo terms for *God*, *Devil*, *idol*, *heaven* and *hell* (after Nwoga 1984:50)

English	God	Devil	Idol	Heaven	Hell
Isoama	Dsúku	Igwe & Amadioha	Aguisi	Dsuku	—
Isiele	Agbara	Onyigiri	Udo	Igwe	Onyigiri
Abadsa	Abala & Dsigogike	—	Wuisiafa & Isiafa	Dsigogike	—

Aro	Ibunogbabe	Iguakala (supposed to be in the forest)	Agu	Eligue	—
Mbofia	Dsuku	—	Nuebe	Eluegue	—

Table 5.3 presents the terms supplied in Freetown by freed slaves of Igbo origin[90] as the Igbo terms for *God*, *Devil*, *idol*, *heaven* and *hell*. Koelle's (1854) informants were from different parts of Igboland, namely Isoama (Isuama), Isiele, Abadsa (Abaja), Aro, and Mbofia. So, they spoke different dialects of Igbo. Yet none of the informants supplied *Ekwensu* as an Igbo term for the *Devil.* The terms supplied for the *Devil* include *Igwe* (god of the sky), *Amadioha* (god of thunder), *Iguakala* (spelt *Igwekala* in Standard Igbo, god of the sky). *Igwekala* is a compound formed from *igwe* (sky), *ka* (that is greater than) and *ala* (earth). So, literally it means "*Igwe* (god of the sky) that is greater than *Ala* (the earth goddess)". Nwoga (1984) clarifies that *Igwekala* was presented as living in the forest (and not in the sky). This clarification is apparently to show how unreliable the information is. What is more, *Igwe* is a name used to refer to *God* today (c.f. "Igwe" by Midnight Crew[91]), which further indicates that the twin concepts of a Supreme God and Supreme Devil in the Igbo consciousness was absent in the pre-Christian Igbo society, and only became an Igbo reality with their encounter with Christianity.

In line with Umeh (1999), Opata (2005) insists that *Ekwensu* is not the Igbo conceptual equivalent of the Christian Devil. He substantiates his claim by investigating instances in Igbo cultural practices where the name *Ekwensu* is invoked or used. He suggests that *Ekwensu* was "the putative ancestor/ founding father of many Igbo communities" (Opata 2005: 35), a claim he makes based on the fact that such communities bore names that reflect that. One such name was *Ụmụ Ezike Ekwensu* "children of Ezike Ekwensu", used by a family in Lejja, Nsukka Local Government Area (LGA henceforth) of Enugu State. This name was changed to *Ụmụ Ezechukwuka* "children of God Almighty" because of the negative

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[90] These Igbo people were interviewed by the German missionary Wilhelm Koelle and the information provided was published in Koelle's *Polyglotta Africana* (1854)

[91] This is a music video by the gospel band "Midnight Crew", which could be watched here:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7DzwmlGpbo

attributes of *Ekwensu* as the devil. Another example is *Owere Eze Oba*, a community in Udenu LGA of Enugu State, which was changed "from *Oba Ekwensu* on the advice of Father Mellet who told them that the name was devilish" (Opata 2005: 36). Two other examples include a community in Isiala Ngwa in Isiala Ngwa North LGA of Abia State which changed its name from *Obi Ekwensu* to *Obi Chukwu*, and a kindred group in Obukpa, Nsukka LGA of Enugu State that changed its name from *Ụmụ Ekwensu* to *Ụmụ Chukwu* (Opata 2005: 36). Incidentally, some communities do retain their *Ekwensu* names. One such community is *Nru N'ato Ezike Ekwensu* in Nsukka LGA and *Imilike Ogo Ekensu* in Udenu LGA both in Enugu State. Thus, Opata (2005: 38) rightly concludes that "[i]f Ekwensu is an ancestral name, then it cannot in any sense be an evil spirit since those who become ancestors are those who had lived well, died well, and therefore were accorded full funeral rites […] It cannot then be imagined that many communities will, knowing that Ekwensu is evil, decide to answer to that name".

Apart from being (part of) the name of various communities, *Ekwensu* is also a place name in some parts of Igboland. Two examples suffice here. One is *Ala Ekwensu* (Ekwensu's land), a large parcel of land in Achi, Oji River LGA of Enugu State, where the Achi people cultivate crops and tap palm wine. That this piece of land is cultivated is an indication that it is not evil, for evil forests in Igboland are not used for productive activities to the extent that, in the past, "if a hunter was chasing or tracking an animal, and the animal ran into an evil forest, the animal was safe because no hunter dared to enter an evil forest to hunt for animals" (Opata 2005: 66). Another place name with *Ekwensu* is *Ugwu Ekwensu* "Ekwensu's hill", located in two communities in Anambra State, Ekwulobia and Ukpor. This case is a bit controversial in that on the one hand, the hill is not normally associated with evil among the Igbo and so it is unlikely that a hill will be named after an evil spirit. On the other hand, at the *Ugwu Ekwensu* in Ekwulobia, the people perform the *Aja-Ekwensu* "where they placate Ekwensu. They use dirty rags and all manner of odd assortments to carry out *aja Ekwensu* on this hill" (Opata 2005: 67). Opata (2005: 67-68) adds that this is one instance in Igboland in which *Ekwensu* is regarded as evil, but he also cautions that his informant, "Rev. Fr. Dr. Onyeneke, CSSP, says that he does not entirely trust the information since he

obtained it from his father, a devout Christian. In other words, this piece of information is already problematized at source".

Furthermore, *Ekwensu* is a deity in several Igbo communities including Edem in Nsukka LGA of Enugu State. At Edem, it is perceived as benevolent and associated with the final funeral rites of men that lived a successful life. At Amube, Amalla Oba in Udenu LGA of Enugu State, the deity that oversees the blacksmithing profession is called *Ekwensu-Ụzụ*, *ụzụ* meaning "blacksmithing". *Ekwensu-Ụzụ* "functions as a regulator of social and moral behaviour, especially for blacksmiths" (Opata 2005: 47-48). Furthermore, at Nkpologu in Uzo-Uwani LGA of Enugu State, *Ekwensu* is worshipped at the *iwhu*[92] *Ekwensu* "Ekwensu's face". It is said that at this spot, the son of the deceased performs "the final funeral rites of separation between himself and the dead father", and that, more importantly, whatever the son says at this spot "must be the truth undiluted", else the separation will not be efficacious (Opata 2005: 43-44). Yet another example is seen at Iheaka in Igboeze South LGA of Enugu State where the shrine dedicated to *Ekwensu* is called *Ọnụ Ekwensu* "Ekwensu's mouth". Here, sacrificial offerings and requests are made to *Ekwensu* at the end of which follows a communion where all the eatable items of the sacrifice are consumed (Opata 2005: 42). Opata (2005: 42) raises two pertinent issues on this. One is that "when a sacrifice is accompanied by a communion, the deity to whom such sacrifice has been made is regarded as a benevolent deity, not as an evil spirit or deity". The second issue is that one of the requests made to *Ekwensu* is that it should ward off any hindrance to the success of the festival during which the sacrifices are made. Opata (2005: 42) then asks rhetorically: "If Ekwensu is an evil deity, how can it be asked to negate its own essence?"

In conclusion, the foregoing reveals that *Ekwensu* in the pre-Christian Igbo society was not associated or defined with evil. Else, the name would have appeared as one of the names for the *Devil* in Koelle's (1854) report. The deity called *Ekwensu* was also not evil, as the practices associated with it are not negative. The only probable exception to this is *Aja Ekwensu* at Ekwulobia done to placate the deity, which insinuates that the deity is evil and needed to be placated. Though the source of this piece of information raises questions of

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[92] This is spelt as *iru* or *ihu* in Standard Igbo

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the validity of the information, Opata (2005) reasons that perhaps the Igbo informant that suggested the name *Ekwensu* to the missionaries as the devil was from this part of Igboland where *Ekwensu* had to be placated. All the same, *Ekwensu* also functions as a regulator of social and moral behaviour, and, for communities and families to be named after it, *Ekwensu* must have had a very positive image in the worldview and cognition of the Igbo people.

With the use of the name as the Igbo equivalent of the Christian Devil, the concept has, over time, acquired the negative attributes of the Christian Devil and shed its erstwhile positive attributes. Dictionary entries have shown how its meaning has evolved over time, such that a name that once evoked pride is now detested as evil, to the extent that communities and families have resorted to changing their names to avoid being associated with *Ekwensu*. One of the communities that changed their name later decided to revert to the original *Ekwensu* name, and even used the name for a primary school. However, this move did not last for long because the negative associations to *Ekwensu* were enormous. Thus, the use of *Ekwensu* as the equivalent for the Christian *Devil* has given this erstwhile Igbo heroic deity pejorative associations and, over time, the original positive attributes of *Ekwensu* are lost and all negative happenings attributed to the deity.

c. Holy Spirit, Angels and Devils

It is necessary that I clarify the difference between *the Devil* analysed in the preceding section and *devils* investigated in this section. In the KJB, *the Devil* appears to be synonymous with *Satan* (Rev. 12: 9; 20: 2), while *devils* are presented as part of the kingdom of *Satan* or *the Devil* (Luke 11: 17-19). Some other translations of the Bible into English, e.g., the Living Bible, use *demons* for the KJB *devils*. So, while *the Devil* is used here to refer to the spirit believed in Christianity to be the archenemy of *God* and the source of all evil things, *devils* is used for spirits believed to be a part of *the Devil's* kingdom yet subordinate to *the Devil.*

The concepts – *Holy* Spirit, *angels*, and *devils* – are analysed together because most of their equivalents in the IBTs (see Table 5.4) have the lexical unit *mmụọ* as one of their components. Table 5.4 presents the representations of *Holy Spirit*, *angels* and *devils* in the Bible translations.

Table 5. 4. The representations of *Holy Spirit, angel* and *devil* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *Holy Spirit*	Meaning	Terms for *angel*	Meaning	Terms for *devil*	Meaning
IIB	*Tsuku Abiama*	Deity of the strangers	*Angeli (onye ozi)*	Loanword from English (messenger)	*ekwensu*	Personal name
NIB	*Mọ (Nsọ)*	(Sacred) spirit	*Mo-ozi (angeli)*	Spirit messenger (loanword)	*ajọ mọ*	Evil spirit
UIBN	*Mọ Nsọ*	Sacred spirit	*Mọ-ozi*	Spirit messenger	*mọ ọjọ*	Evil spirit
UIB	*Mọ Nsọ*	Sacred spirit	*Mọ-ozi*	Spirit messenger	*mọ ọjọ*	Evil spirit
ILB	*Mmụọ Nsọ*	Sacred spirit	*Mmụọ ozi*	Spirit messenger	*mmụọ ọjọọ*	Evil spirit
ICB	*Mmụọ Nsọ*	Sacred spirit	*Mmụọọma*	Spirit messenger	*mmụọ ọjọọ*	Evil spirit
IRE	*Mmụọ Nsọ*	Sacred spirit	*Mmụọ ozi*	Spirit messenger	*mmụọ ọjọọ*	Evil spirit
INWT	*mmụọ nsọ*	Sacred spirit	*Mmụọ ozi*	Spirit messenger	*mmụọ ọjọọ*	Evil spirit

Table 5.4 shows that the IIB translates *Holy Spirit* as *Tsuku Abiama*, today spelt *Chukwu Abiama.* Nwoga (1984: 60) says that the name *Chukwu Abiama* means "'The Great Deity of the Strangers', a very apt description for the Great Deity touted by the Aro from Aro Chukwu in their itinerant colonizing mission throughout Igboland and beyond". In other words, *Chukwu Abiama* and *Chukwu* are names for the same deity – the deity of the Arochukwu people analysed above. Thus, the IIB distinguishes *God* (the Father) from the *Holy Spirit* by adding *Abiama* to *Chukwu* for the latter. After all, both concepts, *God* and the *Holy Spirit*, are said to be manifestations of the same entity. For the *Oxford Dictionary*

defines the *Holy Spirit* as "(in Christianity) the third person of the Trinity; God as spiritually active in the world". This further indicates that the translator could not find ready equivalents to distinguish the *Holy Spirit* from *God*.

All the subsequent IBTs after the IIB translate *Holy Spirit* as *Mmụọ Nsọ*. However, it is noticed that the NIB has *Nsọ* in brackets. This is an indication that the use of *Nsọ* in this context – as an attribute of *Mmụọ* – was unusual and needed to be interpreted carefully. Goodchild's (2003: 154) report on the missionaries' deliberation on the choice of Igbo equivalent for the *Holy Spirit* reveals some of the dilemma of the missionaries:

> For *Holy Spirit*, *Moa-omma-cineke* was used at Bonny, *Mo-nso* at Onitsha, and *Ma-omma* at Ungwana. It was pointed out that *omma* meant merely *fine*, *good*, *beautiful*, and conveyed no idea of separation or holiness. It was asserted against the use of *nso* that it conveyed the idea of dread. After considerable discussion Archdeacon Crowther's proposal that *nso* be placed in the text and *omma* in the margin was agreed and that teachers be instructed to teach their people the sense in which *nso* was used.

Thus, in the UIBN, *Mọ-nsọ* is used in the text and *ọma* placed in the footnote. However, in some other verses (c.f. I Corinthians 2: 13) *nsọ* is in italics. These are all strategies adopted to draw attention to the peculiar usage of *nsọ*. However, *nsọ* is not marked in all the subsequent translations, indicating that the use is now understood and would not be misinterpreted with the "original" concept of *nsọ* among the Igbo (expatiated shortly).

For *angel*, the IIB uses *angeli* (*onye ozi*). *Angeli* is a direct borrowing of *angel*. *Onye ozi* is a compound formed from *onye* "person" and *ozi* "message", i.e., "messenger". The IIB choice gives the impression that the referent is human. However, in the NIB, a number of changes are introduced. One, the Igbo expression is fronted while the English word is put in brackets. Two, the Igbo *onye* is replaced with *mo*, a statement that the messenger is a spirit and not human. The inclusion of *angeli* in brackets is an indication that the expression *mo-ozi* was not yet understood in this Christian usage. The subsequent translations maintain the expression introduced in the NIB, apart from the ICB which represents the concept as *mmụọọma* "good spirit" (also expatiated shortly).

For *devil*, the IIB uses *ekwensu*, the term also used for *the Devil*. This indicates that there was also no hierarchy among the evil spirits. That is, there was no conceptualization of a situation where there are many evil spirits and *the Devil* is their head. The NIB however uses a more general expression, *ajọ mo* "evil/bad spirits", and the subsequent translations all use *mmụọ ọjọọ* "evil spirits". The use of *ekwensu* to denote *devil* or *demon* is an outcome of the emerging Christianity-influenced understanding of the Igbo heroic deity *Ekwensu* at the time. As demonstrated above, the Christians succeeded in giving pejorative meanings to *Ekwensu* and subsequently used the term not only for *the Devil* but also for *devils* generally. However, the subsequent translations, in a bid to distinguish both concepts – *the Devil* and *devils* – retained *Ekwensu* for *the Devil* and created a new category for *mmụọ*, namely *mmụọ ọjọọ.*

So, there is elaboration in the different categories of *mmụọ* created to represent *Holy Spirit*, *angels*, and *devils* as well as in some other nuanced meanings of *mmụọ* which have resulted from these Christian interpretations and use over time. An investigation of anthropological accounts and dictionary entries for *mmụọ* would elucidate these different forms of elaboration.

i. **Anthropological Accounts on *Mmụọ***

As discussed in Section 1.1.1, the Igbo world comprises "the world of man peopled by all created beings and things, both animate and inanimate" and the spirit world, which "is the abode of the creator, the deities, the disembodied and malignant spirits, and the ancestral spirits" (Uchendu 1965: 11). The second world refers to the world of the *mmụọ*, a concept of which Ojiaku (2015: 78 – 79) identifies two categories:

> Mmụọ is the general term for spirits, while ndi mmụọ (umu agbara or umu arushi/ alusi) is reserved especially for the non-human spirits. The human spirits, commonly referred to as Ndi ichie, on the other hand, are the hallowed spirits of 'those of old' who have become 'saints' in the realm of the

dead: the ancestors who lived as accomplished and distinguished elders and, at death, were received into the blessed company of their forebears in the great unknown.

Here, Ojiaku (2015) distinguishes between non-human spirits and spirits who were once human. He however stresses that

> [n]ot all human spirits make it into the sphere of their forebears. For instance, the spirits of adults who committed abominations against the Earth Spirit become ajo mmụọ (evil spirits), Akalogoli or Ekwensu (Satan, Devil) and are never born again. In the same vein, children known as ogbanje (repeaters) are believed to decide before hand when they would die. With the aim of tormenting their mothers, families and even communities, they never make it to the sphere. (Ojiaku 2015: 79)

Ojiaku's (2015) characterization of *Ekwensu* as a human spirit and as *Satan* and *Devil* is problematic. One, Satan and Devil are clearly Christian concepts and so he must be talking about the Christianized Igbo and not the pre-Christian Igbo. Two, he insinuates the existence of more than one Satan or Devil unlike the Christian view that the concepts refer to a singular entity. Furthermore, Ojiaku (2015) makes a distinction between good human spirits and bad ones and identifies the individual's life while alive as the major criterion for determining whether they make it to the ranks of good spirits or end up as evil spirits. Although Ojiaku (2015) does not spell out what constitutes an abomination, Achebe (1958) provides a clue. Unoka, a character in the novel, is said to have

> died of the swelling which was an abomination to the earth goddess. When a man was afflicted with swelling in the stomach and the limbs he was not allowed to die in the house. He was carried to the Evil Forest and left there to die [...] The sickness was an abomination to the earth, and so the victim could not be buried in her bowels. He died and rotted away above the earth, and was not given the first or the second burial. (Achebe 1958: 13)

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Here, it is shown that the "abomination" does not have to be a result of some immoral or "sinful" behaviour, but even the fact of being afflicted by some ailment could cost one admission into the ranks of the ancestors. Thus, the conceptualizations of *mmụọ ọjọọ* "evil spirit" and *mmụọ ọma* "good spirits" in the Bible is different from those in the pre-Christian Igbo society. The *mmụọ ọjọọ* of the Bible are *demons* or *devils*, which are spirits associated with the Devil or Satan (Matthew 12: 26 – 27) and in opposition to the Christian *God* and his *angels* (Revelations 16), but that of the Igbo are spirits of dead human beings who are believed to have committed some abomination while alive as well as some disembodied spirits (c.f. Umeh 1999: 197-200). These two conceptualizations of "good" and "evil" spirits now co-exist in Igbo. Besides, the line between them is becoming blurred as every spirit that is not associated with the Christian God is categorized as being evil. Thus, as a result of this semantic re-categorization of *mmụọ*, the once revered ancestral spirits, also called *mmụọ*, are now perceived as being devilish by Igbo Christians who in effect desist from activities associated with such ancestral spirits.

Furthermore, while the *mmụọ ọma* of the Igbo[93] is the spirit of an ancestor, in the ICB it is the equivalent of *angel*, as demonstrated in this Bible passage from Genesis 16: 7:

31. *Mmụọọma nke Yahweh hụrụ ya* (ICB)

    And the angel of the LORD found her (KJB)

As noted above, of all the Bible translations into Igbo, only the ICB uses *mmụọọma* for *angel.* The rest maintain the UIB choice of *mmụọ ozi*, apart from the IIB which uses *onye ozi.* Igwe (1999: 627) defines *ozi* as:

> *n* (a) errand; message; communication (oral or written, etc); information; news; (b) job; task; engagement; work; service; duty; commission; embassy (cf. *ọrụ)*

Thus, *mmụọ ozi* is the spirit that delivers messages or runs errands, which reflects the definition of *angel* given in the *Oxford Dictionary*: "a spiritual being believed to act as an

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[93] It is not common for the good human spirits to be qualified as this quality of being good is a given: one is required to be good to receive full burial rites and thus be admitted to the ranks of the *mmụọ*. Thus, one is more likely to hear of *ajọ mmụọ* and *mmụọ* and not *mmụọ oma* or *ezigbo mmụọ*.

attendant, agent, or messenger of God, conventionally represented in human form with wings and a long robe". The ICB's choice of *mmụọọma* as against *mmụọ ozi* is significant in that it is therapeutic, meant to rectify the apparent anomaly in the conceptualizations of *angel* and *demon* in Igbo as contrasts. As presented by Aitchison (2001: 169), "language has a remarkable instinct for self-preservation. It contains inbuilt self-regulating devices which restore broken patterns and prevent disintegration". In the same vein, while explaining language change from a functional perspective, Schendl (2001: 68) submits that "linguistic systems are seen as having a natural tendency to regulate themselves, and linguistic change as basically therapeutic in that it makes systems more symmetrical and balanced, and therefore simpler". The conceptualization of *mmụọ ozi* (angel) as the contrast of *mmụọ ọjọọ* (demon) is somewhat anomalous, as *ozi* "message" does not contrast with *ọjọọ* "bad/evil". Consequently, the ICB created *mmụọọma* to rectify the anomaly, i.e., *ọma* "good" contrasts with *ọjọọ* "bad", which makes *mmụọ ọma* a fitting contrast for *mmụọ ọjọọ*.

The other new category of *mmụọ* created in the IBTs is *Mmụọ Nsọ* for the *Holy Spirit. Nsọ* is a rather complex concept in Igbo and requires some expatiation to better appreciate the semantic elaboration of the concept in the Bible. As noted in Goodchild (2003: 154, cited above), the word *nsọ* evokes dread. Ikenga-Metuh (1985:4) translates it as "sacred prohibitions":

> The word *nsọ* in Igbo may mean two different but related things – one negative, and one positive. *Nsọ* means literally, 'avoidance' or 'prohibition', i.e. what one must avoid, or what one is prohibited from doing. This is the negative sense. In some other contexts however, the same word *nsọ*, means 'holy'. The two senses of the word appear to be related because every holy thing – spirits, priests, shrines and so on – is surrounded by a set of prohibitions. Ordinary people may on the advice of a priest or diviner adopt and practice certain prohibitions and thus achieve a limited level of holiness. It would appear therefore, that prohibitions create or preserve the status of holiness (*nsọ*), while the breach of prohibitions (*nsọ*) result in pollution or unholiness. *Nsọ* are therefore 'sacred prohibitions'.

Ikenga-Metuh's (1985) submission raises some issues. Although his definition of *nsọ* as "sacred prohibitions" is apt, how he arrived at the definition appears to contradict ethnographic usages of the term *nsọ*. His categorization of the two meanings of *nsọ* as negative and positive, and his theory of the relationship between both meanings, are problematic. That an act or thing is avoided or prohibited does not necessarily make it negative. What Ikenga-Metuh (1985) does not say is that the "negative" meaning of *nsọ* is the usage found in traditional Igbo religious practices, while the "positive" meaning is found in Christian usages. So, although the focus of his study is on the status of *nsọ* in the traditional Igbo society, the definition provided is an expanded one, encompassing usages of the term in the Igbo cultural practices and in Christianity. This is expatiated shortly.

Furthermore, Ikenga-Metuh (1985) suggests that adopting or practicing certain prohibitions on the advice of a diviner bestows on a person "a limited level of holiness". This is problematic because *nsọ* is not used in Igbo religious practices as an attribute of persons or things, unlike in Christianity where people and things could be *holy* (see Figure 5.1). What is more, Ikenga-Metuh's (1985) submission that "prohibitions create or preserve the status of holiness" is rather faulty, because the status of "holiness" or "sacredness" is achieved mainly by associations to a deity and not by prohibitions.

The problem is further heightened by the fact that the whole ethnographic information in Ikenga-Metuh (1985) explores different dimensions of the first meaning and says little or nothing about the second meaning. In other words, his ethnographic data illustrate the first meaning and not the second. However, this does not deny the existence of the second meaning in present-day Igbo language and cosmology. As mentioned earlier, the missing link in Ikenga-Metuh's (1985) submission is the contribution of Christianity to the emergence of the second meaning.

Indeed, Ikenga-Metuh (1985) presents a detailed exploration of the different forms of *nsọ* in the traditional Igbo society: personal and moral crimes like incest, murder, bestiality; abnormal or unnatural behaviours of humans like a girl getting pregnant before her first menstrual cycle, death resulting from leprosy; abnormal acts of animals like a dog crossing a corpse. Other *nsọ* acts include some prohibitions regarding sex, food, death, among

others. A menstruating woman is described as *nwaanyị nọ na nsọ* "woman in [a state of] *nsọ*". Oyali's (2015b) comparison of the conceptualization of *nsọ* in traditional Igbo religious practices and in the Bible (see Figure 5.1) reveals some marked usages in the Bible not found in the Igbo cultural practices.

Nsọ

Bible

- An attribute of people
- An attribute of places
- Positive acts

Igbo

- Not an attribute of people
- Not an attribute of places
- Negative acts
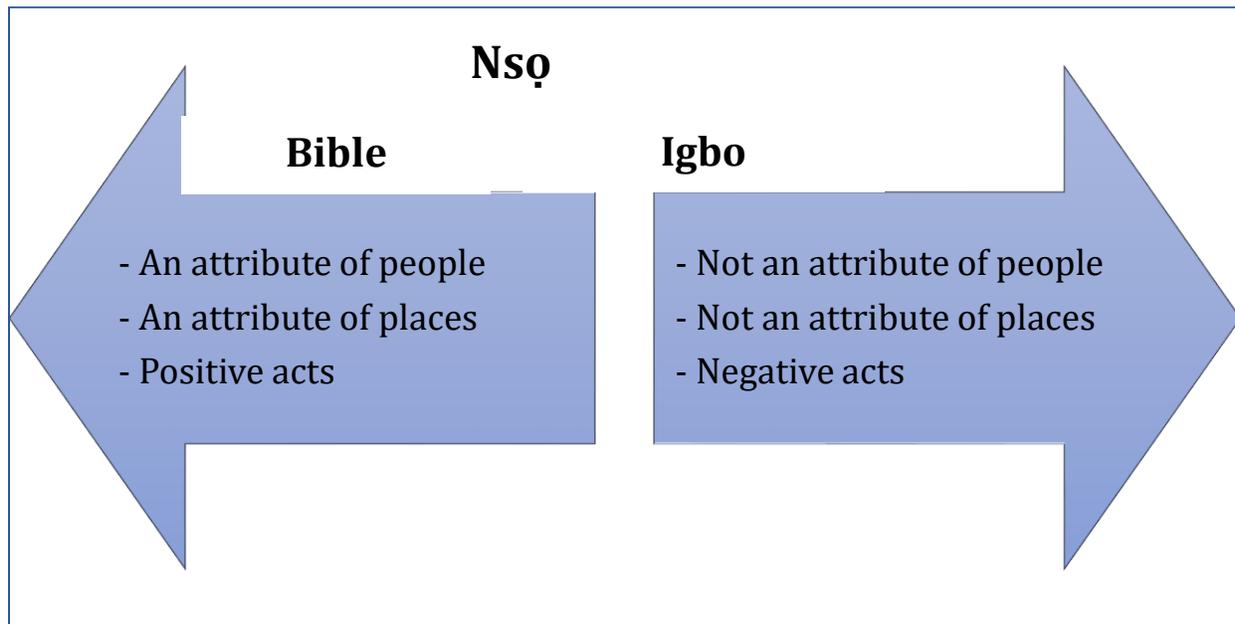
Figure 5. 1. Differences in the use of *nsọ* in the Bible and in Igbo cultural practices

As indicated in Figure 5.1, *nsọ* is used in the IBTs as an attribute of persons and things as well as in references to positive acts. On the contrary, in Igbo cultural practices, *nsọ* is not used as an attribute of persons or things, and *nsọ* acts are negative. Some examples of Biblical usages of *nsọ* would suffice. In the following text from Exodus 22: 31, *nsọ* is used as an attribute of humans, a usage not found in Igbo religious contexts.

32. *Ndi di nsọ ka unu gāburum*
    And ye shall be **holy** men unto me

The following text from Exodus 28: 29 illustrates where *nsọ* is used as an attribute of a place:

33. *Eron gēbu kwa aha umu Israel […] mḅe ọ nābà n'ebe **nsọ** ahu*
    And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel […] when he goeth in unto the **holy** place

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Furthermore, while acts described as *nsọ* in the Bible are perceived as positive because of their associations with the Christian God, acts described as *nsọ* in Igbo religious practices are rather negative, as the prohibitions highlighted above exemplify.

In sum, although *nsọ* refers to prohibitions, the fact that the prohibitions are from a deity (the Earth deity) makes the prohibitions sacred. Despite the sacred status of *nsọ*, which it shares with the Christian concept of *holiness*, there are marked differences between the Igbo *nsọ* and the Christian *holiness*, e.g., *holiness* connotes purity and innocence but *nsọ* does not. The use of *nsọ* as the Igbo equivalent of *holy* in the IBTs expands the meaning and usages of *nsọ* to accommodate all the meanings and usages of *holy*. This semantic expansion has spread and is fully integrated into Igbo that it is difficult to separate both usages, as seen in Ikenga-Metuh's (1985) definition above.

In relation to the Christian concept of *Holy Spirit*, the Igbo concept of *mmụọ* is modified by *nsọ* to form the compound *Mmụọ Nsọ*, thereby creating a new category of *mmụọ* perceived to be holy. Dictionary entries of *mmụọ* reveal further nuanced usages of the concept that have evolved from the appropriation of the concept in the IBTs.

ii.   Dictionary Representations of *Mmụọ*

Crowther (1882: 62) mentions that the word *Mọ* or *Mọa* means "a spirit, ghost" without providing more information. Dennis (1915: 31) has these entries for *mmụọ*:

> **mo**, spirit; spirit-world; object of worship, etc.

> **Mo Nso**, Holy Spirit

Dennis' (1915) "object of worship" is apparently the object before which libation is poured to the ancestors. He also highlights the new category created by Christians to represent *Holy Spirit*, thereby indicating that this usage has been integrated into the Igbo language. On their part, Welmers and Welmers (1968: 109) define *mmụọ* as:

spirit (of a person while living, or departed, or independent of human being): mmụọ ọma 'a good spirit; mmụọ ọjọọ 'an evil spirit'; mmụọ nsọ 'the Holy Spirit'. – mmụọ ozi 'angel'.

While Welmers and Welmers' (1968) definition is not too different from Crowther's, it is significant that all the four examples or types of spirits they list are of Christian conceptualizations of spirit, and not the traditional Igbo conceptualization of *mmụọ*. One can deduce that the good spirit and bad spirit mentioned are Christian in orientation because it is not common to hear those terms used in Igbo in reference to good and evil spirits as understood in the Igbo religious thought. Such spirits are usually identified by their specific names. The terms for *Holy Spirit* and *angels* are clearly Christian.

Williamson (1972: 289-291) has a more comprehensive list of entries for *mmụọ*. In summary, Williamson (1972) identifies three broad usages of *mmụọ* as 1) pertaining to spirits; 2) pertaining to masquerades; and 3) items that are not consumable by humans. The second and third senses are polysemies derived from the first. In the first instance, masquerades are representatives of dead ancestors, a point deducible from Achebe (1958:29):

> Okonkwo's wives, and perhaps other women as well, might have noticed that the second egwugwu had the springy walk of Okonkwo. And they might also have noticed that Okonkwo was not among the titled men and elders who sat behind the row of egwugwu. But if they thought these things they kept them within themselves. The egwugwu with the springy walk was one of the dead fathers of the clan.

Here, Achebe (1958) makes it clear that Okonkwo is the wearer of the mask of the second *egwugwu*, but that knowledge is not expected to be uttered in the open because the masquerade is not seen as human, but as the spirit of a dead ancestor. The third meaning above is derived from the belief that although the items associated with *mmụọ* may not be consumable or useful to humans, the spirits, who are co-inhabitants of this world with humans, make use of them.

Language elaboration is seen in some of the nuanced meanings listed. A case in point is *mmụọ inyi*, interpreted as the "unclean spirit". This word is used in the NIB in this text from Mark 1: 23:

34. *Ozigbofu ofu nwoke nke **mọ inyi** ji no nime unọ-nzukọ-fa*

    And there was in their synagogue a man with an **unclean spirits**

Although *mmụọ inyi* is interpreted as "unclean spirit" in the dictionary and in the NIB, the term literally means "spirit of dirt/uncleanliness". Perhaps, this ambiguity in the compound *mmụọ inyi* informed the UIB choice of *mọ nādighi ọcha* "spirit that is not clean" for *unclean spirit*. The other translations use a different coinage for "unclean spirit". However, despite the fact that subsequent translations do not retain the NIB coinage, the term apparently spread beyond its use in the Bible which explains its inclusion in Welmers and Welmers' (1968).

Furthermore, despite the apparently non-negative entry for *-gọ mmụọ* as "worship a deity (with kolanut); worship spirit", the entry for *ịgọ mmụọ* as "idolatry" is negative. Idolatry is defined by the *Oxford Dictionary* as "the worship of idols", while "idol" is defined as "an image or representation of a god used as an object of worship". Such practices are seen in Christianity as the worship of false gods, which makes it a negative practice, thereby undermining its efficacy and making the worshippers appear to be doing the wrong thing. This pejorative meaning of *mmụọ* could be traced to the early Christian missionaries who insist that the Igbo worship of ancestors is false and that only the Christian God is the true God. Thus, *mmụọ* gradually acquired negative attributes as more Igbo people convert to Christianity.

Echeruo's (1998: 100-101) entries for *mmụọ* are less detailed than Williamson's (1972):

> **mmöö** *n* [LHH] [1]belonging to other than the human world – *ala mmöö = spirit world*; [2]spirit; nonhuman agency – *mmöö na-akwa ya = he is being egged on by spirits (not humans); Cineke bü mmöö = God is a spirit (i.e. is not human)*; [3]spirits – *mmöö öjöö = evil spirits; mmöö ozi = angels; messengers-spirit; mmöö öma = good angel or spirit. var. mmüö*

mmöö *n* [LHH] masquerade; masked dancer; masked spirit. *var. mmanwü*

mmöö ozi *n* [LHH HH) angel; lit. messenger-spirit. *var.* **mmüö ozi**

mmöö öjöö *n* [LHH HHH] [1]demon; [2]madness; lit. [possessed by] evil spirits

One point that stands out in Echeruo's (1998) entries is that most of the examples are of Christian usages. These include the *Supreme God*, *demons*, and *angels*, and indicates that these expressions have gained acceptance among the Igbo. The entry "madness" for *mmöö öjöö* is also a nuanced meaning that has been enforced via Christian teachings. As observed above, *mmụọ ọjọọ* is hardly used in Igbo to refer to spirits deemed to be evil. Rather, the name of the spirit in question in mentioned. The use of the general term then became popular within Christian circles. For instance, when someone is deemed to be possessed by an evil spirit, the person could be said to be possessed by *ajịja* (Opata 2009) or *akalogeli* (Umeh 1999: 200) or some other specific force. Using the general term *mmụọ ọjọọ* is a nuanced usage that has spread via Christian teachings

On his part, Igwe (1999: 444) gives this entry for *mmụọ*:

> **mmụọ** *n.* (a) spirit, ghost; invisible and intangible being; gods; idol; masquerade; juju; (b) spirit world; (c) oath; (d) abuse, insult (e) (as adj.) harmful, poisonous, inedible (vars. ***mmoo, mmam***)

From Igwe's (1999) basic definitions, one could see expressions like *gods*, *idol* and *juju* listed as referring to *mmụọ.* The concepts "god" and "idol" are Judeo-Christian in that they assume a hierarchy among the deities with the *Supreme God* occupying the topmost position and other smaller *gods* coming under "him" (c.f. Section 1.1.2). Using such terms to define *mmụọ* is not innocent, but a negative attribution in comparison to the Christian supposedly "true" God. Such hierarchies arose in academic discussions of African religious systems (c.f. Shaw 1990) and have over time spread into the speech of native Igbo people.

Igwe (1999) also presents *ịgọ mmụọ* as "to make an idol of something", and the variant *ngọm mmụọ* as "making an idol of; worshipping idol", further indicating the successful negativization of the concept of *mmụọ*. Lastly, although *ịnọ na mmụọ* is interpreted as "to

be in the land of spirits; to be dead", it is also used to refer to "being under the influence of the spirit", usually the Holy Spirit. For instance, in Season 4 of the Nollywood movie *Nkọli nwa Nsukka⁹⁴*, the lead actress Nkọli is interrupted while praying and she cautions the interrupter to desist from that because *m ka nọ na Mmụọ Nsọ* "I am still in the Holy Spirit". This interpretation of *ịnọ na mmụọ* as being in the spirit could also have been reinforced by the popularity of its English equivalent especially among Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. These nuanced meanings are a result of the appropriation of the expression from the traditional Igbo religious context to embrace a Christian usage.

In summary, the representations of *Holy Spirit*, *angel* and *devil* in the IBTs engendered different forms of elaboration of the Igbo language. As shown in Table 5.4, the IIB translates *Holy Spirit* as *Chukwu Abiama* and *demon* as *ekwensu*. Both Igbo terms are also used in the IIB for *God* and *Devil* respectively. All the other IBTs use *Mmụọ Nsọ* for *Holy Spirit* and *mmụọ ọjọọ* or *ajọ mmụọ* for *demon*, thereby lexically differentiating *God* from *Holy Spirit* on the one hand, and *the Devil* from *demon* on the other hand. The translation of *Holy Spirit* as *Mmụọ Nsọ*, *angel* as *mmụọ ozi* or *mmụọọma* and *demon* as *mmụọ ọjọọ* or *ajọ mmụọ* involves an appropriation of the Igbo concept of *mmụọ*, whereby *mmụọ* is presented as a superordinate term with different hyponyms. In other words, the Christian concepts are represented in the IBTs as hyponyms of *mmụọ*, each of them expressing an attribute of the concept – *Mmụọ Nsọ* shows that the spirit is holy, *mmụọ ozi* that the spirit delivers messages, *mmụọọma* that the spirit iis good, *mmụọ ọjọọ* and *ajọ mmụọ* that the spirit is evil. The translation of *Holy Spirit* as *Mmụọ Nsọ* also involves an appropriation of the Igbo concept of *nsọ* or sacred prohibitions. *Nsọ* is semantically extended to embrace holiness. The appropriation of *nsọ* in the IBTs also extended the register of the term such that it has distinct usages within the Christian context and different usages outside this context.

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⁹⁴ This video can be watched here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0ngFSnx890

5.3.1.2   Human Agents

Unlike concepts analysed in the preceding sections, which are supernatural beings, concepts analysed in this section are human. They include *Christian*, *messiah*, *gentile*, and *priest*. Apart from *priest*, the other concepts are distinctly Christian and so did not exist in the Igbo worldview prior to the arrival of the missionaries. As such, there were no terms for them in Igbo. However, as demonstrated in the analysis below, although there were terms for *priest* in Igbo, the Bible translators represented this concept with other terms, thereby linguistically distinguishing Christian priests from traditional Igbo priests.

a. Christian

The concept of *Christian* (n.) is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "someone who believes in and follows the teachings of Jesus Christ". This concept was not known among the Igbo prior to their encounter with Christian missionaries. So, there was no Igbo equivalent of the concept. Table 5.5 shows the different representations of *Christian* in the IBTs.

Table 5. 5. The representations of *christian* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *Christian*	Meaning
IIB	*Kristiani*	Loanword from English
NIB	*Ndi-Otu-Kristi*	Members of the society of Christ
UIBN	*Ndi Kraịst*	Christ's people
UIB	*Kristian*	Loanword
ILB	*Ndị Kraịst*	Christ's people
ICB	*Ndị-Otu-Kristi*	Members of the society of Christ
IRE	*Ndị Kristian*	Christian people
INWT	*Ndị Kraịst*	Christ's people

From Table 5.5, all the translations adapted the title *Christ* in their representations of *Christian.* The IIB and UIB both borrowed the word *Christian*, with some form of integration into Igbo: *Kristiani* (IIB) and *Kristian* (UIB). The other translations represent the concept as *ndị-Otu-Kristi* "people of the society of Christ" (NIB, ICB), *ndị Kraịst* "Christ's people" (UIBN, ILB, INWT), and *ndị Kristian* "Christian people" (IRE). Goodchild (2003: 154) presents this report from the Igbo Conference of 1905 held to discuss the Union Bible project:

> [f]or *Christian* the word *Onye-uka*, discusser, formerly used at Onitsha had been abandoned for *Onye otu Kristi.* The word *otu* meant a *company* or *brotherhood*. It was pointed out that this word was not understood at Bonny or Ungwana. Finally, Dennis's proposal of *Onye Kristi*, *one who belongs to Christ*, was unanimously adopted.

Goodchild's (2003) report indicates that, although the IIB and NIB borrowed the English word *Christian*, a new term – *onye ụka* – was created and used in popular speech. The compound *onye ụka* apparently evolved from derisive references to Christians by non-Christians. The compound was formed from *onye* "person" and *ụka* "talk", meaning "a person who talks". The combination suggests a group of persons that gather for the purpose of talking and not for any economic venture, e.g., farming. This derogatory meaning of *onye ụka* apparently informed the non-use of the compound in the Bible translations to represent *Christian*. Despite the non-use of *onye ụka* in the Bible, the innovative use of *ụka* spread among Igbo speakers and lost any form of negative associations it might have had. Examples of usages in Igbo songs are seen in Show Promoter's *Ndị Ụka Mmụọ Nsọ*[95] and Ogbogu Okonji's *Ndị Ụka*[96]. They are both songs that talk about activities of Christians. *Ụka* has also been used to form some other lexical items for Christian concepts (c.f. Section 4.1.1.5). In effect, *onye ụka*, a compound created and spread outside the IBTs and the four terms used in the IBTs (as shown in Table 5.5) are all different terms used to express the concept of *Christian* in Igbo.

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[95] This song can be listened to here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeHDVq43Qvg
[96] The song can be listened to here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtVxI6ACMQw

b. Messiah and Messias

The word *messiah* appears only twice in the KJB, in the Book of Daniel 9: 25, 26. Thus, as the IIB and NIB are translations of (portions of) the New Testament, the earliest representation of the word in an Igbo Bible is in the UIB. The morphological variant *messias* also appears twice, in the Book of John 1: 41 and 4: 25. The etymology of both words in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* indicates that they have the same origin:

> c. 1300, *Messias*, from Late Latin *Messias*, from Greek *Messias*, from Aramaic (Semitic) *meshiha* and Hebrew *mashiah* "the anointed" (of the Lord), from *mashah* "anoint."

> This is the word rendered in Septuagint as Greek *Khristos* (see **Christ**). In Old Testament prophetic writing, it was used of an expected deliverer of the Jewish nation. The modern English form represents an attempt to make the word look more Hebrew, and dates from the Geneva Bible (1560). Transferred sense of "an expected liberator or saviour of a captive people" is attested from 1660s.

In other words, the literal meaning of *messias* was "the anointed one" before it was used to refer to Jesus Christ, and later to refer to an expected saviour of a captive people. Incidentally, *messias* has no entry in the *Cambridge Dictionary* and the *Oxford Dictionary*, but both dictionaries have entries for *messiah*. This suggests that *messias* is now an archaic form that only has diachronic significance. Interestingly, the IBTs seem to interpret them as different concepts judging from their different representations as seen in Table 5.6.

Table 5. 6. The representations of *messiah* and *messias* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *messiah*	Meaning	Terms for *messias*	Meaning
IIB	--	--	--	--
NIB	--	--	*Mesaia*	Loanword
UIBN	--	--	*Mesaia*	Loanword

UIB	*Onye etere mmanụ*	An anointed person	*Mesaia*	Loanword
ILB	*Onye ahụ etere mmanụ*	That anointed person	*Onye nzọpụta*	A saviour
ICB	*Onye ahụ etere mmanụ*	That anointed person	*Mezaya*	Loanword
IRE	*Onye etere mmanụ*	An anointed person	*Mesaia*	Loanword
INWT	*Mesaya*	Loanword	*Mesaya*	Loanword

Table 5.6 shows that apart from the INWT that borrowed *messiah* for both *messiah* and *messias*, all the other Bible translations represent both concepts with different terms. For *messiah*, the UIB and IRE use the descriptive phrase *onye etere mmanụ*, literally "a person on whom oil is rubbed" (the anointed one). The ILB and ICB add a deitic *ahụ* "that" for specificity: *onye ahụ etere mmanụ* "that person on whom oil is rubbed". For *messias*, apart from the ILB which uses *onye nzọpụta* "saviour", all the other translations borrowed *messiah* with different forms of graphological adaptation. The representation of *messiah* as the anointed one is apparently from the etymology of the word, while the choice of borrowing the item into Igbo for *messias* seems to be based on the interpretation of the word as saviour.

Incidentally, among the Igbo, anointing is not a mode of calling or installing a person to an office as it is in the Bible. Thus, the use of *onye (ahụ) etere mmanụ* in the Bible for *messiah* seems to be restricted to the Christian contexts. In fact, *onye etere mmanụ* does not evoke the idea of pouring oil on one's head as does "anoint" in the Bible. Rather, it evokes the idea of rubbing oil on the body. The act of rubbing cream on the body after bathing is also described as *ite mmanụ* "to rub oil". So, the expression *onye etere mmanụ* could be interpreted as a person on whom some cream or oil has been rubbed to make them look beautiful. In the remix of the song *Duro*[97] by the Nigerian artist Tekno, featuring Phyno and Flavour, Phyno plays on this secular meaning of the expression *onye etere mmanụ*:

35. *Nwa Chukwu tere mmanụ*   "Babe whom God rubbed oil"
    Negodu ka i si asha mmanụ "Just see how you exude oil"

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[97] This song is available here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HaX2YcZnM-c

The first line might suggest that the lady in question has been anointed by God, but the contextual meaning is a lady who God has made beautiful by applying cream on her body himself. The second line builds on the first. Here, the idea of exuding oil is an indication of freshness and beauty. So, in the song, Phyno suggests that the beauty of the lady in question is glowing because she is made beautiful by God himself. In effect, the idea of anointing as an act of installation into office remains a concept found in Igbo Christian practices, and hardly beyond this context. Outside the Christian context, the expression evokes the secular meaning of rubbing oil on the body. In other words, the context differentiates the Biblical meaning from the secular meaning.

c. Gentile

The concept of *gentile* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "a person who is not Jewish". The Igbo being non-Jewish themselves, the concept of *gentile* was foreign to them and thus they did not have a term for it in their language. Table 5.7 shows how the IBTs represent the concept.

Table 5. 7. The representations of *gentile* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *gentile*	Meaning
IIB	*ohan*	Slave
NIB	*ndi-Jentail*	Gentile people
UIBN	*ndi mba (pl.) ozo*	People of other communities
UIB	*mba ozo*	Other communities
ILB	*mba ọzọ*	Other communities
ICB	*mba ọzọ*	Other communities
IRE	*mba ọzọ*	Other communities
INWT	*mba ọzọ*	Other communities

As noted above, the definition of *gentile* indicates that the Igbo were also gentile, since they were not Jewish themselves. Translating the concept of *gentile* into Igbo required a re-definition of the concept. Table 5.7 shows that the IIB translates *gentile* as *ohan*, spelt *ohu* in Standard Igbo, meaning "slave". This choice seems to be quite extreme because a gentile is not necessarily a slave, but a person who is not Jewish. Perhaps the overtly negative meaning of *ohan* in its use to mark "otherness" informed the use of different expressions in the later IBTs. The NIB borrows the word as *ndi-Jentail* "gentile people" (gentiles), while the other IBTs use the compound *(ndị) mba ọzọ* "(people of) other communities". Both *ohan* and *(ndị) mba ọzọ* entail a re-definition of the concept of *gentile*. The former suggests that being Jewish equates to being freeborn. The latter backgrounds the idea of non-Jewishness and foregrounds the idea of coming from another community. This indigenization of *gentile* makes it possible for the Igbo Christian to dissociate themselves from *gentile* and identify non-Christians as such, the latter being members of some other religion.

d. Priest

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines the concept of *priest* as "a person, usually a man, who has been trained to perform religious duties in the Christian Church, especially the Roman Catholic Church, or a person with particular duties in some other religions". From this definition, *dibịa* "doctor and/or diviner" and *eze mmụọ* "chief priest" are fitting Igbo equivalents of the concept of *priest*. Echeruo (1998: 38) defines *dibịa* as

> [1]doctor or medicine man; one who prepares curative (or poisonous) medicines; [2]diviner or spiritualist; one who can intercede (through divination or sacrifices) with the spirit world on behalf of clients; fortune-teller.

Echeruo (1998) here shows that a *dibịa*'s functions in the Igbo society were multi-purpose. They were the doctors, diviners, and intercessors with the spirits. Interestingly, apart from the IIB that translated *priest* as *dibịa*, all the other IBTs use a different term, as seen in Table 5.8.

Table 5. 8. The representations of *priest* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *p*riest	Meaning
IIB	*Dibia*	Doctor and/or diviner
NIB	*Onye nchụaja*	A person who offers sacrifice
UIBN	*Onye nchụaja*	A person who offers sacrifice
UIB	*Onye nchụaja*	A person who offers sacrifice
ILB	*Onye nchụaja*	A person who offers sacrifice
ICB	*Onye Ụkọchukwu*	God's emissary
IRE	*Onye nchụaja*	A person who offers sacrifice
INWT	*Onye nchụaja*	A person who offers sacrifice

As shown in Table 5.8, the NIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT all translated *priest* as *onye nchụaja* "a person who offers sacrifice" while the ICB uses *onye Ụkọchukwu* "God's emissary". The IIB's choice is hinged on the fact that the *dibịa* is the closest cultural equivalent of *priest* in Igbo. However, apparently because a *dibịa* is seen by Christians as fetish and unchristian, the subsequent translations (apart from the ICB) use the compound *onye nchụaja* instead. Prior to its use in the IBTs, *onye nchụaja* was probably used to describe a *dibịa* or an *eze mmụọ* whose responsibilities include but are not restricted to offering sacrifices. Its use in the IBTs restricts its reference to Jewish priests, as shown in Chapter 8 of the Book of Matthew where Jesus heals a leper, and then advises the healed man in verse 4 to

> 36. See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

The *priest* here is the Jewish priest. The IBTs apparently felt that *dibịa* would associate the Judeo-Christian priests with the Igbo *dibịas*. Consequently, they created a new term based on the major role of Jewish priests, which is "to oversee the sacrificial cult", for "[c]ultic duties associated with sacrifices and offerings were exclusively the prerogative of priests" (Bonfiglio 2016). In other words, *onye nchụaja* distinguishes the Igbo *dibịa* from the Biblical priests.

Table 5.8 also shows that the ICB uses *onye Ụkọchukwu*. *Ụkọchukwu* is a compound formed from *ụkọ* and *Chukwu* "God". Echeruo (1998: 165) defines *ụkọ* as

[1]intermediary; one who serves as a go-between during negotiations (e.g. marriage); [2]messenger; herald. *See "uko Cukwu" = priest, minister.

So, *Ụkọchukwu* is a Christian coinage for an intermediary between the Christian God and Christians or God's messenger to human beings. It should be noted that the use of *Ụkọchukwu* predates the translation of the ICB. This compound was formed and used, at least among Igbo Anglicans and Catholics, outside the Bible before the ICB adopted it and further spread its usage.

The significance of these lexical innovations – *onye nchụaja* and *Ụkọchukwu* – to represent *priest* is the semantic restriction of *dibịa* to the priests of traditional Igbo practices. With the prevalence of western education, *dibịa* is further restricted to traditional healers and the compound *dibịa bekee* "English dibịa" or the loanword *dọkịta* "doctor" are used for the modern-day medical doctor.

5.3.2 Concepts about Locations and Sacred Spaces[98]

Concepts investigated in this section are those that refer to locations and sacred spaces, be they earthly or spiritual places. These are all concepts that were introduced into Igbo from the Igbo contact with Christianity. Concepts that fall in this category include *heaven*, *hell*, *tabernacle*, *church*, *synagogue*, and *temple.*

a. Heaven

The concept of *heaven* and *hell* (the latter is analysed in the next sub-section) are concepts that were foreign to the Igbo worldview. According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, *heaven* is "in some religions, the place, sometimes imagined to be in the sky, where God or the gods live and where good people are believed to go after they die, so that they can enjoy perfect

[98] Some of the findings in this section have been published in Oyali (forthcoming).

happiness". The Igbo conceptualization of life after death is different from the Christian belief in *heaven* and *hell*. As shown in Section 1.1.1, the Igbo belief is that people who have their full funeral rites performed go to *ala mmụọ* where they become ancestors, and those who, for some reasons, did not have their funeral rites performed end up hovering the human world as *akalogeli*. Thus, the concepts of *heaven* and *hell* were not part of the Igbo worldview before their encounter with Christianity. Table 5.9 shows how the IBTs represent the concept of *heaven*.

Table 5. 9. The representations of *heaven* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *heaven*	Meaning
IIB	*Igwe*	Sky
NIB	*Eluigwe*	Above the sky
UIBN	*Eluigwe*	Above the sky
UIB	*Eluigwe*	Above the sky
ILB	*Eluigwe*	Above the sky
ICB	*Eluigwe*	Above the sky
IRE	*Eluigwe*	Above the sky
INWT	*Eluigwe*	Above the sky

From Table 5.9, the IIB translates *heaven* as *igwe* "sky" but the other translations use the compound *eluigwe*, created from *elu* and *igwe.* Echeruo (1998: 48) explains the noun *elu* as meaning "top of; above". So *eluigwe* means "top of or above the sky". The choice of using the Igbo expression for sky or somewhere above it perhaps stems from the association of the sky with heaven, as seen in this verse from Acts 1: 11:

37. ... Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Interestingly, both *igwe* and *eluigwe* have spread into Igbo as the equivalents for *heaven*. For instance, a popular Igbo song sang during burial ceremonies goes like this:

38. *Abụ m ọbịa n'ebe a*   "I am a visitor here"

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Igwe bụ ụlọ m   "Heaven is my home"

So, the use of these expressions has expanded the meaning of *igwe* to not only refer to the physical sky but also to a spiritual location called *heaven*. It also involves some semantic valorisation, whereby the secular term *igwe* is not only given a religious signification, but also given a positive image as against its erstwhile neutral connotations.

b. Hell

Hell is defined by the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "in some religions, the place where some people are believed to go after death to be punished for ever for the bad things they have done during their lives". The terms used to represent the concept of *hell* in the IBTs are presented in Table 5.10.

Table 5. 10. The representations of *hell* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *hell*	Meaning
IIB	*Ọkụmmụọ*	Fire of the spirits
NIB	*Ọkụmmụọ*	Fire of the spirits
UIBN	*Ọkụmmụọ*	Fire of the spirits
UIB	*Ọkụ ala mmụọ*	Fire of the land of the dead
ILB	*Ọkụ ala mmụọ*	Fire of the land of the dead
ICB	*Ọkụmmụọ*	Fire of the spirits
IRE	*Ọkụ ala mmụọ*	Fire of the land of the dead
INWT	*Gehena, hades and sheol*	Loanwords from Hebrew and Greek

As seen in Table 5.10, five terms are used in the IBTs to represent *hell*: *ọkụmmụọ* (IIB, NIB, UIBN, ICB), *ọkụ ala mmụọ* (UB, ILB, IRE) and *gehena*, *hades* and *sheol* (INWT). The concept of *mmụọ* has been discussed above (see Section 5.3.1.1) as originally referring to dead ancestors for whom the Igbo have a lot of reverence. The lexical compound *ọkụ mmụọ* literally means "the ancestors' fire" while *ọkụ ala mmụọ* literally means "fire (of) the land of

the ancestors". The INWT choice of borrowing the Hebrew and Greek expressions is based on the belief by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society that "the way the word 'hell' is understood today" makes it "such an unsatisfactory translation" of the Hebrew *she'ohl* and the Greek *hai'des* and *ge'enna* (Watch Tower 2004: 1086). In their view, the "idea of suffering after death is found among the pagan religious teachings of ancient peoples in Babylon and Egypt" (Watch Tower 2004: 1087), and it is this idea that is transferred into Christendom. Consequently, the Watch Tower Society rejects the understanding of the word *hell* and chooses to borrow the Hebrew and Greek expressions instead. Hence, while the KJB uses the word *hell* in the following passages, the NWT borrows the Hebrew and Greek expressions:

39. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in **hell**. (Matt. 10: 28, KJB)

    And do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in **Ge·hen-na**. (Matt. 10: 28, NWT)

40. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of **hell** shall not prevail against it. (Matt. 16: 18, KJB)

    Also, I say to you, You are Peter, and on this rock-mass I will build my congregation, and the gates of **Ha-des** will not overpower it. (Matt. 16: 18, NWT)

41. The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from **hell** beneath (Prov. 15: 24, KJB)

    The path of life is upward to one acting with insight, in order to turn away from **She'ol** down below. (Prov. 15: 24, NWT)

Hence, the Jehovah's Witnesses use *sheol*, *gehena* and *hades* for the same concepts for which members of other Christian denominations use *hell*. The same pattern is replicated in Igbo usages as members of the Jehovah's Witness use the loanwords in Igbo, while members of other denominations use *ọkụ ala mmụọ* and *ọkụ mmụọ*.

Although *ọkụ ala mmụọ* and *ọkụ mmụọ* are the equivalents used in the Bible translations for *hell*, another compound *ala mmụọ* "land of the dead" is also used in the language to refer

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to *hell.* This representation of *hell* could be traced to the translations of the Apostles' Creed into Igbo. The first Igbo translation of the *Book of Common Prayer*, edited by Rev. John Christopher Taylor and published in 1871, renders *hell* in the Creed as *ibemo̱a* "house of the spirits". Subsequent renderings of the Creed replace *ibe* "house" with *ala* "land":

42. Ọ rịdara **n'ala-mọ.** (*Ekpere na Abụ* 241)

Ọ gbada **n'ala Mmụọ.** (*Katikizim nke Okwukwe* 5)

He descended into hell. (*Book of Common Prayer* 53)

Ekpere na Abụ is the Igbo translation of the *Book of Common Prayers* while *Katikizim nke Okwukwe* is the Catholic catechism in Igbo. Interestingly, all the three Igbo representations of the concept of *hell* have got entries in the dictionaries. Williamson (1972: 40) defines *anị mmụọ*[99] as

> land of the spirits; hell; Hades (opposed to anị mmadụ land of the living): ọ lịdalụ n'anị mmụọ   He descended into hell

It is interesting to note the sequence of ideas here. First is the literal meaning of the expression, followed by the Christian usage to refer to *hell*. It is instructive that the example given is a line from the Apostles' Creed, indicating that this usage is Christian and has gained acceptance in the language. On its part, the compound *ọkụ mmụọ* is defined in Williamson (1972: 411) as

> hell: Ndi njo ga-aba n'ọkụ mmụọ   Sinners shall enter hell

The fact that no non-Christian or traditional Igbo meaning of *ọkụ mmụọ* is given suggests that the expression is distinctly Christian. Echeruo (1998: 219) simply listed *ala mmụọ* and *ọkụ mmụọ* as the definitions for *hell*, with no explanation given. On his part, Igwe (1999: 664) presents that *ọkụ mmụọ* and *ọkụ ala mmụọ* mean *hellfire.* What these dictionary entries point at is the successful introduction of the Christian concept of *hell* into Igbo by giving a negative meaning to the Igbo belief in *mmụọ*, and using expressions associated with *mmụọ* to refer to *hell*, thereby extending the meaning of *mmụọ* and giving it a negative signification.

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[99] *Anị* is a dialectal variant of *ala*

c. Tabernacle

The concept of *tabernacle* and the next two concepts analysed, namely *church* and *synagogue* refer to different religious houses found in Judaism and Christianity and not among the pre-Christian Igbo people. Thus, there were no words for them in Igbo prior to the arrival of the Christian missionaries, i.e., the terms used in the IBTs to represent these concepts were created and used during Bible translations, or during evangelism and spread through Bible translation.

The concept of *tabernacle* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as

- a place of worship for some groups of Christians
- For the Jews in ancient times, a tabernacle was a type of tent moved from place to place and used for worship.
- in a Roman Catholic church, the box in which holy bread and wine are kept

Table 5.11 presents how this concept is translated in the IBTs.

Table 5. 11. The representations of *tabernacle* in the IBTs

KJB	Tabernacle	Meaning
IIB	*Ulọ*	House
NIB	*Ikwu*	Tent
UIBN	*Ikwu*	Tent
UIB	*Ụlọ ikwuu*	Tent house
ILB	*Ọnụ ụlọ*	Room
ICB	*Ụlọ ikwuu*	Tent house
IRE	*Ụlọ ikwuu*	Tent house
INWT	*Ụlọ ikwuu*	Tent house

As seen in Table 5.11, the IIB represents this concept of *tabernacle* as *ulọ* "house", and the ILB uses *ọnụ ụlọ*, defined in Igwe (1999: 683) as "doorway to a house or room" or "room or rooms in a house". The other translations use *ikwu* "tent" (NIB and UIBN) and *ụlọ ikwuu*

(UIB, ICB, IRE and INWT). Although the UIBN uses *ikwu* in the text, in the notes section it gives *ụlọ* as an alternative form. This indicates a gradual replacement of the IIB's *ụlọ* with *ikwu*, especially as almost all the subsequent translations represent *tabernacle* as *ikwu* or *ụlọ ikwuu*. The only exception is the ILB that uses *ọnụ ụlọ* "room". All three Igbo terms used for *temple* existed in the language prior to their use in the IBTs. Their use in the Bible expanded their meaning to accommodate a religious meaning, i.e., their use in the IBTs expanded their registers. Consequently, the terms have a secular and a Christian religious meaning depending on the context of usage.

d. Church

Church is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "an official Christian religious organization" or "an occasion when this organization meets as a group of people". The word is also used for the building where the organization holds their religious worship. The terms used in translating this concept in the IBTs are presented in Table 5.12.

Table 5. 12. The representations of *church* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *church*	Meaning
IIB	*Ezuko*	A gathering
NIB	*Otu*	A society
UIBN	*Nzukọ*	A gathering
UIB	*Nzukọ*	A gathering
ILB	*Ụlọ/ndị chọọchị*	Church house/people
ICB	*Nzukọ*	A gathering
IRE	*Nzukọ*	A gathering
INWT	*Ọgbakọ*	A congregation

Table 5.12 shows that apart from the ILB that borrows the English word, the other translations all use existing Igbo terms to represent this concept. The ILB however combines some other Igbo expressions with the borrowed item to clarify whether the

referent in the context is to the *church* as a building or as an organization. Thus, in Matthew 16: 18 which reads "You are Peter, a stone; and upon this rock I will build my church", the ILB represents *church* as *ụlọ chọọchị* "church house", but in Matthew 18: 17 which reads "If he still refuses to listen, then take your case to the church", the ILB translates *church* as *ndị chọọchị* "church people". In other words, the lexical item pre-modifying *church* clarifies the referent of the word in the context. The other translations, however, do not clarify whether the referent is to the church building or the people. As seen in Table 5.12, they all translate *church* with Igbo terms for a gathering or congregation of people. These Igbo terms were secular terms that have been elaborated semantically by being given a religious signification in the IBTs. Their use in the IBTs expands their register from secular to embrace a Christian religious meaning. What is more, the religious meaning gives them specificity as they do not refer to any gathering of people but to a specific group of people. That notwithstanding, it should be noted that the word *ụka* is also used, alone or in combination with other words, for *church* or anything related to Christianity, e.g. *izu ụka* "church week", *ụlọ ụka* "church building", *ụbọchị ụka* "Sunday" (see Sections 6.1.1.3, 6.1.2.5 and 7.2.2.3).

e. **Synagogue**

S*ynagogue* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "a building in which Jewish people worship and study their religion". The terms used in the IBTs to represent this concept also experienced a similar form of semantic extension like those used for *church*. As shown in Table 5.13, the terms used to represent *synagogue* in the IBTs are: *ulomota* "house of learning" (IIB), *ụlọ nzukọ* "meeting house' (NIB, UIBN. UB, ICB, IRE and INWT) and *ọgbakọ* "gathering" (ILB).

Table 5. 13. The representations of *synagogue* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *synagogue*	Meaning
IIB	*Ulomota*	House of/for learning
NIB	*Ụlọ nzukọ*	Meeting house
UIBN	*Ụlọ nzukọ*	Meeting house
UIB	*Ụlọ nzukọ*	Meeting house
ILB	*Ọgbakọ*	A congregation
ICB	*Ụlọ nzukọ*	Meeting house
IRE	*Ụlọ nzukọ*	Meeting house
INWT	*Ụlọ nzukọ*	Meeting house

Table 5.13 shows that the IIB's choice emphasizes that the house is meant for studying and learning while the other choices do not clarify the learning aspect of a *synagogue.* Rather, they only indicate that a synagogue is a meeting house. All the same, the different terms used involve an extension of the register of the terms from the secular to the religious.

There is some interesting relationship in the conceptualizations of *church* and *synagogue* in the IBTs, for the expressions used for the concepts suggest that the *church* is the gathering of people while *synagogue* is the house where the people gather to learn or hold their meeting. As shown in Table 5.12, only the ILB distinguishes the church building from the gathering of Christian faithful while the other translations simply represent the concept with Igbo expressions for a gathering. For *synagogue*, apart from the ILB that uses a word that identifies a *synagogue* as a gathering, the other translations specify that a *synagogue* is a house. So, most of the IBTs lexically distinguish *synagogue* from *church* by showing that the former is a house and the latter a gathering of people.

f. Temple

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines the concept of *temple* as "a building used for the worship of a god or gods in some religions". There were houses used for the worship of deities

among the Igbo prior to their encounter with Christianity called *okwu alụsị*. *Okwu* is defined in Igwe (1999: 603) as "*n.* nest, stronghold, home (of things e.g. ants)" while *alụsị* is defined in Echeruo (1998: 21) as "fetish; idol; carved representation of a spirit or deity". Thus, *okwu alụsị* means "the house of a deity". However, none of the IBTs used this compound for *temple* as seen in Table 5.14.

Table 5. 14. The representations of *temple* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *temple*	Meaning
IIB	*Ulo-tsuku*	Deity's house
NIB	*Ụlọ nsọ*	Holy house
UIBN	*Ụlọ Cineke*	God's house
UIB	*Ụlọ ukwu Chineke*	God's big house
ILB	*Ụlọ nsọ ukwu Chineke*	God's big holy house
ICB	*Ụlọ nsọ*	Holy house
IRE	*Ụlọ ukwu Chineke*	God's big house
INWT	*Ụlọ nsọ*	Holy house

Table 5.14 shows the various linguistic attempts at marking the sacredness of *temple* in Igbo – by ascribing holiness to the house (NIB, ICB, INWT), by linking it to a deity[100] (IIB) or to God (UIBN, UIB, IRE) or by combining both (ILB). This is probably the reason the IBTs did not use the existing Igbo term *okwu alụsị* for *temple*, i.e., they consciously wanted to distinguish the Judeo-Christian *temple* from the traditional Igbo *okwu alụsị*. This is especially so considering that the Christian missionaries derided the traditional Igbo religious practices as idol worship. So, they probably did not want the Igbo *okwu alụsị* to be associated with the Christian *temple*. Furthermore, the IBTs differentiate *synagogue* from *temple* by ascribing sacredness to the latter, i.e., *synagogue* is presented as a meeting place, with no reference to sacredness (see Table 5.13), but *temple* is presented with clear linguistic markers of sacredness (Table 5.14).

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[100] *Chukwu* is interpreted here as "a deity" and not as "God" because the IIB used the same term for both the concept of the Supreme God and the smaller gods (see Section 5.3.1.1.A). So, *Chukwu* is used in the IIB to refer to any deity and not to any specific one.

g. Shrine

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *shrine* as "a place that is holy because of a connection with a holy person or object". This concept is a hapax in the KJB, for it appears only in Acts 19: 24:

43. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen

The concept of *shrine* was familiar to the Igbo people before they encountered the Bible, for they had places dedicated to deities. One example of such a place is the *okwu alụsị* highlighted in the preceding section. Igwe (1999: 247) gives *ihu mmụọ* "spirit's frontage" as an Igbo word for *shrine*. However, the IBTs did not use any existing term for Igbo shrines. Rather, they coined new terms or appropriated other Igbo religious concepts for the concept of *shrine* as seen in Table 5.15.

Table 5. 15. The representations of *shrine* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *shrine*	Meaning
IIB	*Akpati* (*ube*)	A box
NIB	*Obele uno̱-nsọ*	A small holy house
UIBN	*Ụlọ nsọ ntà*	A small holy house
UIB	*Ụlọ nsọ ntà*	A small holy house
ILB	*Chi*	Deity
ICB	*Ụlọ arụsị*	A deity's house
IRE	*Ụlọ nsọ ntà*	A small holy house
INWT	*Ụlọ arụsị*	A deity's house

In Table 5.15, the IIB represents it as *akpati* "box", with *ube* put in parenthesis. The meaning of *ube* in this context is not clear as the word has many entries in the Igbo dictionaries none of which is related to a house or a sacred object. Perhaps it is an archaic dialectal word that is now lost in the language. The NIB translates *shrine* as *obele uno̱-nsọ* "little sacred house", while the UIBN, UIB, and IRE translates it as *ụlọ nsọ ntà*, a dialectal

variant of *obele unọ-nsọ.* The ILB simply calls it *chi*, analysed above as being interpreted in Christianity to now mean *god*, and the ICB and INWT use *ụlọ arụsị* "house of a deity". All of these entail the elaboration of the terms used. The IIB's choice gives a secular term a religious signification and the other IBTs give existing Igbo terms a new function.

One significant feature of the terms used in the IBTs for *shrine* is that they are presented as diminutive forms of *temple.* As presented in Table 5.14, the IBTs mark the sacredness of *temple* by associating the house to God, presenting it as holy or both. The terms used for *temple* by the ILB and IRE further emphasize that it is a big house. However, for *shrine*, the IBTs use terms that suggest that the concept is smaller than *temple.* The compounds *obele unọ-nsọ* and *ụlọ nsọ ntà* clearly mark the shrine as being smaller or of a lower status than the *temple.* The choices of *chi* and *ụlọ arụsị* further emphasize this diminutive status of *shrine* for *chi* is diminutive in relation to *Chineke*, and *arụsị* is also perceived by Igbo Christians as being of a lower status than *Chineke.* Thus, the representations in Igbo suggest that the *temple* is the house of God while the *shrine* is the house of lesser deities. The terms used for the concept of *shrine* entail the elaboration of Igbo not only in the lexical coinages used to introduce a new concept, but also in the distinction made between the concept and another one perceived to be of a higher status.

h. Altar

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *altar* as a type of table used in ceremonies in Christian church or in other religious buildings". This concept was not strange to the Igbo prior to the Bible translations, for they have several words for *altar* like *ntö aja*, *okpo*, *okwo*, *okwute ịchụ aja*, *okwute ntö aja* (Echeruo 1998: 180). However, none of these was selected to represent *altar* in the IBTs, as seen in Table 5.16.

Table 5. 16. The representations of *altar* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *altar*	Meaning
IIB	*Ihu Tsuku*	A deity's presence
NIB	*Ebe ịchụaja*	Place of sacrifice
UIBN	*Ebe ịchụaja*	Place of sacrifice
UIB	*Ebe ịchụaja*	Place of sacrifice
ILB	*Ebe ịchụaja*	Place of sacrifice
ICB	*Ekwuaja*	Hearth for sacrifices
IRE	*Ebe ịchụaja*	Place of sacrifice
INWT	*Ebe ịchụaja*	Place of sacrifice

Table 5.16 shows that the concept of *altar* is represented variously in the IBTs: *ihu Tsuku* "a deity's presence" (IIB), *ebe ịchụaja* "place of sacrifice" (NIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT), and *ekwuaja* (ICB). As noted above (see fn 99), the IIB used *Chukwu* for any deity and not for a specific one. The compound *ihu Chukwu* is modelled on *ihu mmụọ* "deity's frontage", mentioned as an Igbo word for *shrine* in Igwe (1999: 247). While *ihu mmụọ* is used in Igbo for the frontage of spirits or deities, the IIB replaces *mmụọ* with *Chukwu*. It is possible that *ihu Chukwu* was used for the *Chukwu* shrine at Arochukwu. Its use in the IIB thus gives it a new meaning as the frontage of any deity, *Chukwu* being a concept appropriated in the IIB for deities generally and not just the Arochukwu deity. The ICB's *ekwuaja* is a lexical compound formed from *ekwu* and *aja* "sacrifice". Igwe (1999: 157) defines *ekwu* as "a small anthill often umbrella-shaped (in past days used as stand for cooking pots...)". Echeruo (1998: 47) defines it as

> hearth, usually moulded with an opening for firewood – *noro n'ekwu ahu di n'ebe icu aja = shall be on the hearth upon the altar (Lev. 6: 9); ekwu igwe = metal cooking stand*

From the definitions, *ekwu* is moulded, apparently with clay, and used as a stand for pots while cooking. The decision to create new terms for *altar* was apparently aimed at distinguishing the Biblical *altar* from the altars of Igbo deities, especially as the altars in the Bible could also be for the Judeo-Christian Supreme God. Echeruo's (1998) definition of *ekwu* is particularly revealing in that it not only explains what the word stands for, but the

sample usage given is from the Bible where it refers to *hearth* and *ebe ịchụaja* given for *altar.* This shows that the ICB usage is innovative, for it creates a new type of *ekwu* used for sacrifices.

5.3.3 Concepts about Christian Beliefs

Concepts in this category are those that embody ideas believed in Christianity to exist. These include concepts like *salvation*, *sin*, *sanctification*, *redemption*, *righteousness*, and *eternity*. One feature of the terms used in the IBTs for these concepts is that the terms were existing Igbo secular expressions, which are given religious significations as a result of their usage to represent the Biblical concepts.

a. Salvation

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *salvation* as "(a way of) being saved from danger, loss, or harm", and "[i]n the Christian religion, salvation of a person or their spirit is the state of being saved from evil and its effect by the death of Jesus on a cross". This indicates that *salvation* has a secular meaning as well as a Christian religious meaning. The terms used in the IBTs to represent *salvation* are presented in Table 5.17.

Table 5. 17. The representations of *salvation* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *salvation*	Meaning
IIB	*Ngaputa*	To un-hook
NIB	*Nzọpụta*	To save
UIBN	*Nzọpụta*	To save
UIB	*Nzọpụta*	To save
ILB	*Nzọpụta*	To save
ICB	*Nzọpụta*	To save
IRE	*Nzọpụta*	To save
INWT	*Nzọpụta*	To save

According to Table 5.17, apart from the IIB which represents *salvation* as *ngapụta* "to un-hook", all the other translations use *nzọpụta* "to save". The IIB's choice of term for *salvation* reflects an image that is dominant in riverine Igbo communities where the hook is used for fishing. Such riverine Igbo communities understand that getting caught by a hook portends danger to fishes and getting un-hooked frees the fishes from the danger. This image was probably not shared by non-riverine Igbo communities. Thus, the other IBTs opted for a more general term *nzọpụta*. That is, *nzọpụta* appears to be less dialect-specific as everybody would easily identify with the idea of escaping from danger, but it requires some special knowledge or experience to appreciate being released from a hook, especially for the Igbo in the hinterland. The significance of the use of these terms in the IBTs is that it gives the terms a religious meaning. The Christian concept of *salvation* is introduced in the IBTs by semantically extending the meaning of the Igbo secular terms for unhooking and saving to embrace a religious meaning.

b. Sin

Sin is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "the offense of breaking, or the breaking of, a religious or moral law". Translating this concept was quite problematic for the missionaries. As noted in Ogharaerumi (1986: 242), T. J. Dennis, one of the translators of the UIB, was frustrated while translating this verse from Exodus 20: 6, Exodus 34: 7 and Numbers 14: 18: "visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children". Interestingly, Igbo has an existing functional equivalent for *sin*, namely *nsọ*. As demonstrated above (see Section 5.3.1.1.Ci), the Igbo concept of *nsọ* originally meant "sacred prohibitions". However, the IBTs have given the concept a new function as *holy*. Thus, when used within the context of the Igbo traditional religious practices, *nsọ* means sacred prohibitions, but within the Christian context, it means *holy*. This re-functionalization of *nsọ* in the IBTs created a lexical gap for the Bible translators, for they could not use the same term for both *holy* and *sin*. In order to fill this lexical gap, the IBTs appropriated Igbo secular terms for wrong acts, as seen in Table 5.18.

Table 5. 18. The representations of *sin* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *sin*	Meaning
IIB	*Njọ*	Badness/transgression
NIB	*Njọ*	Badness/transgression
UIBN	*Mmehie*	Wrong deeds or mis-deeds
UIB	*Mmehie*	Wrong deeds or mis-deeds
ILB	*Mmehie*	Wrong deeds or mis-deeds
ICB	*Njọ*	Badness/transgression
IRE	*Mmehie*	Wrong deeds or mis-deeds
INWT	*Mmehie*	Wrong deeds or mis-deeds

From Table 5.18, the IBTs translated *sin* as *njọ* "badness/transgression" (IIB, NIB, ICB), and *mmehie* "wrong deeds or mis-deeds" (UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE INWT). These were secular words whose use in the IBTs has given a religious signification. Thus, both terms now have a secular meaning and a religious meaning. On the one hand, when used outside the Christian context, they refer to non-religious offenses, but within the Christian context they refer to the concept of *sin*. On the other hand, they lexically differentiate religious or moral offenses in the Igbo religious practices from such offenses in Christianity. The former is expressed in Igbo as *nsọ* while the latter is expressed as *mmehie* or *njọ.*

c. Sanctification

The noun *sanctification* is derived from the verb *sanctify*, which is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "to make an event or place holy". As noted in the preceding section, the IBTs semantically extended *nsọ* "sacred prohibitions" to embrace "holiness". The fact is that the concept of *holiness* did not exist in the pre-Christian Igbo cosmology. The idea of *sacredness* did. The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *holy* as "related to a religion or a god" and "very religious or pure". For *sacred*, the *Cambridge Dictionary* gives these entries: "considered to be holy and deserving respect, especially because of a connection with a god", "connected with religion", and "considered too important to be changed". The apparent difference between *sacred* and *holy* is that the latter connotes purity and goodness while the former

has no such connotations. Prior to the Igbo encounter with Christianity, they used *nsọ* for prohibitions associated with deities or religious obligations. However, the Christian missionaries semantically extended *nsọ* to embrace *holy*. Thus, the IBTs also incorporated *nsọ* in the terms used for *sanctification*, as seen in Table 5.19.

Table 5. 19. The representations of *sanctification* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *sanctification*	Meaning
IIB	*Ndokwa*	To make peace
NIB	*Ido-nsọ*	To make holy
UIBN	*Ido-nsọ*	To make holy
UIB	*Ido-nsọ*	To make holy
ILB	*Ido-nsọ*	To make holy
ICB	*Ido-nsọ*	To make holy
IRE	*Ido-nsọ*	To make holy
INWT	*Ido-nsọ*	To make holy

As shown in Table 5.19, all the translations represent *sanctification* with *ido-nsọ* "to make holy", apart from the IIB which uses *ndokwa* instead. The IIB's choice of term is defined in Williamson (1972: 301) as "settlement; peace; pacification (from –dokwa make peace)". The IIB apparently uses *ndokwa* metaphorically to mean "making peace with God". In other words, the IIB gave the secular term a Christian religious meaning. Interestingly, the term *ndokwa* has been further elaborated in Igbo to also refer to having peace in the afterlife. In Echeruo (1998: 104), *ndokwa* is defined as "perfect peace or restfulness, usually of the afterlife – *zuo ike na ndokwa = rest in (perfect) peace*. *Found almost exclusively in Christian usage". This meaning is seen in this popular song sang during Christian burial ceremonies:

44. *Laba na ndokwa*   Go in peace
    Ọ ga-adịrị gị mma   It will be well with you
    Laba na ndokwa   Go in peace

Furthermore, the word is also used in the Catholic prayer for the dead

45. May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace
    Ka mkpụrụ ndị kwere ekwe zuru ike na ndokwa

In other words, the IIB's extension of the register of a secular term *ndokwa* to also mean making peace with God is further extended outside the Bible to mean peace in the afterlife.

Table 5.19 shows that all the other IBTs translated *sanctification* as *ido-nsọ* "to make holy". Here, the IBTs adopted the creative use of *nsọ* as *holy*. As observed above, the word *nsọ* maintains a distinct meaning in Christian usage and another in usage outside Christianity. The use of *ido-nsọ* for *sanctification* is thus a continuation of the semantic extension of *nsọ* for *holy*.

d. Redemption

The *Cambridge Dictionary* presents this religious meaning for the concept of *redemption*: "(especially in Christianity) an occasion when someone is saved from evil, suffering, etc." Table 5.20 shows that the IBTs translated this concept with two Igbo terms for ransom.

Table 5. 20. The representations of *redemption* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *redemption*	Meaning
IIB	*Mbata*	To buy (a person)
NIB	*Mgbapụta*	To redeem
UIBN	*Mgbapụta*	To redeem
UIB	*Mgbapụta*	To redeem
ILB	*Mgbapụta*	To redeem
ICB	*Mgbapụta*	To redeem
IRE	*Mgbapụta*	To redeem
INWT	*Mgbapụta*	To redeem

From Table 5.20, the IIB translated *redemption* as *mbata* (spelt *mgbata* in Standard Igbo) while the other translations represented it as *mgbapụta*. Williamson (1972: 142) defines the use of the root *gba* where *mmadụ* "person" is the object thus:

-gba mmadụ buy, pawn person: Mmadụ ada agbazị ibe ya n'oge kịta

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People no longer buy each other nowadays.

Prior to the arrival of the Christian missionaries, buying or pawning human beings was practiced among the Igbo. Among the Oko people of Delta State, a person who commits certain abominable acts against the earth deity may be required to perform a sacrifice called *ịgba mmadụ*. In olden days, this involved sacrificing a human being. In the present time, the sacrifice is done with a cow, but it is still called *ịgba mmadụ*. Thus, the IIB's appropriation of this concept of *ịgba mmadụ* in its translation of *redemption* evokes the idea of pawning persons for God. That is, the person redeemed becomes a slave to the Christian God and not to a human being.

The idea of being bought for the Christian God might have appealed more to some segments of the Igbo society, like the victims of *ịgba mmadụ* and their descendants called *ohu* "slave" or *osu*. The *osu* are "people whose forebears were dedicated or given to some deities" (Emeghara 1994: 30). According to Emeghara (1994: 30),

> though human, they [the *osu*] were no longer regarded as mere human by their kit and kin. This is because they had crossed the boundary between the free born into the community of the spirits. They were regarded as taboo once the ritual of initiation into the spirit community had been performed.

As a result of the stigma against the *osu*, the Christian gospel of equality of all human beings attracted them. In the words of Ubah (1988: 83),

> [t]hroughout the *osu* culture areas of Igboland the response of this caste [to Christian evangelism] was understandably very positive, and everywhere they were among the earliest converts. The new doctrine of equality of all men was a turning point in their lives. The church was the only place where the *osu* were regarded as human beings.

Interestingly, all the other IBTs translate *redemption* as *mgbapụta*, which also means "redemption". The major difference between *mgbapụta* and *mgbata* is that the latter suggests buying a person who then remains a slave to the buyer while the former suggests setting the enslaved person free. Perhaps the other IBTs did not retain the IIB's choice

because it suggests that the person remains a slave. In effect, although the practice of pawning human beings among the Igbo has been abolished, the terms for the practice are still used in the language. Such usages are gradually going into disuse in the context of the Igbo traditional practices, but not in the Christian context. The terms are used for the Christian concept of *redemption.*

e. Atonement

The concept of *atonement* in religious contexts is defined in the *Oxford Dictionary* as "reparation or expiation for sin". As highlighted in the analysis of *sin*, the Igbo concept of *nsọ* "sacred prohibitions" was a fitting cultural equivalent of *sin*, but *nsọ* was already given a different function as *holy*. According to Ikenga-Metuh (1985), people that breach these prohibitions are required to atone for them by performing some rituals called *ịkpụ arụ*, literally "to drag abomination" or *ịmerịa nsọ* "to repair sacrilege". These terms were however not used to translate the Biblical concept of *atonement*, as seen in Table 5.21.

Table 5. 21. The representations of *atonement* in the IBTs

KJB	Terms for *atonement*	Meaning
IIB	--	--
NIB	--	--
UIBN	--	--
UIB	*Ikpuchi mmehie*	To cover wrong deeds
ILB	*Mkpuchi mmehie*	To cover wrong deeds
ICB	*Mkpochapụ njọ*	To wipe out bad deeds
IRE	*Ikpuchi mmehie*	To cover wrong deeds
INWT	*Mkpuchi mmehie*	To cover wrong deeds

From Table 5.21, the IBTs translated *atonement* as *ikpuchi mmehie* (UIB, IRE), *mkpuchi mmehie* (ILB, INWT), and *mkpochapụ njọ* (ICB). The first two mean "to cover wrong deeds" while the third one means "to wipe away bad deeds". As noted above, the concept of *sin* is

translated as *mmehie* "wrong deeds" and *njọ* "badness", which were secular terms that have been given a religious meaning in the IBTs. According to Table 5.21, the IBTs conceptualize the concept of *atonement* as covering wrong deeds or wiping out badness. These were also secular terms given a religious meaning in the Bible. Consequently, the terms have both a secular meaning and a religious one in Christianity. Furthermore, the terms lexically differentiate the idea of atonement in traditional Igbo religious contexts from atonement in Christianity.

f. Righteousness

The concept of *righteousness* is defined in the *Oxford Dictionary* as "[t]he quality of being morally right or justifiable". As noted in Section 5.3.1.1C, the traditional Igbo idea of goodness and badness is different from the Christian conceptualization. Consequently, the Biblical conceptualization of *righteousness* was different from the Igbo. To translate this concept, the IBTs appropriated two secular Igbo terms for "good behaviour", as seen in Table 5.22.

Table 5. 22. The representations of *righteousness* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *righteousness*	Meaning
IIB	*Esi-mara-ọmma*	Good behaviour
NIB	*Ezi omume*	Good behaviour
UIBN	*Ezi omume*	Good behaviour
UIB	*Ezi omume*	Good behaviour
ILB	*Ezi omume*	Good behaviour
ICB	*Ezi omume*	Good behaviour
IRE	*Ezi omume*	Good behaviour
INWT	*Ezi omume*	Good behaviour

From Table 5.22, *esi-mara-ọmma* and *ezi omume* are dialectal expressions for "good behaviour". Their use in the IBTs expanded their meanings to include a Christian meaning,

i.e., in the Christian religion, these terms refer to the Christian idea of moral correctness, but outside this context, they have a secular meaning as any behaviour that is deemed to be positive.

g. Perdition

Perdition is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as the "state of punishment that goes on forever, believed in some religions to be suffered by evil people after death". In Section 5.3.2B, it is demonstrated that the Christian idea of the afterlife is different from the traditional Igbo conceptualization of the afterlife. Table 5.23 presents the terms used in the IBTs for the concept of perdition.

Table 5. 23. The representations of *perdition* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *perdition*	Meaning
IIB	--	--
NIB	*Nbibi*	Destruction
UIBN	*Ịla n'iyi*	To waste
UIB	*Ịla n'iyi*	To waste
ILB	*Ịla n'iyi*	To waste
ICB	*Ọdịda*	Falling
IRE	*Ịla n'iyi*	To waste
INWT	*Nbibi*	Destruction

From Table 5.23, the concept of *perdition* is represented in the IBTs as *nbibi* (spelt *mbibi* in Standard Igbo) "destruction" (NIB, INWT), *ịla n'iyi* "to waste" (UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE) and *ọdịda* "falling" (ICB). These were secular expressions that were semantically extended and given a religious meaning in the Bible translations. Consequently, the terms now respectively have both a secular meaning as any form of destruction, waste or fall as well as a religious meaning.

h. Eternity

The concept of *eternity* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "time that never ends or that has no limits". The idea of a time that never ends is expressed in Igbo as *ndụdụgandụ*, defined in Echeruo (1998: 105) as "generation after generation; generations; ages; lit: one life-time to another life-time", and *ụwatụwa* "life after life". Table 5.24 presents the terms with which the IBTs translated the concept of *eternity*.

Table 5. 24. The representations of *eternity* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *eternity*	Meaning
IIB	--	--
NIB	--	--
UIBN	--	--
UIB	*Mgbe niile ebighịebi*	All the time without end
ILB	*Ebighi ebi*	Without end
ICB	*Ebighi ebi*	Without end
IRE	*Mgbe niile ebighịebi*	All the time without end
INWT	*Mgbe ebighị ebi*	Time without end

Table 5.24 shows that *ụwatụwa* and *ndụdụgandụ* were not used as equivalents of *eternity* in the IBTs. Rather, the IBTs appropriated secular terms and gave them religious meanings. The UIB and IRE use *mgbe niile ebighịebi* "all the time without end", the ILB and ICB respectively use *ebighi ebi* and *ebeebe*, dialectal variants of "without end", and the INWT uses *mgbe ebighị ebi* "time without end". These were all secular terms that have been bestowed with a religious signification. The use of these terms in the IBTs further elaborates the Igbo language by introducing a new perspective to the conceptualization of eternity. The Igbo term *ndụdụgandụ* conceptualizes *eternity* from the perspective of generations of people, i.e., generation after generation, while *ụwatụwa* sees it as life after life. These terms focus on human life. However, the UIB, IRE and INWT shift the focus away from generation and life to time.

5.3.4 Concepts about Christian Rituals and Practices

Focus in this section is on concepts about Christian rituals and practices. The major difference between these concepts and those analysed in the preceding section is that these ones involve some mental or physical action from the Christian faithful while those in the preceding section do not. The concept of *atonement* is discussed in the preceding section because it is believed in Christian circles that the death of Jesus Christ has atoned for their sins. For example, the *Oxford Dictionary* defines *the Atonement* as "the reconciliation of God and mankind through Jesus Christ". So, the Christians do not necessarily need to atone for their sins, but they may be required to *repent* of their sins and/or *confess* them. Thus, the concepts analysed in this section include *repentance*, *confession* and *conversion.*

a. Repentance

The noun *repentance* is derived from the verb *repent*, defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "to be very sorry for something bad you have done in the past and wish that you had not done it". Table 5.25 shows the terms with which the IBTs translated the concept of *repentance*.

Table 5. 25. The representations of *repentance* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *repentance*	Meaning
IIB	*Nhalo*	(Meaning could not be deciphered)
NIB	*Nlogha*	Re-think
UIBN	*Nlogha*	Re-think
UIB	*Nchegharị*	Re-think
ILB	*Nchegharị*	Re-think
ICB	*Nchegharị*	Re-think
IRE	*Nchegharị*	Re-think
INWT	*Nchegharị*	Re-think

According to Table 5.25, the IIB translated *repentance* as *nhalo*, a word that has probably become archaic and, as such, no longer in use in modern times. For one, it does not appear in any of the modern dictionaries. The only dictionary that has an entry for it is Crowther (1882: 67) where it is defined simply as "repentance", with no further explanation or example supplied. In other word, Crowther (1882) presents its use in Christianity. However, the other terms used by the IBTs for *repentance*, *nlogha* (NIB, UIBN) and *nchègharị* (UIB, ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT) both mean to "re-think". Both words were secular words, but their use in the IBTs as equivalents for *repentance* has given them a religious meaning in Christianity.

b. Conversion

The *Oxford Dictionary* defines *conversion* in part as: "The fact of changing one's religion or beliefs or the action of persuading someone else to change theirs". The lexical items with which the IBTs translated this concept were secular terms whose meanings were extended to embrace a religious meaning, as seen in Table 5.26.

Table 5. 26. The representations of *conversion* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *conversion*	Meaning
IIB	*Nwoga*	Change in appearance
NIB	*Nrughali*	To turn upward/upside down
UIBN	*Nchighari*	To herd around
UIB	*Nchighari*	To herd around
ILB	*Nchegharị*	Re-think
ICB	*Nchegharị*	Re-think
IRE	*Nchigharị*	Re-think
INWT	*Nchegharị*	Re-think

Table 5.26 shows that the IIB translated *repentance* as *nwoga*, literally "change in appearance". This use of *nwoga* in the IIB entails a semantic extension of the term to embrace the religious meaning of "change of belief or religion". However, the NIB translated the concept as *nrughalị* "to turn upward or upside down". This was also a secular term used metaphorically to mean a change in religious belief. The UIBN, UIB and IRE translated the concept as *nchịgharị* "to herd around", invoking the idea of changing the course of a sheep flock. Here, the term is used metaphorically to mean changing the course of a person's faith or belief. Lastly, the ILB, ICB and INWT use *nchegharị* "to re-think". The fact that these IBTs use the same word for both *conversion* and *repentance* (see Table 5.25) suggests a levelling of both concepts in Igbo. On the one hand, it makes it difficult to lexically differentiate *conversion* from *repentance*. On the other hand, it highlights what both concepts have in common – a change of heart.

c. Confession

The concept of *confession* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "the act of admitting that you have done something wrong or illegal" or "an occasion when a Christian tells God or, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, tells a priest formally and privately, what they have done wrong so that they can be forgiven". Interestingly, all the IBTs translated this concept as *nkwupụta*, i.e. to speak out. This too was a secular term and does not have a religious meaning outside Christianity. Thus, the use of this word in the IBTs as the equivalent of *confession* expands its register to include a religious one. Consequently, an Igbo term for 'speaking out' is given a religious signification, such that it no longer takes only abstract items as its object, but it also takes concrete objects as demonstrated in this text from Matt. 10: 32:

46. *Whosoever therefore **shall confess me** before men...*
    Ya mere, onye ọ bula nke **gēkwuputam** n'iru madu..."

Here, the object of the verb is *m* "me", a usage seen mainly within Christian contexts. Outside the Christian context, the term retains its secular meaning.

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One point that stands out in this chapter is that there seems to be a conscious attempt to represent these distinct Christian concepts in Igbo using Igbo expressions. For instances where the earlier translations borrowed the terms for the concepts from the English Bible translations, subsequent translations tend to revert to indigenous expressions, a point elaborated in the next chapter.

Goodchild's (2003) reports of the conference held in 1905 by the missionaries and Igbo converts to plan the Union Bible translation show the dilemma of the delegates in agreeing on terms for certain Christian concepts because they feared choosing a term that would have associations that negate Christian teachings. Although some of the choices of terms might have sounded awkward to the Igbo native speakers, or had meanings different from the prevailing usage, the use of the Bible over time has contributed to the spread of these erstwhile awkward coinages or usages. The original meanings of the expressions are not completely lost, as most of the expressions retain their secular or non-Christian meanings as well as their Christian usages (e.g., *nsọ*). However, there are instances where the Igbo terms have lost their older meanings completely (e.g., *Ekwensu*).

The chapter also shows that the Christian missionaries tactfully gave pejorative meanings to certain Igbo concepts that posed some serious challenges to their evangelical works. They did this by translating negative Christian concepts with terms for concepts held dear in the Igbo traditional religious practices, like *ọkụ ala mmụọ* "fire of the land of the ancestors" that is used to represent *hell*, and *Ekwensu*, an Igbo heroic deity that is used to represent the *Devil*. Thus, over time, the people started associating the terms with the negative concepts. The outcome of this was a change in the cosmology of the Igbo people. In other instances, general terms are given specificity and secular terms given religious significations in their use in the IBTs to represent specific Christian concepts. The different categories of *mmụọ* created and spread with their peculiar use in the Bible have changed the way the people understood the concept of *mmụọ*. What is more, the conscious effort to avoid representing certain Christian concepts with the same terms for similar concepts in the Igbo traditional religious practices is significant. On the one hand, it shows an attempt to distinguish the Christian concepts from the Igbo concepts, apparently to avoid the possibility of equating the Igbo concepts with the Christian ones. On the other hand, it

marks a conscious effort to evolve an Igbo Christian register. This way Bible translation has not only added new concepts into Igbo but has also introduced changes in the Igbo people's cosmology.

CHAPTER 6

THE EVOLUTION OF THE LEXICAL AND CONCEPTUAL INNOVATIONS IN LATER TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE INTO IGBO[101]

Chapters 4 and 5 investigate the various lexical processes adopted in creating new words and the techniques for representing Christian concepts in the IBTs. This chapter explores the evolution of the lexical and conceptual innovations over time in the different IBTs. Later translations of texts usually respond to the earlier translations, in that the later version is usually done with the intent to correct or overcome the perceived shortcomings of the earlier translation. Thus, this chapter investigates how each of the IBTs responded to the lexical and conceptual innovations of the translations done before them. As noted in Chapter 3, the IBTs studied here include the IIB (1860/1866), NIB (1900), UIBN (1908), UIB (1913), ILB (1988), ICB (2000), IRE (2007) and INWT (2007). The translators of the NIB were aware of the existence of the IIB. Similarly, the translators of the UIBN and UIB were aware of the IIB and NIB. The ILB and IRE were done in reaction to the UIB. The ILB was done to simplify the language of the Bible in order to make Bible reading easier. On its part, the IRE was done to update the language of the Bible. Although the ICB published in 2000 does not mention the existence of earlier IBTs, it is known that the Igbo Catholics were involved in the translation of the IRE (see Section 3.1.2.5), and by extension, were aware of other existing IBTs at the time. Like the ICB, the INWT is also silent on the existence of earlier IBTs. However, that does not preclude an awareness of their existence. As demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 5, the INWT used many of the terms for concepts innovated by earlier translations. In other words, each IBT made after the IIB was done with an awareness of the existing translations.

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[101] Some of the findings in this chapter have been published in Oyali (2018).

To achieve the aim of this chapter, I am guided by the following questions: Did later translations of the Bible into Igbo, i.e. those produced after the IIB, retain the same lexical items and representations of concepts in the earlier translations? If there are changes in the later translations, what is the nature of these changes? Retaining the innovations of the earlier translations implies some level of acceptance and integration of these terms into the language. In other words, have new words and lexical items created during Bible translation to solve translation problems gained acceptance in the language through repeated usage in later translations? The research corpus features many such instances of neologisms. However, some of the terms are replaced with other terms in the later translations or undergo some formal changes that indigenize them at three levels: 1) adapting to the current Igbo orthography, 2) reflecting the current standard spelling or 3) presenting what the translators believe should be the standard or a better spelling of the expressions in Igbo. In all, they are attempts at indigenizing the expressions in Igbo. Using new expressions that are different from those of the earlier translations implies that the later translations have some reservations about the earlier innovations and thus see their own choice of replacements as better options for expressing the ideas. Whatever the case may be, all the choices are forms of elaboration for the Igbo language.

In addition to exploring the changes in the translations as instances of language elaboration, this chapter also investigates whether the retranslation hypothesis is validated in Bible translation into Igbo. The retranslation hypothesis stipulates that subsequent translations of a text tend to be closer to the source language than to the target language. In effect, this chapter examines whether the changes in the IBTs done after the IIB are closer to the source language (English) or to the target language (Igbo). The lexical and conceptual innovations in the IBTs constitute the unit for measuring the closeness of the Bible translations to their source and target languages.

As mentioned earlier, interest in this chapter is on instances where the lexical choices of the earlier IBTs are replaced with different lexical items or retained but with some changes in spelling. Thus, the analysis in this chapter is structured along these two broad categories of changes, namely 1) changes where a lexical item used for a concept in an earlier translation is replaced with a different lexical item in later translations, and 2) changes in

spelling. The IIB, NIB, UIBN and UIB use the Lepsius orthography while the ILB, ICB, IRE and INWT use the Onwu orthography. These are pointed out in the analysis.

6.1   Lexical Changes

This section is concerned with instances where the lexical choices of earlier IBTs are replaced in subsequent IBTs with different lexical items. Four forms of lexical changes are identified in the corpus: 1) changes from terms for cultural concepts to new lexical creations, 2) changes from one term for cultural concept to another, 3) changes from one lexical innovation to another, and 4) instances of de-borrowing. Terms for cultural concepts refer to existing Igbo terms for concepts in the Igbo cosmology prior to the Christianization of the Igbo. Lexical innovations refer to words coined, mainly from existing Igbo words, and used to represent the Christian concepts under study. Except for cases where there are telling suggestions as to why the changes are made, the changes are not explained or justified. However, the outcome of the changes is pointed out where such is discernible.

6.1.1   From Cultural Concepts to New Lexical Creations and Borrowing

Focus here is on instances where an earlier translation represents an item in the Bible with an existing Igbo term for a cultural concept, but a later translation creates a new lexical item for the same referent. Such lexical innovations are done mainly by combining existing Igbo words to form new compounds. This form of change is illustrated using the IBTs' representations of *demon*, *Holy Spirit*, *priest*, *week*, *scripture*, *heaven* and *church*.

a. *Ekwensu* → *Mmụọ Ọjọọ* and *Ajọ Mmụọ* (Devil/Demon)

As noted in Chapter 5, the KJB uses the word *devil* for the Christian Supreme Evil Deity and for his messengers. However, the former is distinguished from the later by pre-modifying it with the definite article "the", a feature that is absent in references to his messengers. Thus, *the Devil* refers to the Supreme Evil Deity while *devil* refers to his messengers, otherwise called *demons.* Incidentally, both concepts are represented as *Ekwensu* in the IIB. As observed by Obiamalu (2013: 51), there are no definite and indefinite articles in Igbo which means that this feature cannot be used to distinguish the two concepts in Igbo as done in English. Thus, there are no linguistic markers to distinguish *Ekwensu* "the Devil" from *Ekwensu* "demon" in the IIB. The subsequent IBTs created new terms for *demon*, which distinguish the concept of *demon* from *the Devil.* The NIB represents this concept as *ajo mo* (spelt *ajọ mmụọ* in Standard Igbo), the UIBN and UIB use *mọ ọjọ* (spelt *mmụọ ọjọọ* in Standard Igbo) while the ILB, ICB, IRE and INWT all use *mmụọ ọjọọ*. *Ajọ mmụọ* is formed from *ajọ* "bad" and *mmụọ* "spirit". Here, *mmụọ* (n.) is the head and is pre-modified by *ajọ* (adj.). Similarly, *mmụọ ọjọọ* is formed from *mmụọ* "spirit" and *ọjọọ* "bad". In this compound, *mmụọ* is the head while *ọjọọ* (adj.) post-modifies it. In effect, both *ajọ mmụọ* and *mmụọ ọjọọ* mean "evil spirit". The significance of these innovations is that they clearly distinguish the Christian concept of the Supreme Evil Deity from the demons and give the Igbo terms new significations. The unanimity of all the subsequent translations in representing *demon* with new terms, each of which has been used in at least two IBTs makes the neologisms no more nonce words. Both terms have also spread into Igbo as the Igbo expressions for *demon.*

b. *Tsuku Abiama* → *Mmụọ Nsọ* (Holy Spirit)

The concept of *Holy Spirit* is represented in the IIB as *Tsuku Abiama*[102]. Incidentally, the IIB represents *God* as *Tsuku* (spelt *Chukwu* in Standard Igbo)*. Chukwu* was the name of the

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[102] Reconstructing the etymology of *Abiama* has posed some challenges to scholars. A popular interpretation of the name is that it is formed from *abịa* "when one comes (close)" *ama* "one knows", i.e., "the one that one

deity of the Arochukwu people that was appropriated by the missionaries as the name for the Christian God. Interestingly, according to Nwoga (1984: 60), *Chukwu Abiama* means "'[t]he Great Deity of the Strangers', a very apt description for the Great Deity touted by the Aro from Aro Chukwu in their itinerant colonizing mission throughout Igboland and beyond". In other words, both terms refer to the same entity, and with the appropriation of *Chukwu* as a term for the Christian God, both *Chukwu* and *Chukwu Abiama* are today used in Igbo to refer to the Christian God. So, to distinguish the *Holy Spirit* from *God*, the NIB created a calque for the former – *Mọ (Nsọ)* (spelt *Mmụọ Nsọ* in Standard Igbo). This compound was formed from *mmụọ* "spirit" and *nsọ* "holy". The NIB puts *nsọ* in brackets apparently because the usage was novel at the time and not yet understood among Igbo Christians. All the subsequent IBTs use the same compound word but without the brackets, which is an indication that the innovation is now understood by Igbo speakers and has been integrated into the language. So, in creating the Igbo equivalent of *Holy Spirit*, the IBTs done after the IIB expanded the Igbo lexicon with a new term and lexically distinguished the *Holy Spirit* from *God.*

c. *Izu → Izu Ụbọchị Asaa/ Izu Ụka* (Week)

The concept of *week*, a cycle of seven days in English and in the Bible, is represented differently in the IBTs (Table 6.1). For instance, the IIB, NIB, UIBN and INWT translate it as *izu*, originally meaning "four-day week". While the UIB uses *izu ụbọchị asaa* "seven-day week", the ILB, ICB and IRE use *izu ụka* "church week".

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knows better when one comes close to him/it". Another popular interpretation is that it is a form of *obiọma*, a compound formed from *obi* "heart" and *ọma* "good", i.e., "good or kind heart". These interpretations are anachronistic impositions of qualities of the Christian God on *Chukwu*, the Arochukwu deity. A more convincing etymology is seen in Nwoga (1984). According to Nwoga (1984: 60), in some Igbo dialects, "strangers or visitors are called *abịa* or *obịa*. With the suffix – *mi* as a pluralizing element *Chukwu Abịama* then becomes 'The Great Deity of the Strangers', a very apt description for the Great Deity touted by the Arọ from Arọ Chukwu in their itinerant colonizing mission through Igboland and beyond".

Table 6. 1. The representations of *week* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *Week*	Meaning
IIB	*Izu*	Four-day week
NIB	*Izu*	Four-day week
UIBN	*Izu*	Four-day week
UIB	*Izu ụbọchị asaa*	Seven-day week
ILB	*Izu ụka*	Church week
ICB	*Izu ụka*	Church week
IRE	*Izu ụka*	Church week
INWT	*Izu*	Four-day week

Izu is the Igbo traditional week, which is a cycle of four days. In other words, the use of *izu* to also represent a seven-day cycle does not distinguish the traditional four-day cycle from the Biblical seven-day cycle. Thus, the use of *izu ụbọchị asaa* "seven-day week" in the UIB and *izu ụka* "church week" in the ILB, ICB and IRE distinguish the Igbo traditional four-day cycle from the Biblical seven-day cycle. The UIB's *izu ụbọchị asaa* clearly indicates that this cycle is different from the traditional four-day cycle. On its part, *izu ụka* shows that this cycle is Christian. Goodchild (2003: 154) explains that the term *ụka* "talk" was used to refer to Christians as discussers or talkers. As explained in Chapter 5, the non-Christians apparently used the word derogatorily to refer to the Christians that would gather and talk instead of going to the farm to work. Incidentally, *izu ụka* has been in use outside the Bible before it was first used for *week* in the ICB. For one, it has an entry in Welmers and Welmers (1968: 159) with the specific meaning of "seven-day week":

> izu   week (traditionally four-day market cycle or seven-day period): izu ụka   (specifically seven-day) "week". izu gara aga   "last week"; izu ọzọ   "next week"

Williamson (1972: 189) also has an entry for *izu ụka* with the same meaning:

> izu   week
>
> izu afịa   market week of 4 days
>
> izu ụka   week of 7 days (i.e. of church or mission)

Williamson's (1972) entry emphasizes two points: 1) *izu ụka* is associated with the church or mission, and 2) there is another compound that clearly marks out the traditional Igbo

week – *izu afịa.* The introduction of the seven-day cycle by the Christian missionaries and the creation of the term *izu ụka* apparently necessitated the need to clarify the traditional market week from the church one, giving rise to the compound *izu afịa*, literally "market week". Although the UIB uses *izu ụbọchị asaa*, the compound did not spread beyond the UIB. Rather, *izu ụka*, which was created and spread outside the Bible, restricted the spread of *izu ụbọchị asaa* into popular speech, which earned it entries in Igbo dictionaries. Consequently, the ILB, ICB and IRE adopted it to represent *week*. For clarity, the ILB, ICB and IRE did not create the compound *izu ụka.* They only adopted a compound that had already become popular among Igbo speakers.

d. *Akukwo → Akwụkwọ Nsọ* (Scripture)

The IIB represents *scripture* as *akukwo* "book" (spelt *akwụkwọ* in Standard Igbo) while the subsequent translations all use *akwụkwọ nsọ* "holy book". The significance of this change is that *akwụkwọ* is rather too broad, as it could also be used to refer to books as well as leaves (of plants) and does not capture the religious associations and sacredness of *scripture.* The compound *akwụkwọ nsọ* lexically distinguishes *scripture* from other kinds of books. This lexical innovation has spread into Igbo as the Standard Igbo word for scripture.

e. *Uri → Abụọma* (Psalm)

The IIB translates *psalm* as *uri* "song". This word could be used to refer to any song. Therefore, its use in the IIB as the equivalent of *psalm* gives it a religious signification. However, all the subsequent IBTs use the compound *abụọma*, formed by combining *abụ* "song" and *ọma* "good". Literally, *abụọma* means "good song". As observed in Section 4.1.1.4, the Bible translators used Igbo words for "good" as linguistic markers of holiness, i.e., they modified some terms with *ọma* and *ezi*, both adjectives meaning "good", to show that the referent is holy or sacred. Thus, in *abụọma*, the IBTs lexically distinguish *psalm*

from other non-religious or sacred songs. This lexical innovation has spread into Igbo, especially among Igbo Christians, as the Igbo term for *psalm*.

f. *Igwe → Eluigwe* (Heaven)

The IIB represents the concept of *heaven* using *igwe*, the Igbo word for sky. As observed in Chapter 5, the idea of a place where good people go to at death to be rewarded for their good deeds was foreign to the Igbo cosmology. It was introduced to the Igbo by the Christian missionaries. The appropriation of *igwe* as the equivalent for *heaven* expanded the meaning of the word to embrace both the physical location (sky) and the spiritual location (heaven). However, all subsequent IBTs after the IIB represent *heaven* using *eluigwe*, a compound formed from *elu* "up/above" and *igwe* "sky". This lexical creation not only adds a new lexical item into the Igbo language, but also distinguishes the physical location from the spiritual one. Interestingly, both *igwe* and *eluigwe* have spread into Igbo as terms for *heaven*, but while *igwe* is used for both sky and heaven, *eluigwe* is used only to refer to heaven and not to sky.

g. *Ekwensu → Setan* (Satan)

Unlike the examples analysed above where the terms for cultural concepts appropriated by the IIB were replaced in the subsequent translations with new lexical innovations, the representations of *Satan* in the IBTs feature an instance where a term for a cultural concept is replaced with a loanword. For the concept of *Satan*, the IIB uses the Igbo cultural concept *Ekwensu*, but the NIB, UIBN, UIB, IRE and INWT all represent the concept as *Setan*, a graphologically indigenized form of *Satan*. As noted in Chapter 5, *Ekwensu* was already used for the *Devil* by all the IBTs. Incidentally, though the *Devil* and *Satan* are seen in Christianity as having the same referent, the English source texts maintain both terms, *Devil* and *Satan*. The decision to replace the IIB *Ekwensu* with *Setan* was apparently meant

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to maintain the different concepts that go with each of the terms, which might be lost if the same word *Ekwensu* is used for both terms.

h. *Ezuko/Otu/ Nzukọ → Ndị Chọọchị/Ụlọ Chọọchị* (Church)

In this example, the term for a cultural concept is replaced with a hybrid compound. The concept of *church* is represented as *ezuko* "congregation" in the IIB, *otu* "society" in the NIB and *nzukọ* "association" in the UIBN and UIB. In the KJB, *church* is used to refer to a gathering of Christian faithful as well as the building where they gather for their religious activities. The choices of terms by the IIB, NIB, UIB and UIBN do not clarify this distinction between the gathering and the place of gathering, which apparently informed the decision to borrow the English word in the ILB. The ILB combines the loanword *church* (graphologically indigenized as *chọọchị*) with *ndị* "people" and *ụlọ* "house", which resulted in the hybrid compounds *ndị chọọchị* "church people" and *ụlọ chọọchị* "church house". This way, the ILB choices, on the one hand, lexically distinguish a church (gathering of Christian faithful) from other gatherings of people, a distinction not made in the earlier translations, i.e. the IIB, NIB, UIBN and UIB. On the other hand, the ILB innovations clarify whether the referent is to the building or to the people.

6.1.2   From One Term for a Cultural Concept to Another

This section focuses on instances of change where a term for a cultural concept in an earlier translation is replaced in later translations with a term for another cultural concept. Concepts that feature such a change include: *parable*, *witness*, *sin* and *perdition*.

a. *Ilu* → *Akụkọ* (Parable)

Apart from the ICB, all the IBTs represent the concept of *parable* as *ilu* "proverb". The ICB represents it as *akụkọ* "stories" instead. These Igbo cultural concepts require expatiation. In Welmers and Welmers (1968: 97), *ilu* is defined as "proverb (not necessarily a well-known saying, but language full of metaphor, symbol, allusion)." This definition suggests that the closest equivalent for *ilu* in English is *proverb*. However, it cautions that "proverb" here does not have to be a well-known saying, which insinuates that a proverb is expected to be a well-known saying. The Igbo *ilu* is basically language full of metaphor, symbol and allusion. That is, an *ilu* is not necessarily a story, but a speaker might tell a story with an *ilu*. However, in Williamson (1972: 181), *ilu* is defined as "parable; proverb; riddle." Igwe (1999: 256) also has "parable" as the first entry for *ilu*: "parable; proverb; riddle; saying; figure of speech". Echeruo (1998: 72) however does not include "parable" in his definition: "proverb; wise saying; riddle". What these dictionary entries suggest is that although "parable" is one of the meanings of *ilu*, this meaning is probably not a standard or widely accepted one. The entries also suggest that although *ilu* is now understood as also meaning parable (Williamson 1972; Igwe 1999), this understanding is probably being questioned (Echeruo 1998). Emenanjo (2012) seems to inadvertently support the second position. For one, the book's title, *Atụtụ inu na akpata ọnụ Igbuzo – Igbuzo proverbial and idiomatic expressions*, indicates that *inu* (a dialectal form of *ilu*) means proverb. Secondly, his presentation of the "characteristic features of proverbs" has it that proverbs "are special phraseological units always sentential in structure" with "set forms" and "equally fixed collocations", and "are more poetic than prosaic" (Emenanjo 2012: 3-4). These are not structural features of a "parable", defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "[a] simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Jesus in the Gospels". In other words, the understanding of *ilu* as *parable* is a result of the semantic expansion of *ilu* in its use in the IBTs as the equivalent of *parable.* However, the ICB (and perhaps Echeruo 1998) seems to question this use and would rather use a secular word *akụkọ* in a religious sense, which in itself is an act of elaboration. Whatever the case may be, it appears the ICB is

fighting a lost battle as *ilu* is not only used in the Bible as *parable*, the use is also featured in dictionaries indicating that the usage has spread into Igbo.

b. *Arogode → Ama → Akaebe* **(Witness)**

Another example of a term for a cultural concept that is replaced in subsequent translations with a term for another cultural concept is seen in the choices made for *witness*: *arogode* (IIB), *ama* (NIB, UIBN, UIB, IRE) and *akaebe* (ILB, ICB, INWT). The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *witness* as "a person who sees an event happening, especially a crime or an accident". The IIB choice *aragode* seems to be an archaic word that is no longer in use, for it does not have any entry in any of the dictionaries nor does any of the informants know what it means. Alternatively, perhaps its spelling is so different from its pronunciation that its meaning could not be deciphered. Welmers and Welmers (1968: 100) define *ama* as:

> testimony: i̤gba ama   "testify";   a ga m agbara gi̤ ezi ama   "I'll give you a good recommendation"

For Williamson (1972: 38), *ama* means

> witness; secret divulged (e.g. if a person is planning to kill me on a certain day and a friend happens to know of this and tells me beforehand, this information is ama); information; testimony: Ndi afe ojii na-akwadebe ijide Chinwe ma ndi enyi ya agbagolu ya ama   The police were going to arrest Chinwe but her friends have warned her of this.

Echeruo's (1998: 22) definition is similar to Williamson's: "[1]information; intelligence; [2]informant". For Igwe (1999: 61), *ama* means:

> An unauthorized disclosure of secret, giving away information without due authorization; secret or open warning about a danger; warning, admonition, premonition; tale-bearing; witnessing (religious, especially to Christian gospel)

The picture that emerges from these different definitions is that *ama* is associated with revealing some secret. However, its use in the Bible has extended its meaning to include "testimony" and "witness". Igwe's (1999) definition emphasizes that the understanding of *ama* as *witness* is a Christian interpretation, which implies that such understanding may not be seen outside Christian contexts. Despite the fact that the semantic extension of *ama*, in religious contexts at least, has gained acceptance to be included in the dictionary, later Bible translations like the ILB, ICB and INWT seem to have some reservations with the choice and use *akaebe* instead, a word defined in Williamson (1972: 18) as:

A. witness; surety: Ọ bụ onye aka ebe m   He is my witness

B. pledge: Ka ife a nọdụ n'aka ebe   Let this (thing) stand as a pledge

In Echeruo (1998: 14), *akaebe* is defined as "testimony; witness". For Igwe (1999: 38), it means "(a) witness; evidence; pledge; deposit; guarantee; surety; (b) one who stands as a witness, alibi". What emerges from these definitions is that *akaebe* is the Igbo cultural equivalent for *witness*. Thus, the ILC, ICB and INWT's replacement of *ama* with *akaebe* might be seen as a corrective move, aimed at rectifying the perceived mistake of the earlier translations in using *ama* for *witness.* The IRE retained *ama* apparently because it has functioned as the Igbo equivalent for *witness* for more than a century and the semantic extension has been integrated into the language. The effect of these choices, of retaining *ama* as the equivalent for *witness* by the IRE and replacing it with *akaebe* by the ILB, ICB and INWT, is that *ama* now co-functions with *akaebe* as equivalents for *witness* in the IBTs, a position *ama* had held without contest till the recent translations were made. In other words, both words now function as equivalents for *witness* in the religious sense.

c. *Njọ* → *Mmehie* (Sin)

For the concept of *sin*, the IIB, NIB and ICB use *njọ* while the UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT use *mmehie*. As highlighted in the preceding chapter (see Section 5.3.3B), the use of both words involved the semantic extension of their original meanings to now accommodate a religious meaning as *sin*. In other words, the semantic extension of *njọ* occurred first with

its use in the IIB and NIB before the UIBN introduced *mmehie* and subsequent translations further popularized its usage. Interestingly, *njọ* was the first to have a dictionary entry as *sin* in Williamson (1972: 310): "evil; badness; wickedness; sin". Williamson (1972) has no entry for *mmehie*. This is apparently because *mmehie* had not been used in the IBTs as the equivalent for *sin* when Williamson's (1972) dictionary was published. However, both words now have entries as meaning *sin* in later dictionaries: *njọ* (Echeruo 1998: 107; Igwe 1999: 483) and *mmehie* (Echeruo 1998: 100; Igwe 1999: 438). Thus, the use of *mmehie* in later IBTs has introduced a synonym for *njọ* with both words functioning interchangeably as the Igbo equivalents of *sin* depending on the denomination of the language user and the Bible translation they use*.*

d. *Mbibi* → *Ịla-n'Iyi/ Ọdịda* (Perdition)

For the concept of *perdition*, the NIB and INWT use *mbibi*, the UIBN, UIB, ILB and IRE use *ịla-n'iyì*, while the ICB uses *ọdịda.* These different choices reflect the interpretation of *perdition* by the different Christian institutions. *Perdition* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "a state of punishment that goes on forever, believed in some religions to be suffered by evil people after death". The IIB's and INWT's choice *mbibi* is defined in Echeruo (1998: 93) as "the ruin or destruction of something; spoiling of (e.g. food)". *Mbibi* has a more elaborate definition in Igwe (1999: 388): "act or process of spoiling, destroying, impairing, marring, ruining; impairment; destruction; ruin; devastation; disaster; thing or person that spoils, destroys or ruins". These definitions are secular, with no reference to punishment that goes on un-ending after death. In other words, *mbibi* is semantically extended to embrace a religious sense. On their part, *ịla-n'iyì* is a deverbal noun meaning "to-waste", while *ọdịda* refers to "falling" "collapsing" or "failing" (Echeruo 1998: 133; Igwe 1999: 641). Again, both expressions are secular and their use in the Bible gives them a religious signification. However, each of the words emphasizes a certain profile for *perdition*: while *mbibi* fronts destruction, *ịla-n'iyì* emphasizes wasting and *ọdịda* falling or failing. The later translations' choices not only contribute to expanding the Igbo lexicon, but

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also front a specific theological understanding of the fate of sinners after death. The Bible readers' understanding of *perdition* in Igbo is thus influenced by their denomination and the Bible version they read.

e. *Ezuko → Otu/ Nzukọ/ Ọgbakọ* (Church)

The IIB represents *church* as *ezuko* (spelt *nzukọ* in Standard Igbo) "congregation". The later translations translate it as *otu* "society" (NIB), *nzukọ* "congregation" (UIBN, UIB, ICB, IRE), *ọgbakọ* "congregation" (INWT). The NIB's *otu* presents *church* as an association and not just a gathering of people. The INWT uses a dialectal word for a gathering of people. The UIBN, UIB, ICB and IRE retained the IIB's term, with the Standard Igbo spelling. So, the IBTs are not all agreed on what term to represent *church* with. It should be noted that the *New World Translation of the Holy Scripture*, the source text for the INWT, has *congregation* and not *church*, in line with the theology of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. In the Society's *Insight on the Scriptures*, it is reported that

> [s]ome English versions use "church" in texts pertaining to the Christian congregation … [and] Since many persons think of church as a building for religious services rather than a congregation engaging in worship, the rendering "church" can be misleading (*Insights* 1988: 496).

That notwithstanding, the different terms used by the IBTs involve expanding the register of secular Igbo terms and giving them a religious signification. Incidentally, none of the terms used to represent *church* in the IBTs has an entry in the dictionary as meaning *church*. For instance, Welmers and Welmers' (1968) entry for *nzukọ* does not have *church* as part of the its meanings:

> nzukọ   a meeting, place of meeting: nzukọ anyị ga adị eci "Our meeting will be tomorrow." nzukọ ndi ocye   "council (lit. meeting of the elders)"   nzukọ ụzọ   "place where (more than two) paths or roads meet."

Williamson (1972: 334) also does not feature *church* as a meaning of *nzukọ*: "meeting; council". The same is seen in Echeruo (1998: 114):

[1]meeting; council or congregation - *nzukö Israel = congregation of Israel (Ex. 12: 17)*; [2]assembly or gathering

Although Echeruo (1998) alludes to a religious congregation, he does not overtly mention *church.* Igwe (1999: 544) also does not mention *church* in his definition of *nzukọ*: "meeting together; a meeting; congregation; assembly; council". However, Igwe (1999: 810) does list *church* in this definition of *ụlọ nzukọ*: "meeting room or house; assembly house; church; hall". In other words, Igwe's *ụlọ nzukọ* refers to the church as a building and not to the gathering or congregation. Similarly, none of the dictionaries listed *ọgbakọ* as an Igbo word for *church*. Thus, the use of *nzukọ and ọgbakọ* for *church* is yet to gain popularity outside Bible readings to be included in dictionaries.

These lexical innovations were apparently restricted from spreading beyond Bible readings by *ụlọ ụka* "church house", a term formed and spread outside the Bible. As highlighted in Section 6.1.1C, the Christians were called *ndị ụka* "talk people" or talkers, apparently in derision of their practice of gathering to talk (and not engage in farm work). Over time, *ụka* spread as the Igbo term for church and anything related to Christianity. Consequently, *ụka*, and not the terms used in the IBTs for *church*, has entries in dictionaries as the Igbo term for *church*. Welmers and Welmers (1968) not only list *ụlọ ụka* "church house" as an entry for *church* (p. 203), they also interpret *ịga ụka* as "go to church" (p. 64), thereby affirming that *ụka* means *church*. Williamson (1972) has no entry for *ụka*, but she does define *ụlọ ụka* as "church" (p. 535), obviously referring to the church building. Echeruo (1998: 165) defines *ụka* as "[1]congregation; church [...] [2]church service". Igwe (1999: 803) also defines *ụka* as "church; church service". In other words, *ụka* has successfully restricted the spread of *otu*, *nzukọ*, and *ọgbakọ* as the Igbo equivalent of *church*. A survey of terms used for *church* by Igbo speakers (see Section 7.2.2.3) also reinforces the fact that *ụlọ ụka* is used more than the Biblical innovations.

6.1.3   From One Lexical Innovation to Another

Changes analysed in this section involve instances where the lexical innovation of an earlier translation for a given concept is replaced with a new lexical innovation. This could be a case of different lexical items competing for adoption as standard. Examples of such changes are seen in the terms used to represent *temple*, *gospel*, *conversion* and *priest*.

a. ***Ulọ-Tsuku → Ụlọnsọ/Ụlọ Cineke/Ụlọ Ukwu Chineke/Ụlọ Nsọ Ukwu Chineke (Temple)***

Five distinct terms are used in the IBTs to represent the concept of *temple*, as seen in Table 6.2.

Table 6. 2. The representations of *temple* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *temple*	Meaning
KJB	*Temple*	Temple
IIB	*Ulọ-Tsuku*	Deity's house
NIB	*Ụlọnsọ*	Holy house
UIBN	*Ulọ Cineke*	God's house
UIB	*Ụlọ ukwu Chineke*	God's great house
ILB	*Ụlọ nsọ ukwu Chineke*	God's great holy house
ICB	*Ụlọnsọ*	Holy house
IRE	*Ụlọ ukwu Chineke*	God's great house
INWT	*Ụlọnsọ*	Holy house

Table 6.2 shows the different attempts at representing the sacredness of *temple*: as God's house, holy house, God's great house and God's great holy house. The IIB represents the concept as *ulọ-tsuku* "deity's house". *Tsuku* (*Chukwu* in Standard Igbo) is interpreted here as "deity" because, as expatiated in Section 5.3.1.1A, the IIB used the word for both the Supreme God and other gods. In other words, the IIB used the word to mean "deity", which

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could be the Supreme God or any other deity. The UIBN's replacement of *tsuku* with *Cineke* (*Chineke* in Standard Igbo) in *Ụlọ Cineke* "God's house" agrees with the decision to replace *tsuku* because of its negative associations with the Arochukwu deity (Goodchild 2003: 153). The UIB expands on this by adding *ukwu* "great" to the UIBN's compound, giving *ụlọ ukwu Cineke* "God's big or great house". It is not surprising that the IRE would retain the UIB's choice, being a revision of the UIB. On its part, *ụlọnsọ* "holy house", the NIB's coinage is retained in the ICB and INWT, while the ILB combines items from the UIB and NIB to give a new word, *ụlọ nsọ ukwu Chineke* "God's holy and big house". In summary, the IBTs done after the IIB did not retain the lexical innovation of the IIB. Firstly, they replace *Chukwu* with *Chineke* in line with the decision to use a term that would not be associated with the Arochukwu deity. Secondly, they adopt various techniques to indicate that a *temple* is a holy house, namely 1) associating the house with holiness (NIB, ILB, ICB), and 2) associating the house with God (UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE).

Incidentally, none of the coinages has an entry in the dictionary as meaning temple. Ironically, the IIB's coinage *ụlọ Cukwu* is listed in Welmers and Welmers (1968: 203) as one of the meanings of *church* – not *temple*! However, this is not repeated in later dictionaries, implying that the expression might not have spread further into the language. Despite the fact that the different choices compete and might all be understood as referring to a Christian sacred house, the NIB's choice of *ụlọnsọ* seems to be the popular one. This view is hinged on the fact that two of the four recent translations also use it, and the other two recent translations are not in agreement on their choices. The ILB's choice is quite long and requires more effort than the other choices. The IRE's choice is a repetition of the UIB of which it is a revision. The fact that the ICB and INWT both use the NIB's choice is an indication that *ụlọnsọ* is popular among Igbo Christians. Thus, although none of these coinages has a dictionary entry yet, *ụlọnsọ* has more prospects to emerge the standard word for *temple.* Alternatively, it might emerge a generic term for any sacred house, which explains its entry in the dictionary as *church.*

b. *Oku Omma → Oziọma* (Gospel)

The equivalents for *gospel* in the IBTs also exhibit changes from one lexical innovation to another: *oku omma* "good word" (IIB) and *oziọma* "good message" (NIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB, ICB, IRE, and INWT). The change is mainly from a general term to a specific one. The change also seems unanimously accepted by all the later translations after the IIB and so is the popular option. It is then not surprising that it is the option that has entries in dictionaries. Williamson (1972: 392) defines it as "the Gospel; good news, message". Echeruo (1998: 131) also has a similar definition: "the Gospel; the New Testament". So, though *oziọma* literally means "good news or message", it has acquired the religious meaning as gospel.

c. *Nwoga → Nrughali/ Nchịgharị/ Nchegharị* (Conversion)

Yet another example of a lexical creation changed or replaced with another lexical creation is seen in the deverbals used as equivalents for *conversion.* For this concept, the IIB uses *nwoga* "to change colour or form", the NIB uses *nrughalị* "to turn around", the UIBN, UIB and IRE use *nchịgharị* "herd around", and the ILB, ICB and INWT *nchegharị* "think again"*.* The IIB's choice does not seem to appeal to later translations as none of them retained it. The same goes for the NIB's *nrughalị*. However, the UIBN's *nchịgharị* that was retained by the UIB and IRE is not retained by the ILB, ICB and INWT who prefer *nchegharị*. Interestingly, none of these seems to have emerged the standard. Of them all, only *nchegharị* has a dictionary entry and here it is defined as "thinking again, thinking over again; re-thinking; repenting; repentance; regretting, regret" (Igwe 1999: 457). In other words, the IBTs' polysemous use of *nchegharị* for repentance and conversion did not spread beyond Bible readings. Rather, only its use for repentance did spread, resulting in its inclusion in Igwe (1999). Furthermore, a different deverbal *ntụgharị* is entered in Echeruo (1998: 197) for *conversion.* Echeruo (1998) apparently refers to the secular meaning of "conversion" and not to the religious one. Although *nchịgharị* and *nchegharị*

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are used for *conversion* by more than one IBT, the fact that they do not have any dictionary entry suggests that their usage in this sense is restricted to Bible readings. That is, the different words elaborated via Bible translations are yet to evolve a standard for *conversion*.

d. *Onye Nchụaja/Onye Ụkọchukwu* (Priest)

The NIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT represent the concept of *priest* as *onye nchụ aja* "a person who performs sacrifices". This choice of term identifies a priest by one of his main functions, which is to offer sacrifices. However, the ICB represents the concept as *onye Ụkọchukwu* "God's emissary". *Ụkọchukwu* is a compound formed from *ụkọ* "emissary" and *Chukwu* "God". The ICB's choice identifies a priest as God's representative and not as a person who offers sacrifices. *Ụkọchukwu* does not restrict the duties of a priest to performing sacrifices.

It should be noted that *Ụkọchukwu* was not created and used first in the ICB. The compound had been in use outside the IBTs for Christian clergy. Its use is widespread that it has an entry in Williamson (1972) and Echeruo (1998). Williamson (1972: 529) defines it as "[m]inister in holy orders; pastor; deacon; priest, etc. (lit. messenger of God)". So, the ICB only adopted a term that was formed and spread outside the Bible. Besides, *Ụkọchukwu* seems to be more popular than *onye nchụ aja* for Christian priests. In sum, both terms are used in Bible reading for priest. However, *Ụkọchukwu* seems to have more spread outside Bible reading, especially in references to Christian clergy.

6.1.4 De-borrowing

De-borrowing refers to a process where lexical borrowings, i.e. loanwords, used in an earlier translation are dropped and replaced with other expressions. It would have been

expected that the borrowed items have spread and been integrated into the language. Dropping borrowed words and replacing them with localized equivalents show how strong the need to indigenize the Biblical message was at the time of translation. It also accentuates the contribution to language elaboration and innovation made by Bible translation. This is especially because most de-borrowed items are replaced with new lexical creations and terms for cultural concepts taken from the indigenous Igbo context. Focus here is predominantly on the status of the items used to replace the de-borrowed words. The de-borrowed lexical items are replaced by new lexical creations and existing terms for cultural concepts.

6.1.4.1   De-borrowed Items Replaced with New Lexical Creations

The new lexical creations used to replace de-borrowed words in later translations are mainly compounds formed by joining existing Igbo words to create new words with meanings different from the meanings of the individual words joined. Replacing the borrowed items with words created from existing Igbo words is a way of indigenizing the concepts and making them more Igbo, as against the loanwords that make the referents appear foreign. De-borrowed terms that were replaced with new lexical creations include *angel*, *baptism*, *gentile*, *rabbi* and *camel*.

a. *Angeli* ➔ *Mmụọ Ozi/ Mmụọọma* **(Angel)**

The concept of *angel* is represented as *angeli* (*onye ozi*) in the IIB. Here, the IIB adopted two techniques in representing this concept in Igbo. On the one hand, it borrowed the English word *angel*, with some graphological integration to reflect the Igbo sound system. On the other hand, it created a new compound from existing Igbo words, namely *onye* "person" and *ozi* "message", resulting in the compound *onye ozi* "messenger". Having the innovated Igbo compound in brackets presents the compound as an explanation of the loanword to enable the Igbo readers understand the loanword. It could also be an attempt at using an

Igbo term to connect the concept of *angel* to concepts in the Igbo culture. In this case, leaving the compound in brackets was a way of introducing a new term, somewhat tentatively, with the goal of teaching the Igbo Christians the sense in which it is used until that sense is understood. The compound *onye ozi* gives the impression that an *angel* is human. However, six of the subsequent translations (NIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT), replace it with *mmụọ ozi* (lit. spirit messenger), while the ICB prefers *mmụọọma* "good spirit". Both coinages emphasize that an *angel* is a spirit, but while *mmụọọma* fronts the goodness of the spirit in contrast to *mmụọ ọjọọ* "evil spirits" (devils or demons), *mmụọ ozi* accentuates that the spirit delivers message (apparently for God). More importantly, these coinages indigenize the concept and reduce its appearance as a foreign concept.

b. *Baptism* → *Mmirichukwu* (Baptism)

The word *baptism* is borrowed in the IIB. However, the ICB and IRE use the compound *mmirichukwu* instead. Coined from the words *mmiri* "water" and *Chukwu* "God", *mmirichukwu* literally means "God's water". Again, this coinage predates the ICB and IRE in that it has entries in Echeruo (1998: 100, 184) as the equivalent for *baptism*. In other words, the compound was formed outside the IBTs produced before the ICB and IRE, and only got adopted by these because of its widespread usage. Thus, adopting the compound is a form of indigenizing the concept by further spreading the Igbo form as against the loanword.

c. *Jentail* → *Mba Ọzọ* (Gentile)

The IIB represents the concept of *gentile* as *ohan* (*ohu*) "slave", while the NIB chooses to borrow the term, represented as *jentail*. Here, the NIB indigenizes the loanword by replacing the letter *g* with *j*, and *i* with *ai* as well as deleting the silent *e* at the end of the word. However, all the subsequent translations replace the borrowed item with *mba ọzọ*

"other community". It could be said that the NIB's choice of borrowing was predicated on the connotations of "slave" in that a gentile is a non-Jew and not necessarily a slave. Although the NIB attempts indigenizing the borrowed item, the subsequent IBTs prefer the compound *mba ọzọ*, perhaps because it is a stronger form of indigenizing the concept. Here, the referent is to a metaphorical "other" community, the otherness defined by the fact that the community practices a different religion. This innovated compound is thus given not only specificity but also a religious sense.

d. *Rabai → Onye ozizi and Onye Nkuzi* (Rabbi)

The NIB, UIBN, UIB, IRE and INWT all borrowed *rabbi* as *rabai*, indicating some attempt at indigenizing the loanword. Here, *rabai* features the elision of one *b* and the change of *i* to *ai.* However, the ILB uses the compound *onye ozizi* while the ICB uses *onye nkuzi*, both words meaning "teacher". These compounds existed in the language prior to the publication of the ILB and ICB. Their use in these IBTs, on the one hand, gives existing Igbo terms a religious signification, and, on the other hand, further integrates the concept in Igbo by using terms already existing in the language.

e. *Kamel → Inyịnyaibu* (Camel)

Yet another de-borrowed item replaced with a coinage is *camel*, borrowed in the IIB, NIB, UIBN, UIB and INWT. Apart from the UIB that maintains the English spelling, the other translations replace the *c* with *k*. The ICB and IRE however, represent this concept with the compounds *inyịnyaibu*, coined from *inyịnya* "horse" and *ibu* "load or burden", literally meaning "horse that carries loads". Although a horse is different from a camel, the translators appropriated an existing concept familiar to the Igbo. The qualification *ibu* is meant to distinguish this type of horse from the normal horse. All the same, though this coinage has an entry in the dictionary, the interpretation given is not specifically *camel*:

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"ass; beast of burden" (Echeruo 1998: 76). In other words, *ịnyịnyaibu* presents the image of a beast of burden of which camel is a member. The act of de-borrowing the loanword is a form of elaboration in that it further indigenizes the concept of *camel*.

6.1.4.2   De-borrowed Items Replaced with Terms for Cultural Concepts

This section analyses changes where a word that is borrowed in an earlier translation is replaced in later translations with an existing term for a cultural concept. Concepts that feature such changes include *Jehovah*, *Satan*, *farthing* and *pound.*

a.   *Jehova* ➔ *Chineke* (Jehovah)

Jehovah is borrowed as *Jehova* in the UIB, ILB, IRE and INWT[103]. The loanword features the omission of the letter *h* in order to reflect the Igbo spelling system. However, the ICB replaces *Jehova* with *Chineke.* As highlighted in Section 5.3.1.1A, *Chineke* is an appropriation of *chi na eke* "*chi* and *eke*", a duality that is presented as a singular entity with a different meaning of "God that creates". The ICB apparently replaces the loanword with *Chineke* because both lexical items – *Jehova* and *Chineke* – refer to the same entity, i.e., the Christian God. Thus, rather than represent the same entity with the term for a cultural concept and a borrowed item, the ICB opts for a uniform representation. This also implies a complete indigenization of the concept, rather than use a loanword that reminds the Christian faithful of the foreignness of the concept.

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[103] The word does not appear in the New Testament of the King James Bible, and so the IIB, NIB and UIBN do not feature it

b. *Setan → Ekwensu* (Satan)

The IIB represents the concept of *Satan* as *Ekwensu*, the same term used by all the IBTs for the *Devil.* In contrast to the IIB, the NIB, UIBN, and UIB borrow the item as *Setan*. However. the ILB and ICB de-borrowed *Satan* and replaced it with the cultural concept *Ekwensu*. The de-borrowing and replacement of *Satan* with an existing Igbo concept is a reflection of the belief that *Satan* and *the Devil* refer to the same Christian concept and so both terms are represented with the same word *Ekwensu*. It also further indigenizes the concept of *Satan* by using the term for an Igbo concept.

c. *Farthing → Ụgwọ/ Anịnị/ Mkpụrụ Ego* (Farthing)

The concept of *farthing* also features an instance where a cultural concept used by an earlier IBT is replaced with a direct lexical borrowing by some later translations, and the borrowed item is de-borrowed by subsequent ones. Table 6.2 shows the evolution of the concept among the IBTs.

Table 6. 3. The representations of *farthing* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *Farthing*	Meaning
IIB	*Wantikiri mkpụrụ ego*	A very little coin
NIB	*Nkpulu-ego*	Coin
UIBN	*Fadin*	Loanword
UIB	*Farthing*	Loanword
ILB	*Ụgwọ*	Debt
ICB	*Ụgwọ*	Debt
IRE	*Anịnị*	A quarter of a penny
INWT	*Mkpụrụ ego*	Coin

Here, the IIB represents *farthing* as *wantikiri mkpụrụ ego* "a very little coin" and the NIB uses *nkpulu-ego* (*mkpụrụ ego* in Standard Igbo) "coin". However, the UIBN uses *fadin*, an

indigenized form of *farthing*, while UIB retains the English spelling as *farthing*. The IBTs done after the UIB all de-borrowed *farthing* and replaced it with terms for existing Igbo cultural concepts: the ILB and ICB use *ụgwọ* "debt", the IRE uses *anịnị* "a quarter of a penny" and the INWT uses *mkpụrụ ego* "a coin". It should be noted that the word *farthing* is not used at all in the English Living Bible. For instance, in Matt. 5: 26 where the KJB has

47. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost **farthing**

the Living Bible has this instead:

48. for you will stay there until you have paid the last **penny**

Here, it is seen that the Living Bible uses *penny* and not *farthing*, and thus the ILB had *penny* as the source text word and not *farthing.* Whatever the case may be, the different cultural concepts emphasize different meanings: coin, very little coin, and debt. Of these, *anịnị* appears to be the one with an exact referent to a *farthing*, for, as one of the informants[104] stated, *anịnị* was a popular coinage among Igbo speakers for a quarter of a penny. It should be noted that Nigeria was using the same currency as Britain – pounds, shillings and pence – until January 1, 1973. So, there were local coinages for certain currency denominations. Perhaps because of the change of currency to Naira and Kobo, the ILB, ICB and INWT avoided using the same old currency, and would rather prefer some other cultural equivalent. Thus, these IBTs use the closest equivalents available, like *mkpụrụ ego*, which emphasizes the smallest available unit of currency, and *ụgwọ*, which emphasizes what the money is apparently meant for, i.e., to repay a debt.

The IRE's use of *anịnị* is significant in the sense that *anịnị* may be seen as indigenous unlike *farthing* that is English. These different choices made significant elaborations of the language because they further indigenized the concepts by using local terms.

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[104] Male, aged 64.

d. *Pound → Naira/Akpa Nnu/ Mkpọ/ Mma* **(Pound)**

Pound has two meanings in the KJB: 1) unit of measuring weight, and 2) currency. In the IBTs, both usages feature instances of de-borrowed lexical items replaced with terms for cultural concepts, as seen in Table 6.4.

Table 6. 4. The representations of *pound* in the IBTs

Bibles	*Pound* as Currency	Meaning	*Pound* as Unit of Measurement	Meaning
IIB	--	--	--	--
NIB	*Mina*	Loanword	*Litra*	Loanword
UIBN	*Poun*	Loanword	*Poun*	Loanword
UIB	*Pound*	Loanword	*Pound*	Loanword
ILB	*Naira*	Nigerian currency	*Akpa nnu*	Bag of salt
ICB	*Pam*	Loanword	*Mkpọ, mma*	Container, measurement
IRE	*Naira*	Nigerian currency	*Pound*	Loanword
INWT	*Maịna*	Loanword	*Paụnd*	Loanword

As currency, the NIB borrowed the term *mina*, while the UIBN and UIB borrowed *pound.* However, the ILB and IRE replace these borrowed items with *naira*. As mentioned earlier, Nigeria was using the British pound as currency up till January 1, 1973 when the British currency was replaced with the Nigerian naira. Consequently, the ILB and IRE de-borrowed the now foreign currency and replaced it with the Nigerian currency. This is significant because generations of Igbo speakers born after the change of currency are familiar with the new currency and not with the colonial currency.

Similarly, as a unit of measurement, pound is represented in the NIB as *litra*, and in the UIBN and UIB as *poun* and *pound* respectively, all instances of direct lexical borrowing. However, the ILB de-borrowed these and replaced them with *akpa nnu* "bag of salt" (Exodus 25: 39), while the ICB uses *mkpọ* "container" (John 12: 3) and *mma* "measure" (Nehemiah. 7: 71). These cultural concepts are familiar to the Igbo speakers who apparently conceptualize units of measurements in terms of the cultural concepts used.

Another significance of these de-borrowings is that they clarify the potential ambiguity that could result from using the same word *pound* as currency and as a unit of measurement. The non-perceptive Bible reader might not recognize the difference, which would then lead to some misunderstanding of the passage. However, the Igbo cultural concepts make this distinction clear, as *naira* is a currency and not a unit of measurement. On their part, the cultural concepts used as units of measurements cannot be confused with currency.

6.2   Changes in Spelling

This section is concerned with instances where a lexical item used to represent a concept by an earlier IBT is retained in subsequent IBTs. However, the later translations do not retain the spellings used by the earlier translations. Some of these changes apply to Igbo words and these include capitalized words that are decapitalized, and hyphenated compounds that are de-hyphenated and made open or closed compounds. Other changes in spelling apply to loanwords and reflect the different processes of indigenizing such words to reflect the Igbo grapho-phonological system, e.g., additions, omissions and replacements of graphemes.

6.2.1 Capitalization and De-capitalization of Proper Nouns

In Igbo, as it is in English, the general rule is that proper nouns are capitalized. However, the IBTs feature instances where a proper noun is not capitalized by earlier translations and later translations capitalize the said proper noun, as well as instances where a proper noun is capitalized by earlier translations and later ones de-capitalize the said noun.

An example of a proper noun that should be capitalized but is not in some of the IBTs is *Ekwensu*, used to represent the Christian *Devil*. As highlighted in Chapter 5, *Ekwensu* is the name of an Igbo heroic and trickster deity appropriated and used for the Christian *Devil*. Thus, being a personal name, it is expected that the name should be capitalized.

Consequently, the name is capitalized in the IIB, NIB, and INWT. However, the UIBN, UIB, ILB, ICB, and IRE de-capitalize the name. Such decapitalizations are apparently meant to graphologically reduce the value of the character that bears the name. Although Opata's (2005) linguistic and anthropological report on this deity shows that it did not have negative associations in the Igbo cosmology, the ICB describes the name this way:

> This name means a wrongful accuser, a liar, whose work is to lead people into sin. The translation of the name in Hebrew is ekwensu, [...] The bearer of this name is the person held guilty for all the things he did in the works of God and of Christ [...] Defeating him is the last indication of God's final victory. (Footnote c, p. 1495, my translation)

The ICB's description of this deity is not the pre-Christian Igbo conceptualization of the deity, but a description of the attributes of the Christian Devil. However, the ICB gives the impression that these attributes were associated with *Ekwensu* in the Igbo worldview before the arrival of the missionaries to Igboland. This apparently informs the choice of decapitalizing the name to make it a diminutive, aimed at showing that the character does not deserve to be revered.

Other examples feature proper nouns that are not capitalized in earlier IBTs but some later IBTs capitalize the terms. One example is *Akwụkwọ Nsọ*, used in the IBTS to represent *scriptures.* Although the literal meaning of the compound, holy book, is a common noun, its use in the IBTs has a specific referent, thereby making it a proper noun. Besides, the referent is a sacred object in Christianity. The IIB, NIB, UIBN, UIB, ILB and IRE do not capitalize the compound, but the ICB and INWT capitalize it. The decision to capitalize it is apparently to clarify that it is a proper noun and to give it an outlook of importance and sacredness.

A similar instance is seen in *Nwa Atụrụ Chineke*, the equivalent for *Lamb of God*. This too refers to a specific entity and is thus a proper noun. The IIB, NIB and ILB do not capitalize the term, but the UIB, ICB, IRE and INWT capitalize it, thereby giving it prominence and accentuating its sacredness. In effect, although there are established rules guiding the capitalization of proper nouns, the IBTs use this feature – capitalization – to make ideological statements.

6.2.2 Hyphenation and De-hyphenation of Compounds

Hyphenation of compounds is the process of separating the words that constitute a compound word with hyphens, e.g. *elu-igwe*, formed by combining *elu* "up" and *igwe* "sky", literally "above the sky" (heaven). Non-hyphenated compounds could be written as single words, e.g., *alaeze*, a combination of *ala* "land" and *eze* "king", literally "the king's land" (kingdom), or left open, e.g., *nkịta ọhịa*, a combination of *nkịta* "dog" and *ọhịa* "bush", meaning "bush or wild dog" (fox). Compounds written as single words are called closed compounds while those that are left open are called open compounds.

The lexical items in the corpus feature instances where a compound is hyphenated by earlier translations, but later translations de-hyphenate the compound, i.e. remove the hyphens in the compound, and represent it as open or closed. This contributes to the elaboration process because Igbo had not yet evolved a standard dialect and spelling system when most of the IBTs were done or, at least, when the projects were begun (c.f. Chapter 3). So, the choices of the IBTs reflect the current spelling norms or are conscious steps taken to evolve a stable written Igbo standard.

From the corpus, translations done by the missionaries, viz, the IIB, NIB, UIBN, and UIB, generally hyphenated compound words. On the contrary, the translations done by native Igbo agents, i.e. the ILB, ICB, IRE and INWT, de-hyphenated the compounds. These de-hyphenated compounds were either closed or left open. Table 6.5 presents hyphenated compounds that are de-hyphenated and closed.

Table 6. 5. Hyphenated compounds de-hyphenated and closed

Concept	Hyphenated compound	IBTs that used them	Closed compound	IBTs that used them
Heaven	*Elu-igwe*	NIB, UIBN, UIB	*Eluigwe*	ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Kingdom	*Ala-eze*	NIB, UIBN, UIB	*Alaeze*	ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Apostle	*Onye-ozi*	NIB, UIBN, UIB	*Onyeozi*	ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Priest	*Onye-nchụ-aja*	NIB, UIBN, UIB	*Onye nchụaja*	ILB, IRE, INWT
Gospel	*Ozi-ọma*	NIB, UIBN	*Oziọma*	ICB, IRE
Hell	*Ọkụ-mọ*	NIB, UIBN	*Ọkụmmụọ*	ICB
Beast	*Anụ-ọhịa*	NIB, UIBN, UIB	*Anụọhịa*	ICB

| Tabernacle | *Ụlọ-ikwu* | UIB | *Ụlọikwu* | ICB, INWT |

Conversely, Table 6.6 presents hyphenated compounds that are de-hyphenated and left open.

Table 6. 6. Hyphenated compounds de-hyphenated and made open

Concept	Hyphenated compounds	IBTs that used them	Open compounds	IBTs that used them
Sabbath	*Ụbọchị -izu-ike*	UIBN, UIB	*Ụbọchị izu ike*	ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Beast	*Anụ-ọhịa*	NIB, UIBN, UIB	*Anụ ọhịa*	ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Fox	*Nkịta-ọhịa*	UIBN, UIB	*Nkịta ọhịa*	ILB, IRE, INWT
Angel	*Mo-ozi*	NIB, UIBN, UIB	*Mmụọ ozi*	ILB, IRE, INWT
Prophet	*Onye-amụma*	UIBN, UIB	*Onye amụma*	ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Gospel	*Ozi-ọma*	NIB, UIBN	*Ozi ọma*	UIB, ILB, INWT
Synagogue	*Ụlọ-nzukọ*	NIB, UIBN, UIB	*Ụlọ nzukọ*	ICB, IRE, INWT

Tables 6.5 and 6.6 show that the hyphenated compounds are found in the IBTs done during the missionary era while the de-hyphenated compounds are seen in the IBTs done during the native Igbo period. This indicates that the native Igbo do not favour hyphenation of compound words. However, the IBTs by the native Igbo are divided on whether the de-hyphenated compounds should be left open or closed. The compounds that are closed in all the four translations done by native Igbo seem to be compounds that, with use over time, have been fully integrated into the Igbo lexicon such that users are hardly conscious of their underlying components. However, it appears the IBTs by native Igbo are not all agreed on the status of some of these compounds, which explains the divided representations as closed or open. These choices in the IBTs by native Igbo agents suggest that there is no agreement yet on the standard norm for compounds, whether to have them open or closed. The clear practice is that the current literary standard Igbo does not favour hyphenating compounds. In other words, the IBTs are a site for showcasing the current spelling norms in the language.

6.2.3 Direct Lexical Borrowings Indigenized through Spelling

Section 6.1.4 is concerned with instances of de-borrowing where lexical items borrowed in an earlier IBT are replaced with existing Igbo words or new words created from existing Igbo words. In this section, focus is on direct lexical borrowings that are not de-borrowed. However, the subsequent IBTs make some spelling changes to the retained loanwords. Incidentally, these borrowed words are not written in the English orthography, rather they undergo several indigenization processes intended to adapt them to the Igbo linguistic system. As noted by Ogbonna (2001: 75),

> [o]ften, the degree to which a copied word is modified seems to depend more on social, cultural and historical factors than on purely linguistic ones. Thus, copied words with partial modification to the copying language may be used by educated speakers to show that they have a knowledge of the copied language. This is usually true if the copied language is prestigious.

In other words, there are various levels or degrees to which a borrowed word can be indigenized, and the level of education acquired by the language user often determines or influences how much of the phonological features of the donor language is retained in the borrowed word. Perhaps this explains the different levels of indigenization reflected in the Bible translations. Many of the borrowed words, though written in the Igbo orthography, retain features of the English phonology. Such features include consonant clusters, as seen in the following indigenized forms of "mustard":

49. Mustard: mu**st**ardi (IIB), mọ**st**ad (UIBN, ICB, INWT), mu**st**ard (UIB, IRE).

Another feature of the English phonology transferred into the Igbo translations is seen in words ending with closed syllables as showcased in Table 6.7:

Table 6. 7. Indigenized Loanwords that end with closed syllables

English word	Indigenized Igbo forms	IBTs that used them
Mustard	*Mọstad*	UIBN, ICB, INWT
Table	*Tebil*	NIB
	Tebel	UIBN
	Tebụl	INWT

Baptism	*baptisim*	IIB, UIBN, UIB
	nbaptisim	NIB
	baptizim	ILB, INWT
Hyssop	*Hisop*	NIB, UIBN, IRE, INWT
	hissop	ICB
Pound (currency)	*Poun*	UIBN
	pam	ICB
Pound (unit of measurement)	*Poun*	UIBN
	paụnd	INWT

All the borrowed words in Table 6.7 have gone through some form of indigenization, yet they end with consonant sounds unlike the system in Igbo where words generally end with vowel sounds. That notwithstanding, the IBTs exhibited several forms of grapho-phonological indigenization of borrowed words, namely additions of graphemes or epenthesis, omissions of graphemes or haplography and replacements/substitution of graphemes.

6.2.3.1 Grapheme Addition or Epenthesis

Epenthesis involves inserting a letter or sound within a word. Hall (2011: 1576) observes that the function of epenthesis in most cases is "to repair an input that does not meet a language's structural requirements". This is the case with the words borrowed in the IBTs, especially words that have structures that are not found in Igbo. For example, Igbo does not normally accommodate consonant clusters. So, it is normal for a vowel sound to be inserted in between consonant clusters as a way of Igbonizing the borrowed word. The following examples in Table 6.8 illustrate this.

Table 6. 8. Indigenized loanwords featuring vowel insertion between consonants

English word	Indigenized Igbo form	IBTs that used them
Mustard	*Mọsụtadị*	ILB
Table	*Tabịli*	IIB
	tebịl	NIB
	Tebel	UIBN
	tebụlụ	ILB, IRE

	tebul	INWT
Baptism	*Baptisim*	IIB, UIBN, UIB
	Nbaptisim	NIB
	baptizim	ILB, INWT

In Table 6.8, the letter *ụ* is inserted between *s* and *t* in *mustard*, the letters *i*, *e* and *ụ* between *b* and *l* in *table*, and *i* inserted between *s* and *m* in *baptism*. These vowel insertions make the borrowed lexical look more like Igbo words.

Furthermore, Igbo hardly features words that end with closed syllables, i.e., syllables that end with consonant sounds. Consequently, some of the loanwords that end with closed syllables are made open with the addition of vowel sounds. The examples in Table 6.9 illustrate this point:

Table 6. 9. Loanwords with closed syllables indigenized through epenthesis

English word	Indigenized Igbo form	IBTs that used them
Mustard	*Mustardi*	IIB
	mọsụtadi	ILB
Table	*Tabili*	IIB
	Tebụlụ	ILB, IRE
Talent	*Talenti*	IIB
Hyssop	*Hisọpụ*	ILB

In these examples, a vowel sound is added to the last syllables to make them open.

It should be emphasized that Igbo Bible readers may not necessarily feature such epenthesis in their pronunciation of the loanwords, especially since they are familiar with the words in English. Echoing Ogbonna (2001), Emenanjo (2015: 89) observes that epenthesis is featured mainly in the speech of non-compound Igbo-English bilinguals. In other words, the translators of the IBTs themselves may not feature these vowel additions in their speech. Thus, featuring the epenthetical forms in the IBTs emphasizes the desire to

indigenize the loanwords as much as possible so they can easily get integrated into the Igbo language.

6.2.3.2 Grapheme Omission or Haplography

Haplography involves the omission of a repeated letter or letters in writing. Like epenthesis, it is used in the IBTs to indigenize loanwords in order to make them reflect the Igbo spelling system. The Igbo orthography is phonemic and as such each grapheme represents a unique sound. Thus, the language hardly features words with repeated letters because such repeated letters would be redundant. Incidentally, some of the loanwords in the IBTs have such repeated letters, as seen in the examples in Table 6.10.

Table 6. 10. Indigenized loanwords featuring grapheme omission

English word	Indigenized Igbo form	IBTs that used them
Manna	*Mana*	UIBN, ILB, ICB, IRE, INWT
Hyssop	*Hisop*	NIB, UIBN, IRE, INWT
	Hisọpụ	ICB
Rabbi	*Rabai*	NIB, UIBN, UIB, IRE, INWT

In these examples, an *n* is dropped in *manna*, an *s* in *hyssop* and a *b* in *rabbi*. These dropped letters are redundant and so do not contribute anything to the meaning of the word in Igbo. They are dropped to reflect the Igbo spelling system.

6.2.3.3. Grapheme Substitution

Grapheme substitution refers to the replacement of a letter (and therefore a sound) with another letter. As mentioned above, Igbo orthography is phonemic and so there is a correspondence between the graphemes and the phonemes. Each letter of the Igbo

alphabet represents a specific sound, unlike English where a letter, say *c*, could be pronounced /k/ as in "camel" and /s/ as in "cement". Some of the loanwords in the research corpus feature letters that do not correspond to their pronunciation in the context. Thus, the IBTs replaced them with other letters that correspond to the pronunciations. The following words in Table 6.11 feature such replacements.

Table 6. 11. Indigenized loanwords featuring grapheme replacement

English word	Indigenized Igbo form	IBTs that used them
Camel	**K**amel	IIB, NIB, UIBN, INWT
Baptism	Bapti**z**im	ILB, INWT
Hyssop	H**i**sop	NIB, UIBN, IRE, INWT
	hisọpụ	ILB
	h**i**ssop	ICB
Rabbi	Rab**ai**	NIB, UIBN, UIB, IRE, INWT
Pound (unit of measurement)	Paụnd	INWT

In Table 6.11, the consonant *c* in *camel* is replaced with *k*, *s* in *baptism* replaced with *z*, and *y* in *hyssop* replaced with the vowel *i*. For *rabbi*, the vowel *i* is replaced with *ai*, and in *pound*, *ou* is replaced with *aụ.* These orthographic substitutions are phonemically-motivated and aim to make it easier to pronounce the words in Igbo the way they are spelt. Although many Igbo speakers would not have problems pronouncing the words in English, the IBTs' drive to indigenize the Bible may have motivated the changes.

This chapter has demonstrated that later translations of the Bible into Igbo are not passive translations, but translations made in reaction to the earlier ones. This reaction can be seen in the changes made by later translations to some of the lexical choices of earlier translations. On the one hand, the changes were made to correct the perceived shortcomings of the earlier translations. Such corrective changes were made: 1) where the earlier translations represent two distinct Christian concepts with the same lexical item and later translations mark the distinction between the two concepts by representing them with two different lexical items; 2) where the lexical choice of the earlier translations for a Christian concept also refers to a non-Christian concept, but the choice of the later

translations distinguish the Christian concept from the non-Christian one; 3) where the lexical item used in an older translation seems imprecise or misleading in its representation of a concept, and as such the later translations replace the misleading or imprecise term with a precise one. On the other hand, the changes or replacements are purely ideological, aimed at foregrounding the view of the translation institution regarding the interpretation of some theological terms. These corrective changes contribute to the elaboration of Igbo by introducing new lexical items in the language, and further enriching the lexicon of the language, and clarifying usages of terms for concepts.

Moreso, the later translations of the Bible into Igbo improve on the indigenization efforts of the earlier translations. This is seen especially in the lexical items that are de-borrowed and replaced with new lexical creations or with existing Igbo cultural equivalents. The borrowed items that are retained in the later translations are further indigenized by adjusting their spellings to reflect the Igbo spelling system, which in turn, being a phonemic spelling system, reflects how words are pronounced in Igbo. These indigenization efforts were part of the post-independence steps taken to evolve a distinct Igbo national identity. As such, they have a nationalistic ideological essence.

That said, the fact that many of the lexical innovations of the IBTs, especially those made during the missionary period (IIB, NIB, UIB and UIBN), now have dictionary entries shows that the words have been integrated into the Igbo language. The dictionaries apparently relied on the IBTs for their entries, or on the use of the innovated terms by Igbo Christians. In some cases, however, the dictionary entries reveal that the Biblical usages do not reflect the meanings of the words in the dictionaries. The IBTs representations of *conversion* is illustrative. A total of four different words were used by the IBTs to represent this concept, namely, *nwoga* (IIB), *nrughali* (NIB), *nchịgharị* (UIBN, UIB, IRE), and *nchegharị* (ILB, ICB, IRE). While the first two words might be seen as nonce since only one IBT used each of them, each of the last two neologisms have been adopted by three IBTs. Interestingly, three of the words do not have any dictionary entry, and *nchegharị*, the one with an entry in a dictionary, does not have *conversion* as one of its meanings. These words, especially *nchịgharị* and *nchegharị* that are used in more than one text, are undergoing a process of *competition for filtration* (Anchimbe 2006) before one of them emerges the standard Igbo

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word for *conversion*. Alternatively, a new word could emerge and displace these competing words.

This chapter has also shown that the later translations of the Bible into Igbo do not validate the retranslation hypothesis. The retranslation hypothesis holds that subsequent translations of a text tend to be closer to the source language than earlier translations. However, the analysis of the evolution of concepts in the IBTs indicates that, where the earlier translations represent the Biblical concepts with loanwords, the later translations represent the concepts with new lexical innovations created from existing Igbo words or adopted existing Igbo terms for cultural concepts. In cases where the subsequent translations retained the words borrowed in the earlier translations, they further indigenized the loanwords to reflect the Igbo spelling system. This suggests that the presentation of the retranslation hypothesis as a universal phenomenon is, perhaps, pre-mature as data from other societies, including the Igbo society, do not support the claim. The IBTs' non-validation of the retranslation hypothesis could be traced to the fact that the socio-political and historical factors that prompt translations differ:

> the languages involved have different levels of development and they face different degrees and forms of competition from neighbouring languages; the needs for the translations vary; the motivations and actual style of each translator differ; the methods of negotiating cultural concepts across various languages and cultures are diverse and the uses made of the translations themselves are numerous. (Oyali 2017b: 1)

In the case of the IBTs, the agents involved in the translations during the missionary era were mainly foreigners with limited proficiency in Igbo, while those that did the translations in the native Igbo era were Igbo native speakers. Besides, there was little study of Igbo during the missionary era, which meant that knowledge of Igbo grammar was limited. On the contrary, there were a lot of studies of Igbo language, religious practices and philosophies during the native Igbo period, and many of the translators were scholars with extensive research experience in Igbo linguistics, philosophies, religious views, and so on. Thus, the native Igbo have a deeper understanding of the Igbo language and culture, which

is seen in their translation choices. Being Igbo native speakers and involved in the nationalistic agenda of the post-independence period, these translators used the IBTs as a site for fronting an Igbo identity, with as little foreign outlook as possible. In effect, their translations are closer to the Igbo language more than the earlier translations which were closer to English.

As noted in the introductory section of this chapter, focus here has been on concepts whose representation in an earlier IBT was changed in later IBTs. This implies that the chapter does not investigate instances where all the IBTs were unanimous in their representation of concepts. Such instances include the representation of the *Devil* as *Ekwensu* (the name of an Igbo deity), *soul* as *mkpụrụobi* "the seed of the heart or chest", *concubine* as *iko nwaanyị* "female paramour", among others (c.f. Chapters 4 and 5). The unanimity indicates that the lexical innovations of the IIB, the earliest translation, were accepted by the subsequent translations, and their repeated use in the different IBTs have engendered their spread and integration into the Igbo language. Most studies of the effects or influence of Bible translations on the Igbo language place a lot of emphasis on the UIB (c.f. Achebe 1979, 1999; Nwadike 2005, Oyali 2018). Very little, if any, reference is made to Bible translations before the UIB and this is perhaps because the UIB is the first complete translation of the Old and New Testaments. This chapter has demonstrated that many of the lexical innovations in the UIB were first introduced by the IIB and NIB. As noted above, this chapter did not investigate lexical items that all the IBTs used unanimously. It follows that these lexical innovations were first introduced by the IIB and the subsequent translations adopted them. In other words, the IIB was seminal. Its choices of lexical items for concepts were the foundation on which the subsequent translations were built. As such, some of the credits given to the UIB should be extended to the IIB and NIB. Studies of Bible translations into Igbo should also include the contributions of these earlier translations.

CHAPTER 7

THE SPREAD OF THE BIBLICAL LEXICAL AND CONCEPTUAL INNOVATIONS AMONG IGBO SPEAKERS

The last three chapters dealt with the lexical processes adopted in the IBTs to create new terms (Chapter 4), the strategies adopted in representing Christian concepts in the IBTs (Chapter 5), and the evolution of the lexical and conceptual innovations across the different IBTs (Chapter 6). This chapter examines the spread of these Biblical lexical and conceptual innovations among Igbo speakers. It explores whether Igbo speakers are aware of these lexical and conceptual innovations and whether they understand and use them with the same meanings as in the Igbo Bibles. The next section presents the research question answered in this chapter as well as the research design adopted to answer them.

7.1   Research Question and Design

The research question answered in this chapter is: How have the Biblical lexical and conceptual innovations spread among Igbo speakers? This question raises some sub-questions: Are Igbo speakers aware of these innovations? Do they use them for the same concepts as used in the Igbo Bible translations? In cases where the term used for a concept in the Bible is not the one supplied by the Igbo speakers, with what term do they represent the concept? Is there a marked difference between terms supplied where a concept is described, and terms supplied where the English term is mentioned? Lastly, are there lexical forms peculiar to specific Christian denominations?

To answer the above questions, I administered a questionnaire to speakers of Igbo in Nsukka in Enugu State, Nigeria[105]. The questionnaire offers some insight into the background of the respondents, especially their religious background, denomination, age, and sex. The questionnaire approach would give the respondents' perceptions of their linguistic habits and not necessarily the actual linguistic practice. The pattern that emerges from the responses is not claimed here to be watertight. However, it shows an awareness of the existence and use of the expressions.

The choice of Nsukka to administer the questionnaires was because Nsukka is in the heart of Igboland. Secondly, being a cosmopolitan city, there are Igbo speakers from different dialect areas living there. Besides, the oldest and biggest (i.e. with the largest population) university in Igboland, i.e., the University of Nigeria, is in Nsukka. It is reputed to be the first indigenous university in Nigeria and has a long and vibrant history of Igbo Studies. So, Nsukka promised a population of Igbo speakers who are literate in Igbo and English. In addition to administering the questionnaire to members of the university community, I also administered it to Igbo speakers in some churches, mainly Catholic, Anglican, and Pentecostal Churches. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed, from which186 were returned. The criteria for selecting respondents were: 1) they must be of Igbo parentage, and 2) they must be able to speak Igbo. This way the respondents were people to whom Igbo is a mother tongue and who must have learnt or acquired Igbo at home. Figure 7.1 shows the distribution of the respondents according to their age range.

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[105] As mentioned in Chapter 1, Igbo is spoken as an indigenous language in seven out of the 36 States of Nigeria namely: Abia, Anambra, Delta, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo and Rivers States. It is the only indigenous language spoken in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States, while in Delta and Rivers states, Igbo is spoken alongside other Nigerian languages.
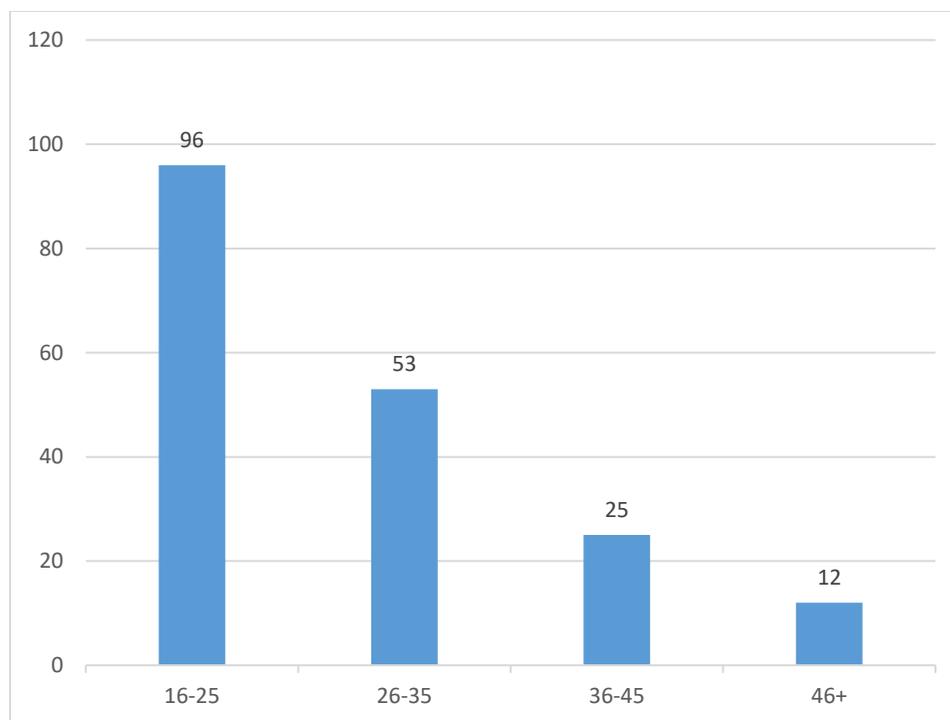
Figure 7. 1. Respondents according to age range

According to Figure 7.1, the youngest group is within 16-25 years. The choice of 16 years as the minimum age of respondents was influenced by the nature of the questionnaire which required some level of literacy in Igbo and English. Consequently, the questionnaire was administered to people with at least post-secondary education. What is more, 16 years is the minimum age at which a person can start post-secondary education in Nigeria. From Figure 7.1, majority of the respondents (52%) were within the range of 16-25 years while the respondents above 45 years registered the lowest number (6%). The age variable helps to establish whether the spread of the lexical and conceptual innovations is restricted to a given age range. Although the respondents that were above 45 years were few, their responses were similar to those supplied by the respondents within the other age ranges. In other words, the low numerical strength of respondents who were above 45 years does not invalidate the data or the findings from them.

Figure 7.2 graphically presents the distribution of the male and female respondents according to their respective age ranges.
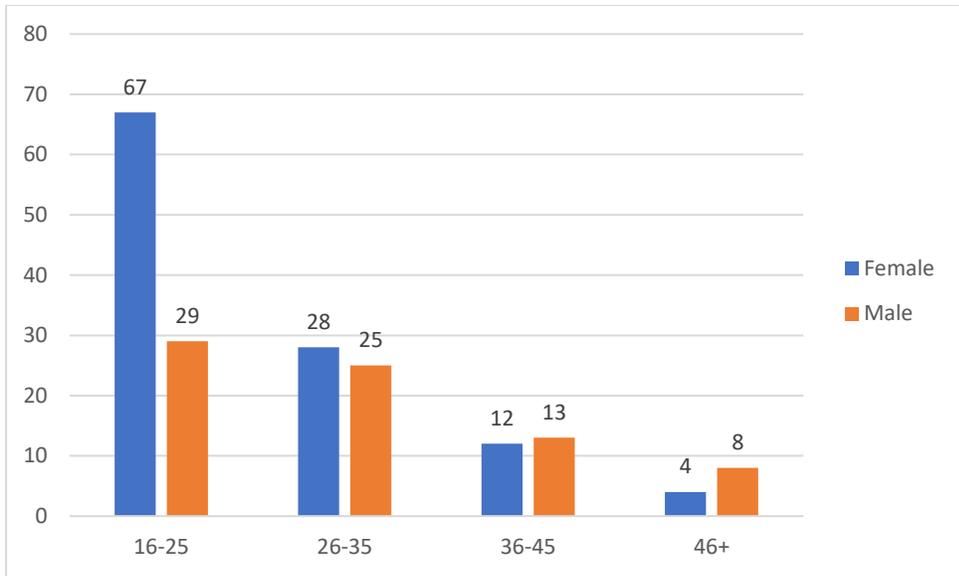
Figure 7. 2. Respondents according to sex and age range

From Figure 7.2, of the 186 respondents, 111 were female while 75 were male. Of the female respondents, 67 were within 16-25 years, 28 within 26-35 years, 12 within 36-45 years, and 4 were above 45. The male population has 29, 25, 13 and 8 persons in these categories respectively. Figure 7.2 shows that the difference between the male and female population is most visible in the 16-25 age range, where the female population is 67 compared to the male population which is 29. For the other age ranges, the difference is not much. The data analysis investigates whether the Biblical innovations spread more among a given gender and age range or not.

Figure 7.3 shows the distribution of the respondents according to the level at which they formally learnt or studied Igbo.
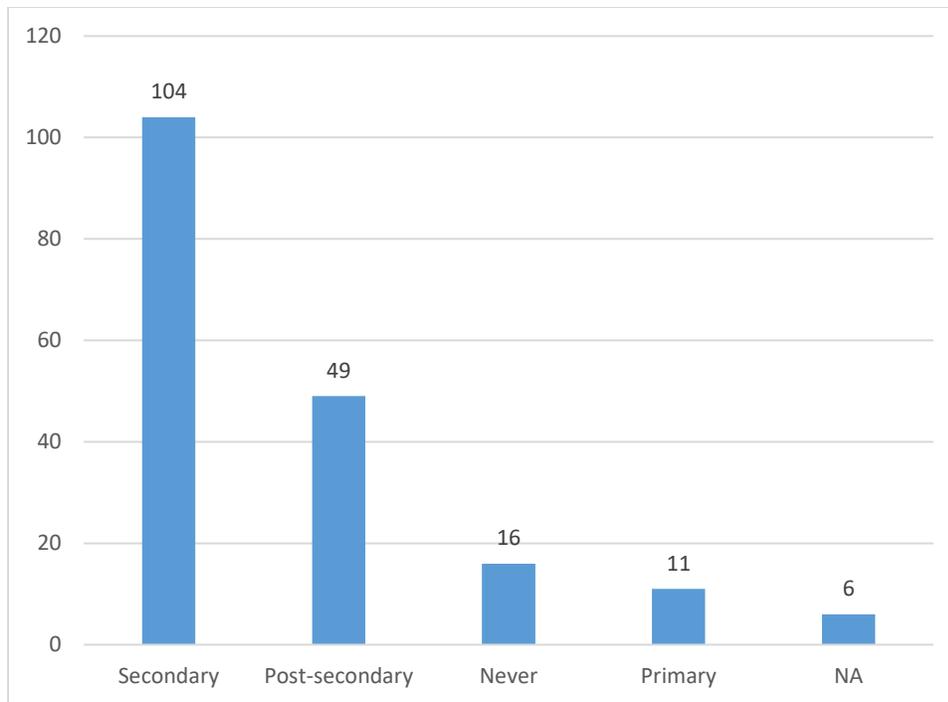
Figure 7. 3. Respondents according to highest level of learning or studying Igbo

Figure 7.3 shows that 104 of the respondents studied or learnt Igbo at the secondary school level, 49 at the post-secondary level, 16 never learnt or studied Igbo in a formal setting, 11 stopped at the primary school level and 6 respondents did not supply any response. This indicates that most of the respondents studied Igbo at the secondary school, followed by those that studied Igbo at the post-secondary level. In other words, their use of Igbo must have been greatly influenced by Standard Igbo, which is spread through the educational system.

Figure 7.4 presents the distribution of the respondents according to their age range and highest level at which they formally studied Igbo. From Figure 7.4, majority of the respondents across the four age ranges studied Igbo at the secondary school. This is followed by those that studied Igbo at the post-secondary level. The least numbers are seen among those who studied Igbo at the primary school level. In other words, most of the respondents across the different age ranges studied Igbo at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Thus, the influence of Standard Igbo learnt in the educational setting cuts

across the different age ranges. The responses to the questionnaire could then be said to be influenced by the formal educational setting.
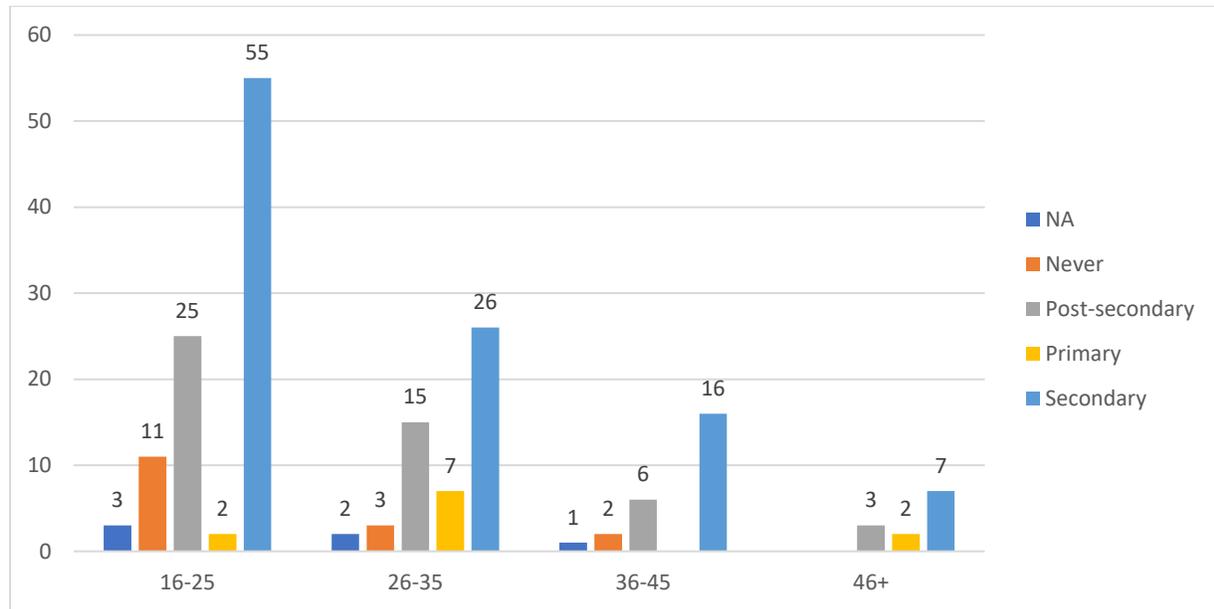
Figure 7. 4. Respondents' age range and highest level of learning or studying Igbo

Since this study focuses on the religious domain, the religious affiliation of the respondents is important. The choice of the lexical items and concepts investigated in this work could be influenced by the religion or the religious denomination of the speaker. Of the 186 respondents to the questionnaire, 184 said they are Christian, one respondent claimed Judaism and one did not specify his religion. Thus, the respondents could be said to be Christian, and their responses must have been influenced by their Christian faith. Figure 7.5 shows the distribution of the 184 Christians according to their denominations: 79 were Catholic, 62 Pentecostal and 32 Anglican. The Presbyterian Church and Jehovah's Witnesses have 3 respondents each and the Methodist Church, Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA), [Church of Jesus Christ of] Latter-Day Saints (LDS), Greek Orthodox and an unspecified Other denomination all have 1 respondent each. Interest here is on the possible influence of the denominations of the respondents on their understanding and use of the concepts and lexical items under study. From the distribution of respondents by their

denominations, the analysis is restricted to the Catholics, Pentecostals and Anglicans, as the other denominations do not have sufficient respondents to be included. Thus, these other denominations are collectively grouped as "Others" in the analysis.
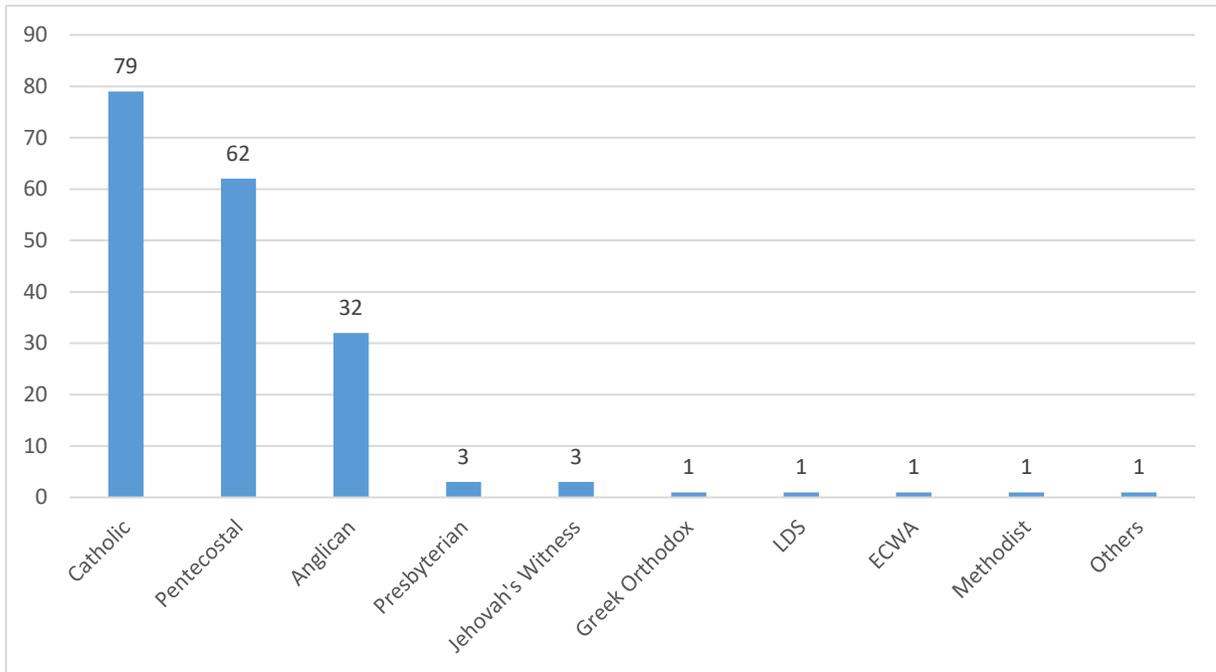
Figure 7. 5. Distribution of respondents according to denominations

Lastly, the respondents were also asked what kinds of texts they read in Igbo. Figure 7.6 graphically presents their response. Academic texts top the list followed by the Bible and fiction. This indicates that the respondents would have been exposed to Standard Igbo through the academic set texts as well as through fiction. They would also have been exposed to the Bible in Igbo. In other words, it is expected that their Igbo would be influenced by the school system and the church. It is interesting that, apart from those who stated that they read academic set texts, fiction and the Bible alone, the remaining respondents report that they read a combination of these with other materials, which goes to show the key place of these three materials in the respondents' lives and linguistic usages.
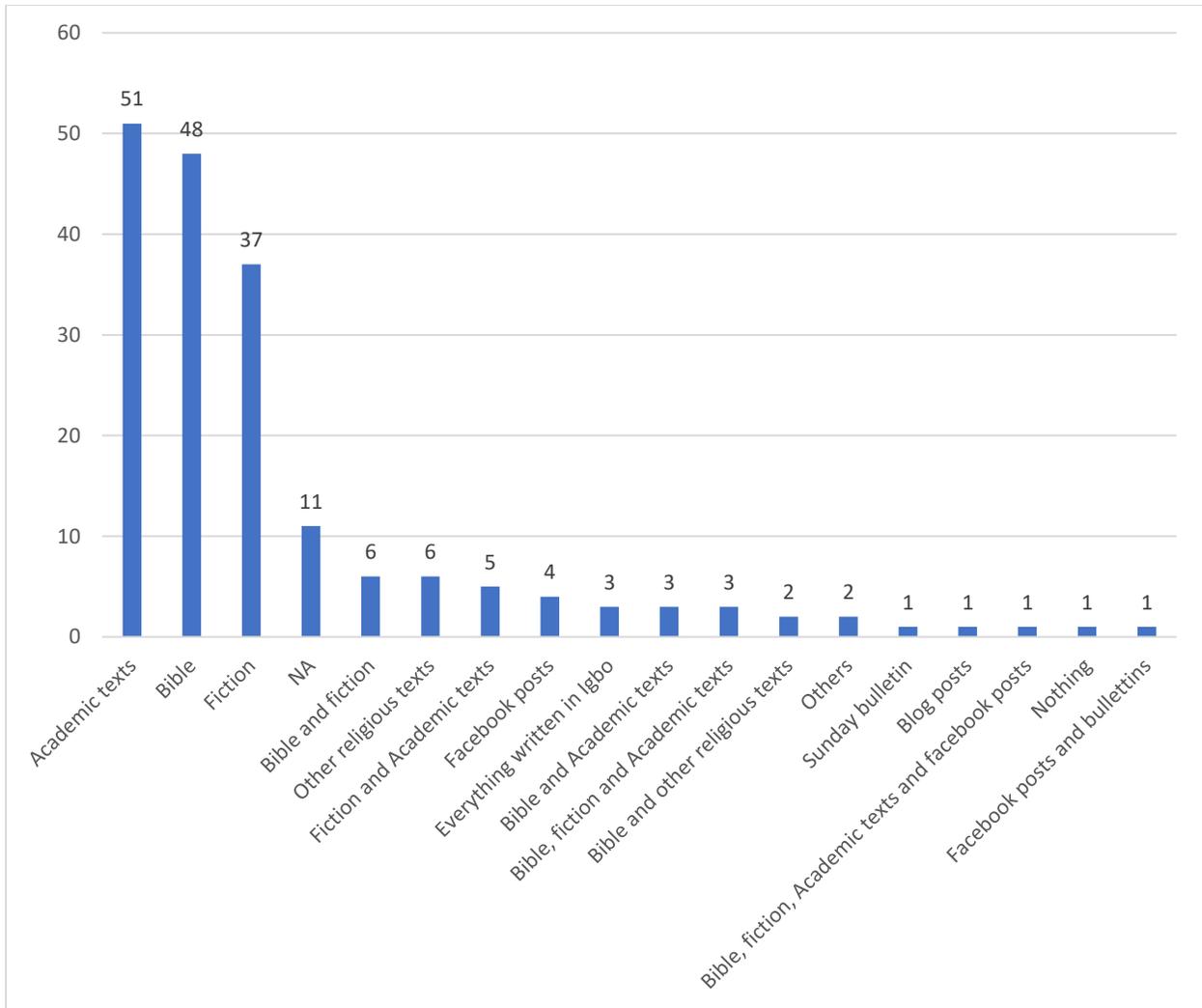
Figure 7. 6. Written materials read in Igbo

Apart from the questions on the background of the respondents, the questionnaire had two sets of open-ended questions. The first set described a concept, a situation or phenomenon, and then asked for how it is called in Igbo (c.f. section D of Appendix 1). The intention here was to avoid drawing attention to the terms used in the English translations of the Bible for which the respondents apparently have "standard" Igbo equivalents, mostly drawn from their use in the Bible. The idea is to see whether the respondents would, on their own, suggest the same terms used in the IBTs. Terms supplied from such descriptions of concepts are referred to here as "terms from descriptions" (TD). However, for the second set of questions, a list of some concepts in English was presented to respondents for which

they were expected to provide the Igbo equivalents (c.f. section E of Appendix 1). Terms supplied for this set are referred to here as "terms from translation" (TT). This is because the respondents would ordinarily supply the Igbo equivalent of the terms, generally drawn from the Igbo translations of the Bible. While the English terms show some religious (Christian) leaning, it is interesting to note that some of the responses do not replicate the exact terms used in the Bible. What is more, the English terms listed also included terms for some of the concepts described in the first set of questions in order to see whether the same terms would be repeated. The findings indicate some marked difference in the responses on some of the concepts. The next section espouses these in detail.

7.2   Data Analysis

For each question, the respondents were given the opportunity to supply more than one answer. The returned questionnaires have respondents supplying one or two answers. Each term supplied has a value of 1. The first items supplied are not given a higher value in the analysis than the second items. Rather, each item has equal strength. Responses got from the survey were entered into a Microsoft Excel sheet. These were then analysed using the Pivot Table to get the number of tokens of each unique term supplied for each concept as well as the distribution of the respondents who supplied the terms according to their age ranges and denominations. Focus is on terms with at least two tokens, i.e., terms mentioned by at least two respondents.

Furthermore, many of the lexical items supplied are derived from the same head word. In other words, the different lexical items present different attributes or qualities of the head word. For example, for *parable*, the word *akụkọ* "story" is used as the head word for many other words supplied like *akụkọ nkuzi* "didactic story", *akụkọ ntuzi aka* (also didactic story, but more specifically "directives"), *akụkọ akwụkwọ nsọ* "story [from/of] the holy book", etc. Another example, this time for the verb root *ke* "create"[106] or "share", is seen in these

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[106] Chapter 5 has demonstrated that the concept of *creation* (creating out of nothing) became a reality among the Igbo with the arrival of Christian missionaries.

words: *okike* "creation", *ike ihe ọhụrụ* "to create a new thing", *ikepụta* "to create [out]", *nkeghari* "re-creation", etc. So, in instances where a series of lexical items created from the same head word or root were supplied, the significance of the head word or root in the elaboration process is also highlighted.

Moreover, the respondents did not use the same spelling for the terms listed, since many of them are not proficient in written Igbo. Maintaining the respondents' spellings in the analysis would give more than one supposedly unique entry for what is essentially the same term. Hence, the different spellings are uniformized using the Standard Igbo spelling of the word in question. For example, *akaebe* and *aka ebe* are analysed as one term, i.e. *akaebe.* There are also instances where a borrowed item is, on the one hand, spelt in English, i.e., with no attempt at adjusting it graphologically to reflect the Igbo spelling system, and, on the other hand, spelt with some graphological adjustment. Since interest in this chapter is not on the spelling conventions but on the lexical items and their usages, these different spellings are seen as one unique item. Consequently, and for ease of analysis, the English spellings are maintained. The choice of the English spelling is hinged on the fact that the graphologically adjusted spellings are not conventionalized forms. So, entries like *curtain*, *kotin* and *kotini* are analysed as *curtain.*

Lastly, each concept and term in every language has a unique history. As Crystal (2006: 149) puts it, "[n]o two words have identical histories, and thus no two words have identical meanings and range of usage". Thus, the analysis of the lexical items and concepts in this chapter is determined by the significant forms and meanings identified in each case. The tables provide a literal meaning of the terms supplied by the respondents.

That said, I offer below an in-depth analysis of the survey results to provide answers to the research questions posed at the beginning of the chapter. The structure of the sections is determined by the last four sub-questions of the research question highlighted above, i.e., each section of the analysis provides answers to one of the four sub-questions. Answers to the first sub-question are implied in the analysis.

7.2.1 Innovations Spread with the Same Biblical Meaning

This section investigates instances where the lexical innovations in the Igbo Bibles are used by Igbo speakers for the same concepts as in the Bible. The implication is that the Biblical innovations have spread into the speech of the users of the language, cutting across age, gender, and denomination. There are also indications that these users further use the Biblical innovations creatively, which emphasizes that the innovations are now well integrated into the Igbo language. Concepts analysed in this section include *virgin*, *the Devil*, *kingdom,* and *curtain*

a. Virgin

The concept of *virgin* is represented variously in the IBTs as shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7. 1. The representations of *virgin* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *Virgin*	Meaning
IIB	*Obogo (obogobia)*	Maiden
NIB	*Nwa-agbo namaro nwoke*	A maiden who does not know a man
UIBN	*Nwa-agboghọ ahu nāmaghi nwoke*	That maiden who does not know a man
UIB	*Nwanyi nke akamaghị nwoke*	A woman who does not know a man yet
ILB	*Nwanyị na-amaghị nwoke*	A woman who does not know a man
ICB	*Nwaanyị na amaghị nwoke*	A woman who does not know a man
IRE	*Nwaanyị nke amabeghị nwoke*	A woman who does not know a man yet
INWT	*Nwa agboghọ na-amaghị nwoke*	A woman who does not know a man

In Table 7.1, the IIB represents *virgin* as *obogo* (spelt *agbọghọ* in Standard Igbo). This word is defined in Echeruo (1998: 11) as "maiden; woman usually in her late teens or early 20's". In other words, the use of *agbọghọ* in the IIB entails the semantic extension of the term for maiden to embrace a person who has not had sex. The other IBTs, however, add the phrase *na amaghị nwoke* "who does not know a man" or *amabeghị nwoke* "who does not know a man yet" to either *agbọghọ* "maiden" or *nwaanyị* "woman". These added phrases clarify

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that a virgin is a person who has not had sex, unlike *agbọghọ* that does not make such distinction.

In the questionnaire, the respondents were given this definition of *virgin*: "a person who has never had sex before". Table 7.2 presents the terms supplied by the respondents as the Igbo terms for *virgin*.

Table 7. 2. Igbo terms for *virgin* provided by the respondents

Terms for *Virgin*	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Nwaanyị amaghị nwoke	A woman who does not know a man	61	Yes (ICB)
Nwoke amaghị nwaanyị	A man who does not know a woman	45	No
Onye amaghị nwoke maọbụ nwaanyị	A person who does not know a woman or a man	34	No
Onye na-amaghị nwoke	A person who does not know a man	17	No
Onye na-akwabeghị iko	A person who has not yet had sex	10	No
Onye nsọ	Holy person	6	No
Virgin	Loanword	4	No
Onye na-emerubeghị onwe ya	A person who has not yet defiled themselves	4	No
Onye dị ọcha	A pure person	4	No
Onye na-emebeghị mmekọrịta nwoke na nwaanyị	A person who has not yet had the affair between men and women	3	No
Onye dị nsọ	A holy person	3	No
Onye na-amaghị nwaanyị	A person who does not know a woman	3	No
Nwa agbọghọ na-amaghị nwoke	A maiden who does not know a man	2	Yes (NIB, INWT)
Onye dị asọ	A holy person	2	No

The terms supplied in Table 7.2 present two conceptualizations of *virgin*. Some terms focus on the fact that the person has not had sex, sometimes presented euphemistically, e.g., *nwaanyị amaghị nwoke* "a woman who does not know a man", *nwoke amaghị nwaanyị* "a man who does not know a woman", *onye amaghị nwoke maọbụ nwaanyị* "a person who does not know a man or woman", *onye na-amaghị nwoke* "a person who does not know a

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man", *onye na-akwabeghị iko* "a person who has not yet had sex", *onye na-emebeghị mmekọrịta nwoke na nwaanyị* "a person who has not yet had the affair between men and women", *onye na-amaghị nwaanyị* "a person who does not know a woman", *nwa agbọghọ na-amaghị nwoke* "maiden who does not know a man". Other terms present a virgin as a holy person, e.g., *onye nsọ* "a holy person", *onye na-emerubeghị onwe ya* "a person who has not yet defiled themselves", *onye dị ọcha* "a pure person", and *onye dị nsọ* "a holy person". Of these terms, *nwaanyị amaghị nwoke* is the most used, being mentioned by 61 respondents (33%). *Nwoke amaghị nwaanyị* is the second most used term, with a value of 45 (24%). The third most used term for *virgin* is *onye amaghị nwoke maọbụ nwaanyị*, supplied by 34 respondents (18%). The first refers to female virgins, the second to male virgins and the third to both male and female virgins. This shows a consciousness that virginity involves both genders, a point that is expatiated shortly.

Meanwhile, from Table 7.2, only two of the terms mentioned by the respondents were used in the IBTs, namely *nwaanyị amaghị nwoke* (ICB) and *nwa agbọghọ na-amaghị nwoke* (NIB, INWT). The difference between both terms is that the former uses the general term *nwaanyị* "woman" while the latter uses *nwa agbọghọ* "maiden". However, of the 15 terms in Table 7.2, six were built around the verb root *ma* "know", i.e., the descriptive phrases contain the verb *ma* "to know" used euphemistically to mean "to have sex". In fact, the four terms mentioned most were formed with this verb. The point is that prior to the use of this verb in the NIB, it did not have the figurative meaning of "to have sex". It was given this meaning because the NIB transferred the euphemism from Genesis 4: 1 – "And Adam knew Eve his wife", into Igbo. The significance of this is that the semantic extension of *ma* in the IBTs to also mean "to have sex", first used in the NIB and retained by all the subsequent translations, has spread into the language and is now used as root to coin new terms with the same meaning. In other words, the euphemistic use of "to know" to mean "to have sex" has spread into Igbo through Bible translation. What is more, the use of the terms formed with this euphemism has spread across gender and age. Table 7.3 shows the distribution of respondents who supplied terms formed from this euphemistic use of *ma* according to age.

Table 7. 3. Age range of respondents who supplied *ma*-terms

Terms Supplied for *Virgin*	16-25	26-35	36-45	46+	Total
Nwaanyị amaghị nwoke	27	18	8	8	61
Nwoke amaghị nwaanyị	21	13	7	4	45
Onye amaghị nwoke maọbụ nwaanyị	24	7	3		34
Onye na-amaghị nwoke	13	3	1		17
Onye na-amaghị nwaanyị	1	2	-	-	3
Nwa agbọghọ na-amaghị nwoke	2	-	-	-	2

Table 7.3 shows that the respondents who supplied terms created from the semantic extension of *ma* cut across all the age ranges. Similarly, as shown in Table 7.4, the respondents also cut across different denominations.

Table 7. 4. Denominations of respondents who supplied *ma*-terms

Terms Supplied for *Virgin*	Anglican	Catholic	Others	Pentecostal	Total
Nwaanyị amaghị nwoke	12	25	6	18	61
Nwoke amaghị nwaanyị	10	18	6	11	45
Onye amaghị nwoke maọbụ nwaanyị	7	14	2	11	34
Onye na-amaghị nwoke	6	7	1	3	17
Onye na-amaghị nwaanyị	1	2	-	-	3
Nwa agbọghọ na-amaghị nwoke	-	-	1	1	2

As seen in Table 7.4, terms that feature the semantic extension of *ma* were supplied by members of the Catholic, Anglican, Pentecostal and Other churches. In other words, the lexical innovation occasioned by the IBTs' (especially those done after the IIB) representation of *virgin* has not only spread into Igbo, but it has also become the basis for further lexical innovations.

Furthermore, the Bible (including the IBTs) associates virginity with women only, i.e., references to virgins and virginity in the Bible are only to female virgins. There is no reference to male virgins in the Bible. However, the terms supplied for *virgin* by the

respondents are not restricted to female virgins. For instance, *nwoke amaghị nwaanyị* "a man who does not know a woman" and *onye na-amaghị nwaanyị* "a person who does not know a woman" refer to male virgins. Furthermore, the following terms also supplied by the respondents are gender-neutral: *onye amaghị nwoke maọbụ nwaanyị* "a person who does not know a man or woman", *onye na-akwabeghị iko* "a person who has not yet had sex", *onye na-emebeghị mmekọrịta nwoke na nwaanyị* "a person who has not yet had the affair between men and women", *onye nsọ* "a holy person", *onye na-emerubeghị onwe ya* "a person who has not yet defiled themselves", *onye dị ọcha* "a pure person", and *onye dị nsọ* "a holy person". So, while the IBTs semantically expanded the verb *ma* in reference to female virgins, Igbo speakers have further extended it to embrace male virgins. The term from the survey with the second highest recurrence value – *nwoke amaghị nwaanyị* – refers to male virgins. The fact that 45 respondents (24%) mentioned it indicates its widespread usage. The significance of this extension of the IBTs' use of *ma* by Igbo speakers to also refer to male virgins is heightened when it is recalled that there were existing Igbo terms for virgin prior to the translation of the Bible. Echeruo (1998: 269) identifies *okporo* and *oke okporo* (*oke* means "male") as the Igbo terms for female and male virgins respectively. As highlighted in Section 4.2A, the fact that Echeruo's (1998) *okporo* for female virgin is not pre-modified by any gender marker as is done for the male virgin with *oke* "male" suggests that virginity is associated more with the female gender. Interestingly, these terms were not mentioned in the survey. This shows that the IBTs' lexical innovation has spread into the language so much so that it seems to be gradually displacing *okporo* and *oke okporo* as the terms for virgin. In addition, many of the respondents supplied terms that refer to male virgins. This could suggest an increased gender balancing in references to virginity. Unlike *okporo* that gives the impression that virginity is, by default, a feature expected of women than of men whose term had to be pre-modified by *oke*, the terms supplied by the respondents to the questionnaire do not give such impression.

Lastly, some of the terms supplied in Table 7.2 also show that some Igbo consider virginity as a sign of holiness or purity. For instance, *onye na-emerubeghị onwe ya* "a person who has not yet defiled themselves" gives the impression that sex (outside marriage) is an act of defilement. Similarly, *onye nsọ* "holy person", *onye dị ọcha* "a pure person", *onye dị nsọ* "a

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person who is holy", and *onye dị aso* "a person who is holy" suggest that virgins are like *saints*. Interestingly, the term *onye nsọ* "holy person" is used in the IBTs for *saint*. So, the perception of virginity as a sign of holiness has resulted in the further semantic extension of the Biblical innovation *onye nsọ* among Igbo speakers to also refer to a virgin.

In all, the semantic extension of *ma* in the IBTs' representation of *virgin* has introduced an innovative euphemism for sex in Igbo. This euphemism has spread into Igbo and is the basis on which new terms are coined. Besides, unlike what obtained in the IBTs where virginity is used in references to women only, the terms supplied indicate a strong awareness that a virgin could be male or female and not just female.

b. The Devil

The concept of *the Devil* is represented uniformly as *Ekwensu* in all the IBTs. As highlighted in Section 5.3.1.1B, *Ekwensu* was an Igbo heroic and trickster deity, whose positive image was given a pejorative meaning in the IBTs where it is used to represent a negative concept, *the Devil.* To elicit the Igbo terms for this concept, the following description of *the Devil* was provided in the questionnaire: "(In Christian and Jewish belief) the supreme spirit of evil". Table 7.5 presents the terms supplied for this concept in the survey.

Table 7. 5. Igbo terms for *the Devil* supplied by the respondents

Terms for *the Devil*	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Ekwensu	Personal name	110	Yes (all the IBTs)
Ajọ mmụọ	Evil spirit	36	No
Mmụọ ọjọọ	Evil spirit	27	No
Mmụọ Ekwensu	Ekwensu's spirit	2	No
Nwa chi ọbụbọ	Son of dawn	2	No
Chukwu Mmụọ Nsọ	God the holy spirit	2	No
Eze mmụọ	King of spirits	2	No

Table 7.5 shows that the main word used by Igbo speakers for the Christian Devil is *Ekwensu*, supplied by 110 (60%) of the 186 respondents. This indicates that the IBTs

semantic extension of *Ekwensu*, the name for the Igbo heroic and trickster deity, has spread into Igbo as the word for the Christian *Devil*. Figure 7.7 presents the distribution of of the respondents who supplied *Ekwensu* for *the Devil* according to age and denomination.
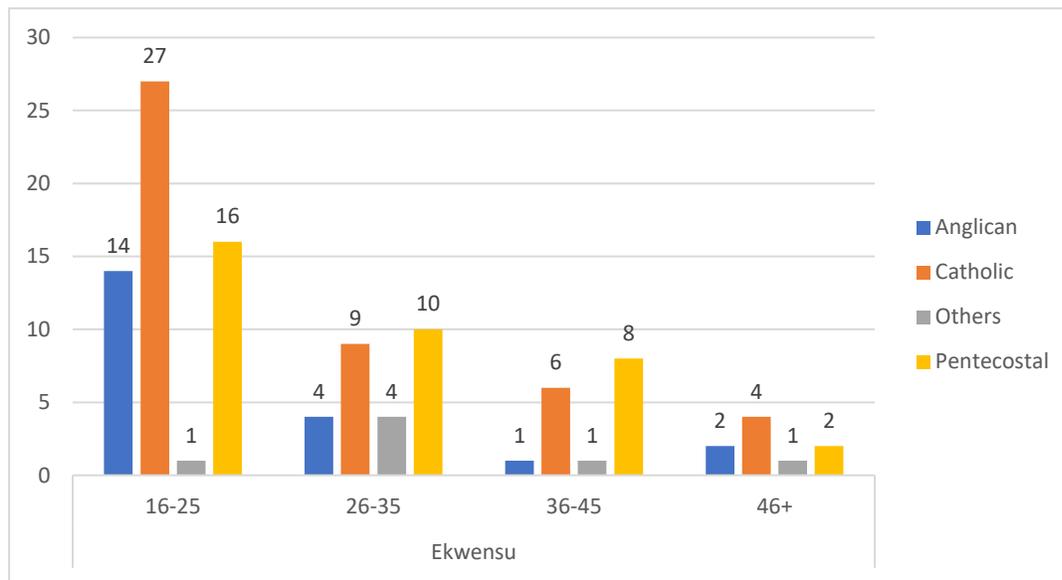
Figure 7. 7. Age and denomination of respondents who supplied *Ekwensu*

Figure 7.7 shows that the use of *Ekwensu* for the *Devil* cuts across age and denominations. From Figure 7.7, 58 respondents (53%) were within 16-25. 27 (25%) were within the 26-35 age range. 16 (15%) fell within 36-45, while 9 respondents (8%) were above 45 years. On the respondents' denominations, 42% were Catholic, 33% Pentecostal, 19% Anglican and 6% Others. These figures indicate that the use of *Ekwensu* for the Christian Devil is not restricted to a specific age group or denomination but has spread across different ages and denominations.

The other terms with high tokens in Table 7.5 are *ajọ mmụọ* "evil spirit" and *mmụọ ọjọọ* "evil spirit", with 36 and 27 tokens respectively. Both terms are used in the IBTs for the concept of *demon* (see Section 5.3.1.1C). In other words, the terms used in the IBTs for

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demon are also used for *the Devil*. However, their low tokens in comparison with *Ekwensu* show that their use outside the IBTs to refer to the Christian Supreme Evil deity is minimal.

The last four terms in Table 7.5 do not appear in the IBTs. *Mmụọ Ekwensu* refers to the spirit of *Ekwensu* and not to the deity itself. *Nwa chi ọbụbọ* "child of dawn" clearly refers to *Lucifer*, analysed in Section 5.3.1.1B. These respondents obviously use this term because of the Christian belief that *Lucifer* is the same entity as the *Devil*. Supplying *Chukwu Mmụọ Nsọ* "God the Holy Spirit" in this context is curious because the *Holy Spirit* is perceived in Christianity as a good spirit. *Eze mmụọ* is the Igbo term for the chief priest of a deity. The low tokens of these last four terms suggest that they do not have widespread usage as terms for the Christian *Devil*. In fact, *Chukwu Mmụọ Nsọ* might be interpreted as given in error.

In conclusion, *Ekwensu* has spread as the Igbo term for *the Devil*. The spread is not restricted to any age range or denominations. The semantic extension of the original meaning of the word has spread so much so that the original meaning is gradually getting lost.

c. Kingdom

The IIB coined *ezeala*, a combination of *eze* "king" and *ala* "land" for *kingdom*, while all the subsequent IBTs use *alaeze*, another compound coined from the same words. From the order of the constituent words, *ezeala* means "king of the land" while *alaeze* means "land of the king". It is not clear whether there is a special dialectal interpretation of *ezeala* in [late 19th century] Isuama dialect of Igbo that would make it mean the land under the rule of a king. All the same, all the translations after the IIB translated *kingdom* as *alaeze* and that became the standard Christian term for kingdom. As presented in Section 4.1.1.3C, the lexical compound *alaeze* is generally used today as a Christian term for the kingdom of God and hardly for a human kingdom because *obodo* and *ala*, the Igbo words for town or village, have restricted the use of *alaeze* for a human kingdom to Bible reading. *Alaeze* is also used

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for any place of much wealth and happiness. Interestingly, findings from this survey lend weight to this position. Unlike the two concepts analysed above where the concepts were described and the respondents asked for the Igbo words for the ideas described or defined, in this case the word "kingdom" was presented and the respondents requested to supply its equivalent in Igbo. Table 7.6 presents the terms supplied by the respondents.

Table 7. 6. Igbo terms for *kingdom* supplied by the respondents

Terms	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Alaeze	The land of the king	135	Yes (all but the IIB)
Obodo	Village or town	23	No
Obi eze	The king's palace	8	No
Eluigwe	Above the sky	8	No
Ebe obibi eze	The king's living space	6	No
Ala	Land	4	No

From Table 7.6, *alaeze* is the most used word for *kingdom* with a token of 135 (73%). This indicates that *alaeze* has spread among Igbo speakers. Figure 7.8 shows the distribution of the respondents that mentioned *alaeze* according to age range.
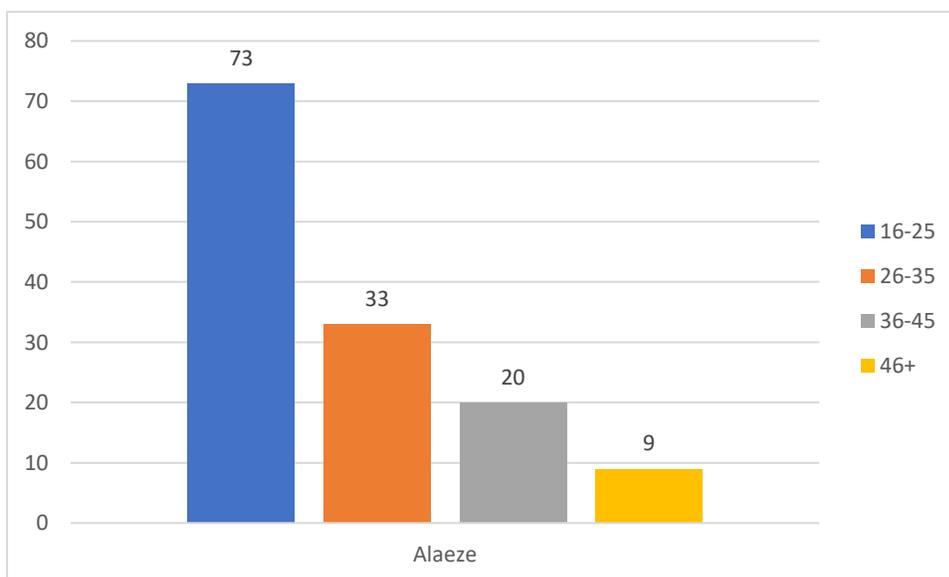
Figure 7. 8. Distribution of *alaeze* according to respondents' age range

Figure 7.8 shows that 73 of the respondents were within ages 16-25, 33 within 26-35, 20 within 36-45, and 9 above 45. This indicates that the spread of the term cuts across different ages. The distribution of the respondents that supplied *alaeze* for *kingdom* according to denomination is seen in Figure 7.9.
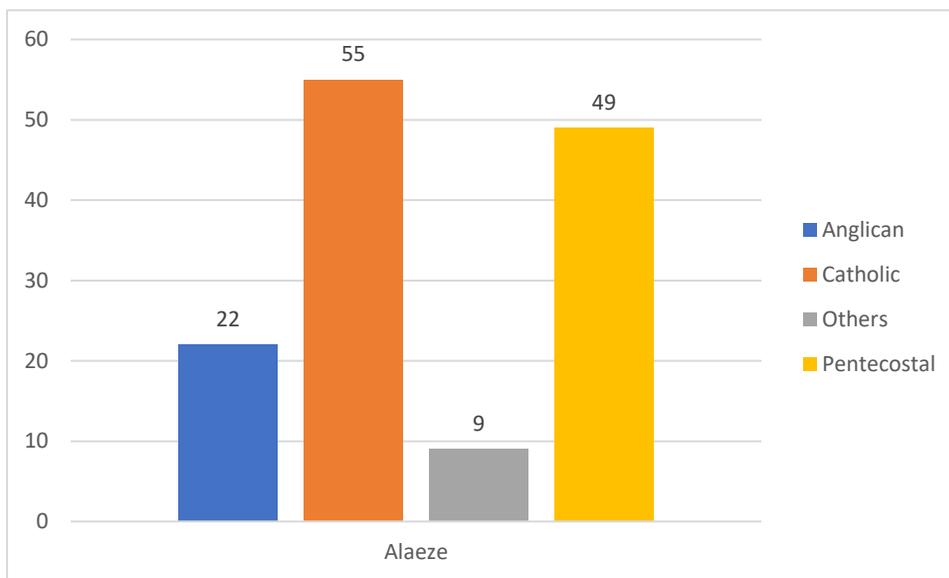
Figure 7. 9. Denominations of respondents who supplied *alaeze*

From Figure 7.9, 22 of the respondents who supplied *alaeze* are Anglican, 55 were Catholic, 49 Pentecostal and 9 Others. In other words, the use of *alaeze*, coined during Bible translation, has spread among Igbo of different denominations.

Nevertheless, as highlighted in Section 4.1.1.3c, there is a distinction in Igbo between a kingdom under the rule of a human king and a kingdom governed by God. The former is linked to the village or town unit because a human king rules over his village or town. The latter is linked to heaven, perceived in Christianity as the place where God reigns as king. Thus, it was submitted in Section 4.1.1.3C that *alaeze* is generally restricted to the kingdom

of God and not to a kingdom ruled by a human king. It was pointed out that *obodo* "town" or *ala* "land" is used for human kingdoms. Other terms supplied by the respondents in Table 7.6 as Igbo terms for *kingdom* support this position. On the one hand, the words *obodo* and *ala* were also supplied in the survey. It is important to note that *obodo* has 23 tokens (12%), the second highest token (after *alaeze*). This shows that the idea of *kingdom* is linked to the idea of a village or town unit. On the other hand, *eluigwe* "heaven" is also mentioned, with 8 tokens. As mentioned in Section 4.1.1.3A, I once asked an Igbo man for the Igbo term for *kingdom*, and he supplied *alaeze eluigwe* "the kingdom of heaven", despite the fact that there was no mention of "heaven" in the question. This shows that the concept of kingdom is also linked to heaven or paradise.

The significance of this semantic distinction between a kingdom governed by a human king and one governed by God is further seen in the nature of the question that elicited the terms from the respondents. To elicit the terms, the respondents were presented with the word "kingdom" and requested to supply the Igbo terms for it. As noted in Section 7.1, presenting the English term for a concept would influence the respondents to provide the "standard" religious terms used in the Bible, but defining the concept would not suggest any specific context. As such, the respondents were more likely to provide terms from outside the Bible when a concept is defined or described than when the English term for the concept is mentioned. In other words, the mentioning of the word "kingdom" in the questionnaire influenced the high token of *alaeze* and the low token of *obodo* and *ala.* This is an indication of the emergence of an Igbo Christian register, i.e., when the English term was mentioned, the respondents provided terms from the Christian register as used in the Bible, but when the concept was defined or described, the respondents provided terms from Christian and non-Christian registers. This point is explored further in Section 7.2.3.

d. Curtain and Veil

Although *veil* is not included in the survey, it is discussed here as well because the coinage for *veil* in the IBTs has a marked effect on the Igbo terms supplied for *curtain*. The terms

used in the IBTs for *curtain* and *veil* are presented in Table 7.7. The term *curtain* does not appear in the New Testament of the KJB, which is why the IIB, NIB and UIBN do not have words for it. For this concept, the UIB and IRE use *akwa nkwụba* "cloth [meant for] hanging", the ILB uses *akwa mgbokwasị* "cloth for covering" and the ICB and INWT use *akwa mgbochi* "cloth for concealing". For the concept of *veil*, apart from the IIB that uses *akwa mgbodo* "cloth for covering", all the other IBTs use *akwa mgbochi* "cloth for concealing". A *veil* has more religious connotations than a *curtain*, i.e., a *curtain* could be neutral, but a *veil* is used more in religious settings with some religious signification.

Table 7. 7. The representations of *curtain* and *veil* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *Curtain*	Meaning	Terms for *Veil*	Meaning
IIB	_	_	*Mbusin (mgbochi)*	Concealing
NIB	_	_	*Akwa-mgbodo*	Cloth for covering
UIBN	_	_	*Akwa-ngboci*	Cloth for concealing
UIB	*Akwa-nkwuba*	Cloth for hanging	*Ákwà-nḅochi*	Cloth for concealing
ILB	*Akwa mgbokwasị*	Cloth for covering	*Akwa mgbochi*	Cloth for concealing
ICB	*Akwa mgbochi*	Cloth for concealing	*Akwa mgbochi*	Cloth for concealing
IRE	*Akwa nkwụba*	Cloth for hanging	*Akwa mgbochi*	Cloth for concealing
INWT	*Akwa mgbochi*	Cloth for concealing	*Akwa mgbochi*	Cloth for concealing

From Table 7.7, the UIB, ILB and IRE lexically distinguish *curtain* from *veil*, while the ICB and INWT use the same terms for both concepts.

To elicit the Igbo terms for *curtain*, this definition was provided in the questionnaire: "a piece of material, especially cloth, that hangs across a window or opening to make a room or part of a room dark or private". Table 7.8 presents the terms supplied by the respondents for *curtain*.

Table 7. 8. Igbo terms for *curtain* supplied by the Respondents

Terms for *Curtain*	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Akwa mgbochi	Cloth for concealing	92	Yes (ICB and INWT)
Akwa mkpuchi	Cloth for covering	25	No
Curtain	Loanword	20	No
Akwa nkewa	Cloth for demarcation	11	No
Akwa	Cloth	10	No
Mkpuchi	A covering	4	No
Akwa mmechi	Cloth for covering	3	No
Nnukwu akwa	Big cloth	2	No
Akwa ụzọ	Cloth for the door	2	No
Nko	Hanger	2	No
Akwa ndo	Cloth for shed	2	No
Nsachi	Covering	2	No

Table 7.8 shows that of the three lexical items used for *curtain* in the IBTs, only the one used by the ICB and INWT, *akwa mgbochi*, was mentioned, with 92 tokens, i.e., 49% of the respondents. Incidentally, the same term is used for *veil* by the UIBN and all the translations done after it. The fact that the terms for *curtain* in the UIB, ILB and IRE were not mentioned by the respondents indicates that they did not spread beyond their use in the IBTs. An investigation of the denominations of the respondents who supplied *akwa mgbochi* (Figure 7.10) shows that the term is used across different denominations.
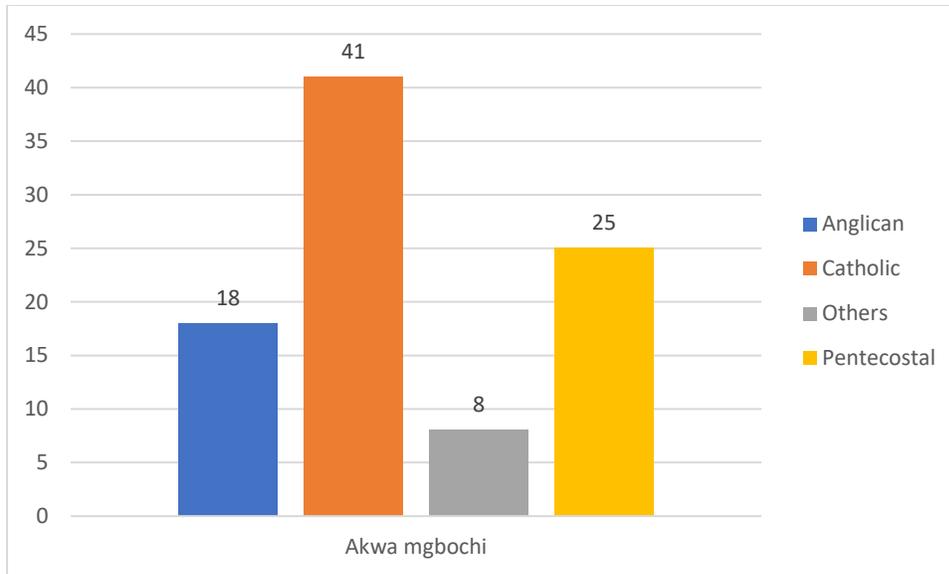
Figure 7. 10. Denominations of respondents who supplied *akwa mgbochi*

Figure 7.10 shows that 18 of the respondents that supplied *akwa mgbochi* were Anglican, 41 were Catholic, 25 Pentecostal and 8 Others. So, the use of *akwa mgbochi* for *curtain* is not restricted to any specific denomination.

Similarly, the distribution of the respondents according to their age range (see Figure 7.11) also shows that the term is used across different age range. 49 of the respondents were within 16-25, 21 within 26-35, 15 within 36-45, and 7 above 45. So, without doubt, *akwa mgbochi* has spread beyond the IBTs as the Igbo term for *curtain*.
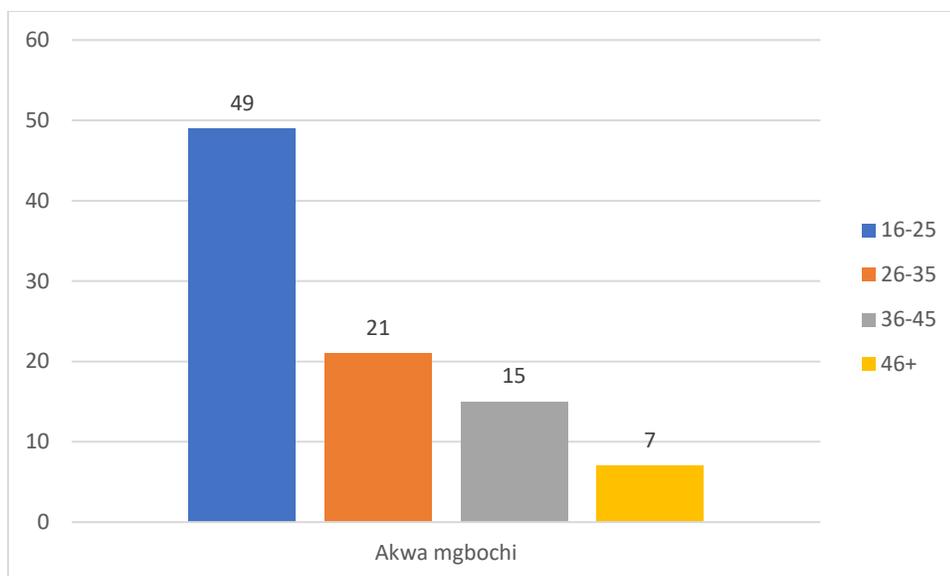
Figure 7. 11. Age range of respondents who supplied *akwa mgbochi*

Nevertheless, the fact that *akwa mgbochi* was used for *curtain* only in the ICB (2000) and INWT (2007) suggests that the spread of the term could not have resulted from its use to refer to *curtain*. The ICB and INWT are relatively recent translations and would not have influenced the language of Igbo speakers more than the translations done earlier. Consequently, the use of *akwa mgbochi* for *curtain* by Igbo speakers could be traced to the use of the term for *veil* in the UIBN (1908) and all the subsequent IBTs. In other words, unlike the UIB, ILB and IRE that lexically distinguish *veil* from *curtain*, Igbo speakers do not necessarily make such distinctions. They use the coinage *akwa mgbochi* for both *curtain* and *veil*. Thus, the attempts by the UIB, ILB and IRE to lexically distinguish *curtain* from *veil* as done in the KJB did not spread beyond the IBTs. This levelling of both concepts by Igbo speakers apparently informed the levelling of the concepts in the ICB and INWT, i.e., the ICB and INWT adopted *akwa mgbochi* for both concepts because that was the norm among Igbo speakers.

The other terms supplied by the respondents for *curtain* were not used in the IBTs. Of these, those with relatively high tokens include *akwa mkpuchi* "cloth for covering" (25 tokens), the loanword *curtain* (20 tokens), *akwa nkewa* "cloth for demarcation" (11 tokens), and *akwa* "cloth" (10 tokens). The fact that these terms were not influenced by the

IBTs suggests that *veil* (or *curtain*) is not understood strictly as a religious concept. Thus, Igbo speakers do not use only the term used in the IBTs but also create other novel terms for the concept or borrow the English word *curtain*.

In conclusion, the compound *akwa mgbochi*, used in the IBTs for *veil* has not only spread into Igbo but has also been extended to embrace *curtain*. Unlike the KJB, UIB, ILB and IRE that lexically distinguish between *veil* and *curtain*, Igbo speakers have levelled these concepts and understand them as one concept referred to as *akwa mgbochi*.

7.2.2   Innovations Restricted to Bible Reading

This section explores concepts where the terms supplied by the respondents are different from the ones used in the IBTs. In other words, the lexical innovations in the IBTs have been restricted to Bible reading or to the Christian contexts and other lexical items are used instead for the concepts. Focus is on lexical items supplied by the respondents with tokens higher than the lexical innovations used in the IBTs. Concepts that feature such terms include *soul*, *concubine*, *harlot*, and *heir.*

a. Soul

All the IBTs translated *soul* as *mkpụrụobi*, a compound formed from *mkpụrụ* "seed" and *obi* "chest or heart". Literally "the seed of the chest", *mkpụrụobi* is also used for "heart" in Igbo. As mentioned in Section 4.1.1, the use of *mkpụrụobi* in the IBTs entails the semantic extension of the term to not only refer to the physical heart but also to the spiritual part of a human being that is believed in some religions to continue to live after the person has died. In other words, the IBTs semantically extended *mkpụrụobi* by giving the secular term a religious meaning. To elicit the terms used for *soul* in Igbo, the following definition was presented to the respondents: "the spiritual part of a person that continues to exist in some

form even after their body has died". From the responses provided, only 2 terms have a minimum of two tokens, as seen in Table 7.9.

Table 7. 9. Igbo terms for *soul* supplied by the respondents

Terms for *Soul*	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Mmụọ	Spirit	122	No
Mkpụrụobi	Seed of the chest/heart	61	Yes (all the IBTs)

Table 7.9 shows that, with 122 tokens (66%), *mmụọ* is the most used term in Igbo for *soul*. As noted in Section 1.1.1, *mmụọ* is an Igbo term for the ancestors. It was submitted that the Igbo practice of veneration of ancestors was a major obstacle to missionary evangelism. Thus, the missionaries condemned the practice and went as far as giving pejorative meanings to the term by using it in terms created for the concept of *hell*, e.g. *ọkụ mmụọ* "fire of the ancestors" and *ọkụ ala mmụọ* "fire of the land of the ancestors" are the terms used for *hell* in the IBTs. The Catechism of the Anglican and Catholic Churches also use *ala mmụọ* "land of the ancestors" for *hell*. The fact that, despite the pejorative meanings given to *mmụọ* in the IBTs in its use to represents *hell*, the word is presented as the Igbo term for *soul* indicates that the denigration of *mmụọ* in the IBTs did not completely change the Igbo perception of the ancestors. Even though *mkpụrụobi*, the term for heart, is semantically extended in the IBTs to refer to *soul*, Igbo speakers continue to use *mmụọ* to refer to dead people and, by extension, the part of a person that is believed to continue to live when the person dies.

An investigation of the background of the respondents that supplied *mmụọ* indicates that they are from different denominations and age ranges. For instance, Figure 7.12 presents the distribution of the respondents who supplied *mmụọ* according to their age range.
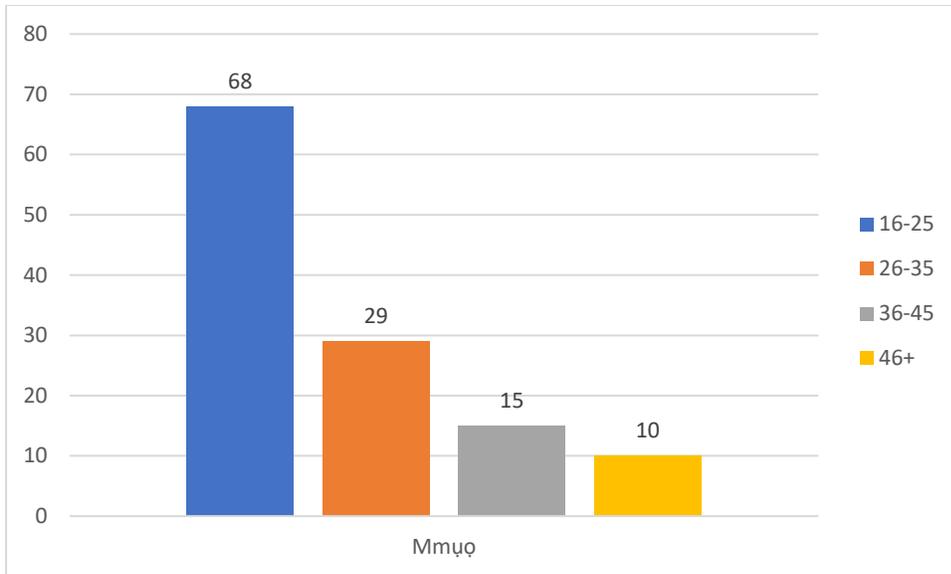
Figure 7. 12. Age range of respondents who supplied *mmụọ*

Figure 7.12 shows that 68 of the respondents who supplied *mmụọ* fall within 16-25, 29 within 26-35, 15 within 36-45, and 10 above 45 years. So, *mmụọ* is used among Igbo speakers of different ages for the concept of *soul*. Figure 7.13 presents the distribution of the respondents who supplied *mmụọ* according to their denominations.
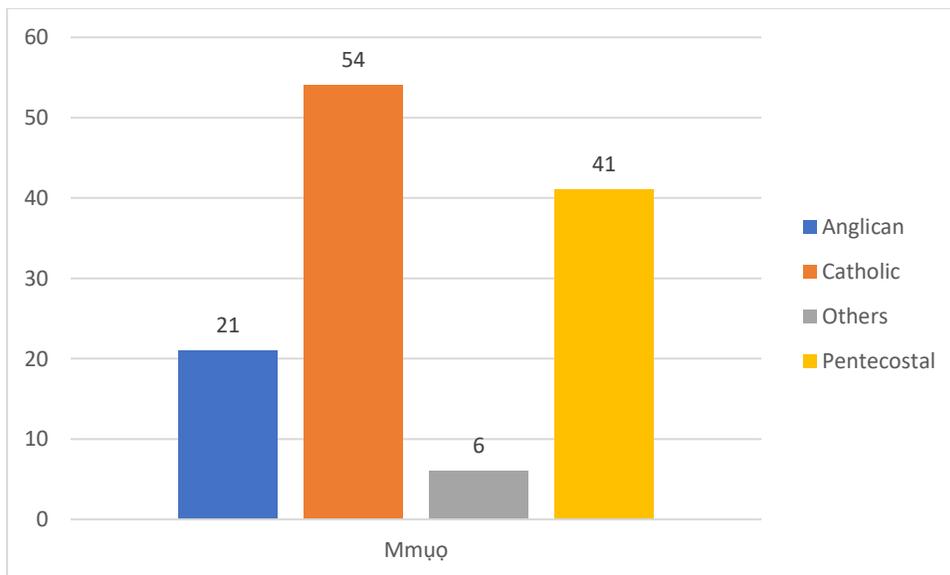
Figure 7. 13. Denominations of respondents who supplied *mmụọ*

From Figure 7.13, 21 of the respondents who supplied *mmụọ* were Anglican, 54 were Catholic, 41 Pentecostal and 6 Others. This indicates that this term is used by members of these different denominations and not restricted to members of any specific denomination.

Interestingly, *mmụọ* is not used in any of the IBTs for *soul*. As mentioned above, all the IBTs translated *soul* as *mkpụrụobi*. In the survey, *mkpụrụobi* has 61 tokens (33%). With 122 tokens (66%), *mmụọ* was mentioned by double the number of people that mentioned *mkpụrụobi.* In other words, *mmụọ* has restricted the spread of *mkpụrụobi* to Bible readings and the Christian context. Thus, *mkpụrụobi* may be seen as a Christian register, unlike *mmụọ* that is not restricted to the Christian context. What is more, the respondents were presented with a definition of the concept of *soul* that does not make any allusion to Christianity. Consequently, they were not restricted in terms of the domains from which they could supply terms. Had the term *soul* been presented to them, perhaps more respondents would have supplied *mkpụrụobi* than those that supplied *mmụọ* (see Section 7.2.3). So, the elaboration of *mkpụrụobi* in the IBTs is restricted to the Christian context, which contributes towards expanding the Igbo Christian register.

b. Concubine

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines *concubine* as "a woman who, in some societies, lives and has sex with a man she is not married to, and has a lower social rank than his wife or wives". This concept is translated as *iko nwaanyị* in all the IBTs. *Iko nwaanyị* is a compound that was formed from *iko* "paramour" and *nwaanyị* "woman or female". Thus, *iko nwaanyị* means "a female paramour (to a man)". The practice of *iko*, or specifically *iko mbara*, is found in several Igbo communities, e.g., Ngwa, Aguku, Awka, Owerri, among others (Uchendu 2010). It is called *agịrị* in Nsugbe. According to Uchendu (2010: 4), "*iko* is a generic term for a paramour, and *mbara* may be rendered as 'public, not clandestine'". Thus, *iko mbara* is an institution that permits a married man or woman to officially have a paramour, with the consent of their spouse. Unlike the concept of *concubine* in English where only men could have concubines and only women could be concubines, the practice

of *iko* among Igbo people is such that both men and women could be or have *iko* (Uchendu 2010). So, the compound *iko nwaanyị* as used in the IBTs specifies that the referent is the female paramour, not the male one. Incidentally, the practice of *iko mbara* was condemned by the Christian missionaries, who then went further to use the term *iko* for "all sexual relationships outside the framework of a monogamous marriage – polygamy, adultery, fornication, prostitution, and rape" (Echeruo 1999: 296). For instance, the UIB translates "Thou shalt not commit adultery" in Exodus 20:14 as *Gi akwala iko* "Do not engage in *iko*".

In the survey, the respondents were presented with the word "concubine" and requested to provide the Igbo words for it. Table 7.10 presents the terms supplied by the respondents.

Table 7. 10. Igbo terms for *concubine* supplied by the respondents

Terms for *concubine*	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Enyi nwaanyị	Female lover	48	No
Iko	Paramour	21	No
Enyi	Lover	8	No
Nwunye di	Co-wife	6	No
Ọyị	Lover	6	No
Inyom	Woman	6	No
Ọyị di	Husband's lover	5	No
Agịrị	Paramour	3	No
Akwụna	Prostitute	3	No
Nwa ụlọ	Bastard	3	No
Ashawo	Prostitute	2	No
Nwaanyị anụghị anụ	A woman who is not married	2	No
Nwaanyị ọyị	Female lover	2	No
Ndị inyom	Women	2	No
Nwaanyị iko	A woman who is a paramour	2	No

From Table 7.10, the term with the highest number of tokens is *enyi nwaanyị*, a compound formed from *enyi* "friend or lover" and *nwaanyị* "woman or female". So, *enyi nwaanyị* means "female lover". It is the popular Igbo term for girlfriend and has 48 tokens in the survey (26%). The fact that this term is not used in the IBTs for *concubine* suggests that *iko nwaanyị*, the term used in the IBTs, did not spread beyond the Bible. In fact, from Table 7.10, none of the respondents mentioned the exact term used in the IBTs. However, *iko*, the

head word in the compound *iko nwaanyị* was mentioned 21 times (11%). The distribution of the respondents who supplied *enyi nwaanyị* and *iko* for *concubine* according to their age ranges (Figure 7.14) reveals some interesting dynamics.
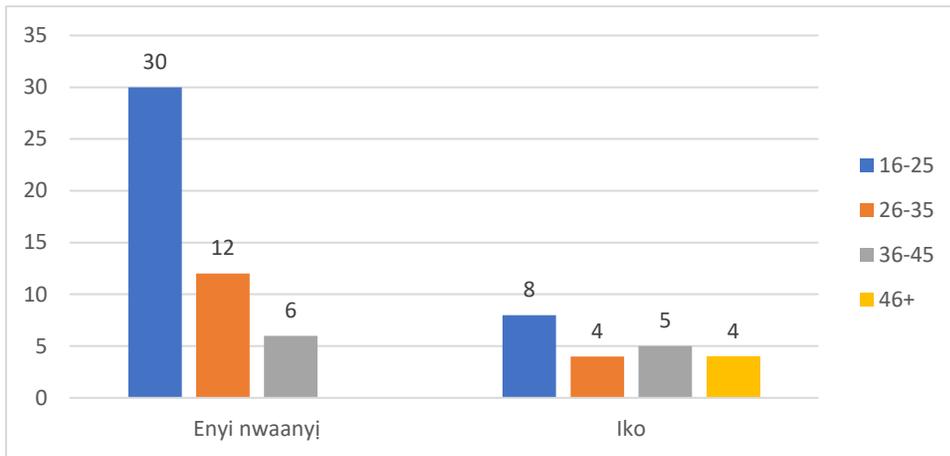
Figure 7. 14. Age range of respondents who supplied *enyi nwaanyị* and *iko*

Figure 7.14 shows that, on the one hand, 30 of the respondents who supplied *enyi nwaanyị* were within 16-25, 12 within 26-35 and 6 within 35-45. None of the respondents above 45 years supplied *enyi nwaanyị* as the Igbo word for *concubine*. On the other hand, 8 of the respondents who supplied *iko* were within 16-25, 4 within 26-35, 5 within 36-45, and 4 above 45. Table 7.11 presents these figures in percentages in relation to the total number of respondents in each age range. As noted in Section 7.1, 96 of the respondents are within 16-25, 53 within 26-35, 25 within 36-45, and 12 above 45.

Table 7. 11. Percentage of *enyi nwaanyị* and *iko* according to age range

Age Range	Total Respondents by Age Range	Number that Supplied *Enyi Nwaanyị*	%	Number that Supplied *Iko*	%
16-25	96	30	31%	8	8%
26-35	53	12	23%	4	8%
36-45	25	6	24%	5	20%
46+	12	0	0%	4	33%

Table 7.11 shows that *enyi nwaanyị* was supplied by 31% of respondents within 16-25 while *iko* was supplied by only 8% of respondents in this age range. 12% of respondents within 26-35 supplied *enyi nwaanyị* while only 8% of the same population supplied *iko*. There is not much difference between the population of respondents within 36-45 who supplied *enyi nwaanyị* and those who supplied *iko*. Conversely, for respondents above 45, 0% supplied *enyi nwaanyị* while 33% supplied *iko*. In other words, the older the respondents, the more likely that they would use *iko* for *concubine*. Conversely, the older the respondent, the less likely that they would use *enyi nwaanyị* for *concubine.* This pattern is significant because it shows the conceptualization of *concubine* along generational line. The younger generation of Igbo speakers seem to understand concubinage as a form of girlfriendship. It is not incidental that no respondent above 45 supplied *enyi nwaanyị*. It is rather an indication that this generation of Igbo speakers understands that a concubine is not just a girlfriend or a woman who has sex with a man, but a formal union regulated by the society in which it is practiced. The terms supplied by respondents who are above 45 are *agịrị* "paramour" (2 tokens), *iko* "paramour" (4 tokens), and *nwunye di* "co-wife" (2 tokens). The first two terms – *agịrị* and *iko* – are the terms for the practice of concubinage among the Igbo people. The third term refers to a co-wife in a polygamous marriage. This is significant because it suggests the gradual loss of the meaning of *iko* among members of the younger generation. It is remarkable that very few respondents within the 16-25 and 26-35 age ranges supplied *iko*, despite the fact that it is the key word in the compound *iko nwaanyị* used in the IBTs for *concubine*. The implication of this is that the use of *iko nwaanyị* in the IBTs is apparently restricted to Bible readings and not used beyond that. Secondly, it suggests the dwindling understanding of *iko* as referring to concubinage, especially with the use of the term in the IBTs to refer to "all sexual relationships outside the framework of a monogamous marriage – polygamy, adultery, fornication, prostitution, and rape" (Echeruo 1999: 296).

What is more, the practice of *iko mbara* is apparently dwindling as more Igbo people convert to Christianity and so perceive it as a sinful practice. Thus, on the one hand, the

pejorative meaning given to *iko* in its use in the IBTs in representations of not only *concubine* but also *fornication*, *adultery* and *harlot* has influenced the people's perception of the practice of *iko mbara*. On the other hand, the use of the word *iko* for these four concepts all of which have to do with sexual relationships outside marriage has changed the meaning of the word from a paramour within some regulated contexts to a party in any form of sexual relationship outside marriage.

c. Harlot

The concept of *harlot* is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as "a female prostitute". This concept is represented with four different terms in the IBTs, as seen in Table 7.12.

Table 7. 12. The representations of *harlot* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *harlot*	Meaning
IIB	*Nde aroro ala*	People who defile the land
NIB	*Umu nwanyi ndi ji onwe fa atu mgbele*	Women who trade with themselves
UIBN	*Ndi inyom nke na-akwa iko*	Women who are paramours
UIB	*Ndi inyom nke na-akwa iko*	Women who are paramours
ILB	*Umu nwanyị akwula*	Akwula women
ICB	*Umu nwanyị akwula*	Akwula women
IRE	*Umu nwanyị akwula*	Akwula women
INWT	*Umu nwanyị akwula*	Akwula women

From Table 7.12, the IBTs that were done by the missionaries used three different terms for *harlot*. The IIB used *nde aroro ala* (*ndị arụrụ ala* in Standard Igbo), literally "people who defile the land", the NIB used *ụmụ nwaanyị ndị ji onwe fa atụ mgbele*, literally "women who trade with themselves", while the UIBN and UIB used *ndị inyom nke na-akwa iko* "women who are paramours". These descriptive terms suggest that there was no term for harlot in Igbo when these translations were made. Consequently, the IIB and NIB used terms that indicate that the practice of prostitution is morally frowned upon. The UIBN and UIB

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appropriated the Igbo concept of *iko*, highlighted in the preceding section to refer to a paramour. This was an ideological strategy aimed at discouraging the Igbo practice of *iko*.

All the IBTs done during the native Igbo period used *ụmụ nwaanyị akwụla* "akwụla women" for *harlot*. *Akwụla* is a phonologically integrated form of *akụna*, itself a shortened form of *Akụnakụna*. *Akụnakụna* is the name of a town in present-day Cross River State whose women were recruited by the British government to serve as cooks, but they ended up also having sex with the soldiers and anybody willing to pay them (Echeruo 1999: 297). Thus, any woman who has sex for money is called an *akụnakụna* woman. Over time, the name is shortened and phonologically integrated into Igbo as *akwụna* or *akwụla*. This appropriation of a place name to represent *harlot* in Igbo happened during the same period of the missionary Bible translation and so had not yet spread across Igboland when the missionaries did their translations. However, the word had gained widespread usage across Igboland during the period of Bible translation by Igbo natives, who then used it to replace the descriptive phrases of the missionary era.

In the survey, the word "harlot" was presented to the respondents who were requested to provide its Igbo equivalent. Table 7.13 shows the terms supplied by the respondents for *harlot.*

Table 7. 13. Igbo terms for *harlot* supplied by the respondents

Terms	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Akwụna	*Akwụna* is a place name	139	Yes (ILB, ICB, IRE and INWT)
Ashawo	*Ashawo* is a loanword from Yoruba	43	No
Onye ọkwa iko	A paramour	7	No
Onye na-agba n'ama	A person who plays on the street	3	No

From Table 7.13, with 139 tokens (75%), *akwụna* is the most used term for *harlot* in Igbo. Figure 7.15 shows that the respondents who supplied *akwụna* come from different

denominations: 25 Anglican, 60 Catholic, 46 Pentecostal and 8 Others. Thus, the term is not restricted to any specific denomination.
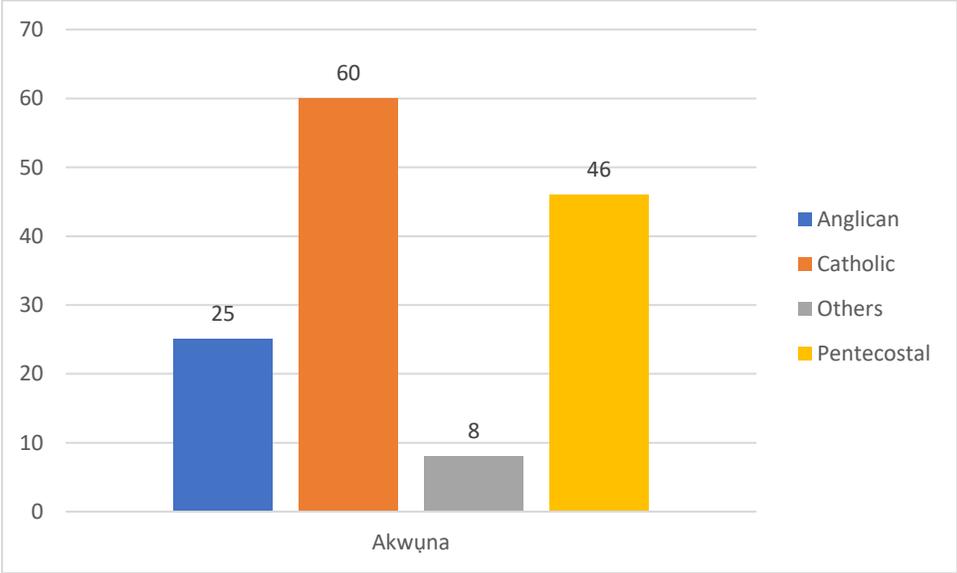
Figure 7. 15. Denominations of respondents who supplied *akwụna*

Similarly, the respondents who supplied *akwụna* cut across different age ranges, as seen in Figure 7.16.
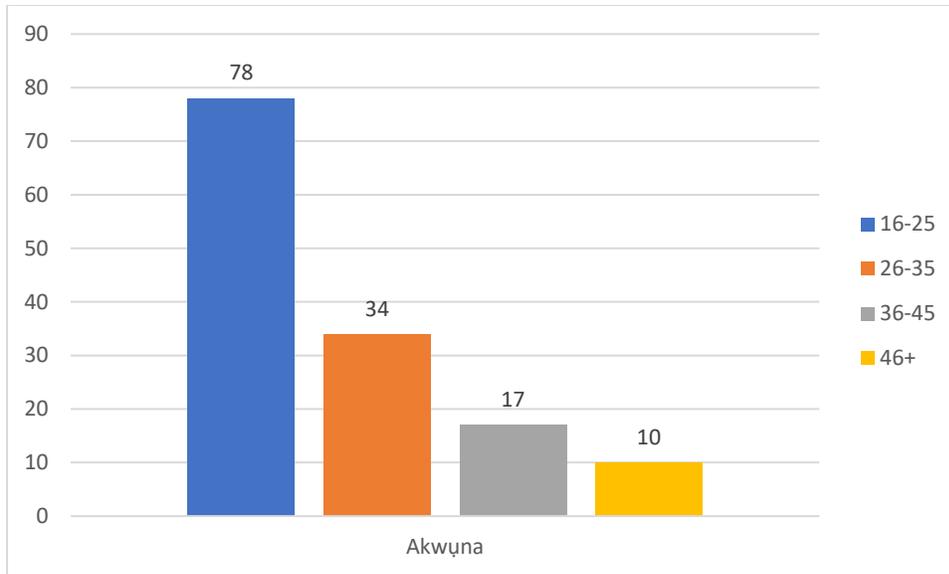
Figure 7. 16. Age range of respondents who supplied *akwụna*

Figure 7.16 shows that 78 of the respondents who supplied *akwụna* were within 16-25, 34 within 26-35, 17 within 36-45, and 10 above 45. It is thus conclusive that *akwụna* is the main Igbo term for *harlot*.

However, the widespread use of *akwụna* could not be attributed to the IBTs. For one, the IBTs that used the word in their representation of *harlot* are relatively recent publications: ILB (1988), ICB (2000), IRE (2007) and INWT (2007). Thus, they could not have influenced the widespread usage of *akwụna* for *harlot*. Rather, *akwụna*, as noted earlier, was derived and spread outside the Bible. Using it in the IBTs updates the language of the Bible.

The term with the second highest number of tokens is *ashawo*, a loanword from Yoruba, with 43 tokens (45%). This word is also used by Igbo speakers from different denominations, as seen in Figure 7.17.
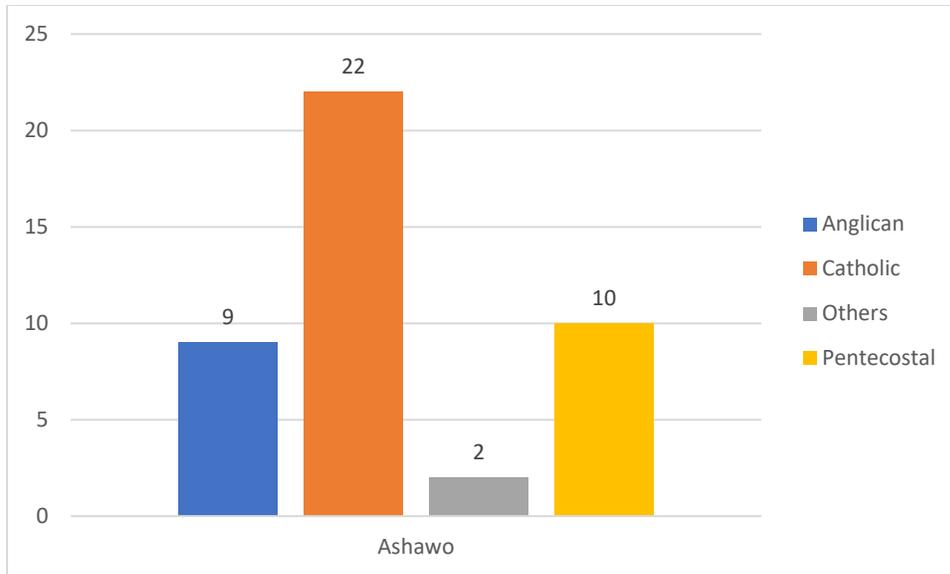
Figure 7. 17. Denominations of respondents who supplied *ashawo*

Figure 7.17 indicates that 9 of the respondents who supplied *ashawo* for *harlot* are Anglican, 22 are Catholic, 10 are Pentecostal and 2 are Others. Similarly, *ashawo* is used by Igbo speakers across different generations, as shown in Figure 7.18.
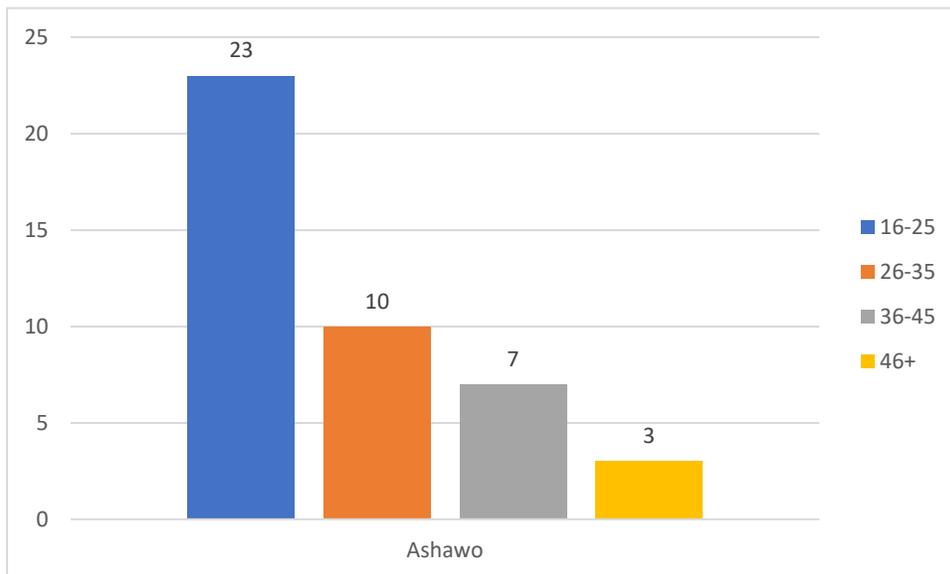
Figure 7. 18. Age range of respondents who supplied *ashawo*

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From Figure 7.18, 23 of the respondents are within 16-25, 10 within 26-35, 7 within 36-45, and 3 above 45. In other words, *ashawo* is used for *harlot* by Igbo speakers of different denominations and age groups. That notwithstanding, its lower tokens as against *akwụna* suggests that, although both terms have widespread usage among Igbo speakers of various age groups and denominations, *akwụna* has more spread than *ashawo.*

Incidentally, none of the terms used by the earlier translations, i.e., the IIB, NIB, UIBN and UIB, was mentioned by the respondents. As already mentioned, the widespread usage of *akwụna* did not result from its use in the later IBTs, i.e., ILB, ICB, IRE and INWT. The implication of this is that the terms used by the earlier translations were restricted to Bible readings by *akwụna* and *ashawo*, both terms introduced into Igbo from outside Bible translation.

Interestingly, most Igbo speakers seem to be unaware of the etymology of the word *akwụla* or *akwụna*. Some of the respondents suggested that *akwụna* is a shortened form of *akwụnakwụna*, which is believed to be derived from the Igbo verb root *kwụ* "stand". The idea is that *akwụnakwụna* is a reduplicative used derisively to refer to people, especially women, who stand on the streets, waiting for customers to sell sex to. As one respondent put it: a*kwụnakwụna bụ ndị na-akwụgharị akwụgharị* "Akwụnakwụna are people that walk around". Although this statement does not overtly mention the idea of selling sex, the idea is implied and understood in context. In one of his songs titled *Nwaanyị Na-Agba Akwụna*[107] (a woman that engages in *akwụna*), Show Promoter sang this line:

50. *Agbọghọ nwa ọkwụ n'ilo*   "Maiden who stands on the streets"
    Nwa ọkwụ n'ilo   "Who stands on the streets"
    Ọkwụ n'ilo nwe onye Ọ na-eche   "The person who stands on the streets is
                                      waiting for somebody"

Again, Show Promoter does not specifically state that the maiden who stands on the street sells sex, but the statement that she is waiting for someone is understood to mean that she is waiting for her customer. This re-analysis of *akwụna* fits so perfectly into the Igbo

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[107] This song can be found here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prWYGkGw7Ho, the quoted line is sang at 1.50 minutes)

language structure that the historical emergence of the term from its use in reference to women from *Akụnakụna* community is lost. Whatever the case may be, the fact that the use of *akwụna* and *ashawo* for *harlot* cuts across age and denominational affiliations further indicates that the terms have effectively restricted the terms used by the older IBTs to Bible reading and are now fully integrated into the Igbo language.

d. Heir

As expatiated in Section 4.1.1.1D, there is apparently no single term in Igbo for the concept of *heir* in different institutions. Different terms are used for heirship in different institutions. The IBTs translated *heir* with four different terms, as seen in Table 7.14.

Table 7. 14. The representations of *heir* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *heir*	Meaning
IIB	*Opara*	First son
NIB	*Oli ọkụ*	Inheritor of wealth
UIBN	*Onye nketa*	The person who would get a share
UIB	*Onye nketa*	The person who would get a share
ILB	*Onye ga-eketa*	The person who would get a share
ICB	*Onye ga-eketa*	The person who would get a share
IRE	*Onye nketa*	The person who would get a share
INWT	*Onye nketa*	The person who would get a share

From Table 7.14, the IIB and NIB used existing terms for Igbo cultural concepts to represent *heir*. The IIB translated *heir* as *opara* (spelt *ọkpara* in Standard Igbo), which means "first son". This choice was probably predicated on the fact that the first son of a man takes over responsibility of the household when the man dies. The NIB translated the concept of *heir* as *oli ọkụ*, a compound formed from *oli*, literally "eater" and figuratively "inheritor", and *ọkụ* "wealth or possession". So, *oli ọkụ* means "inheritor of wealth". On their part, the UIBN, UIB, IRE and INWT translated *heir* as *onye nketa* "person who would get a share (of something)". It was however pointed out in Section 4.1.1.1D that *onye nketa* is

inherently ambiguous as it could mean "the person who receives a share of something" or "the person who is received as a share". Perhaps because of this inherent ambiguity in *onye nketa*, the ILB and ICB did not use it for *heir*. Rather, they translated *heir* as *onye ga-eketa* "the person who would receive a share". Unlike *onye nketa*, *onye ga-eketa* clarifies that the person (*onye*) receives the item in question.

In the survey, the following definition of *heir* was provided: "the person that inherits a property or position, like a throne, from another person when the second person dies". The terms supplied by the respondents are presented in Table 7.15.

Table 7. 15. Igbo terms for *heir* supplied by the respondents

Terms	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBT?
Ọkpara	First son	51	Yes (IIB)
Ọnọchie	One who replaces a person or sits in their stead	45	No
Onye nnọchi anya	A replacer/a person that replaces	25	No
Onye nketa	A receiver of a share	16	Yes (UIBN, UIB, IRE, INWT)
Ọkpara eze	The king's first son	8	No
Igwe	The king	6	No
Oriekpe	An inheritor of a will	5	No
Ọnọchie eze	The replacer of the king	5	No
Nwa	Child	3	No
Nwa igwe	The king's son	3	No
Onowu	Prime minister	2	No
Osobe	Next in line	2	No

The terms supplied by the respondents as the Igbo terms for *heir* (Table 7.15) reflect the relationship between the heir and the person bequeathing the property or office. These are grouped here into three categories: 1) terms that mark familial hereditary relationship, e.g., *ọkpara*, *ọkpara eze*, *nwa*, and *nwa igwe*; 2) terms that mark official relationship, e.g., *ọnọchie, ọnọchie eze, onye nnọchi anya, igwe, onowu* and *osobe*; and 3) terms that are silent on the relationship between the heir and the person bequeathing the wealth or office, but

rather point at the fact of receiving some property or wealth, e.g., *onye nketa* and *oriekpe*. The categories support the earlier submission that different Igbo institutions have different terms for *heir*. Terms in the first category are used for *heir* in family institutions and those in the second for *heir* in cultural, religious and/or political institutions. The third category is general and could apply to any of the first two institutions.

From Table 7.15, the most mentioned term is *ọkpara*, with 51 tokens (27%). Figure 7.19 presents the distribution of the respondents who supplied *ọkpara* according to age range.
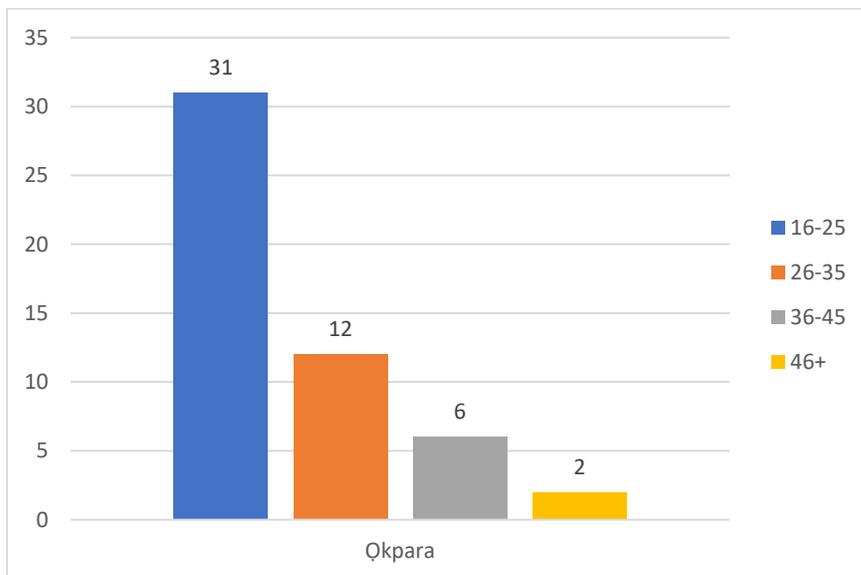
Figure 7. 19. Age grade of respondents who supplied *ọkpara*

Figure 7.19 indicates that 31 of the respondents who supplied *ọkpara* are within 16-25, 12 within 26-35, 6 within 36-45, and 2 above 45. This suggests that *ọkpara* is used for *heir* across different generations. Figure 7.20 presents the distribution of respondents who supplied *ọkpara* for *heir* according to denomination.
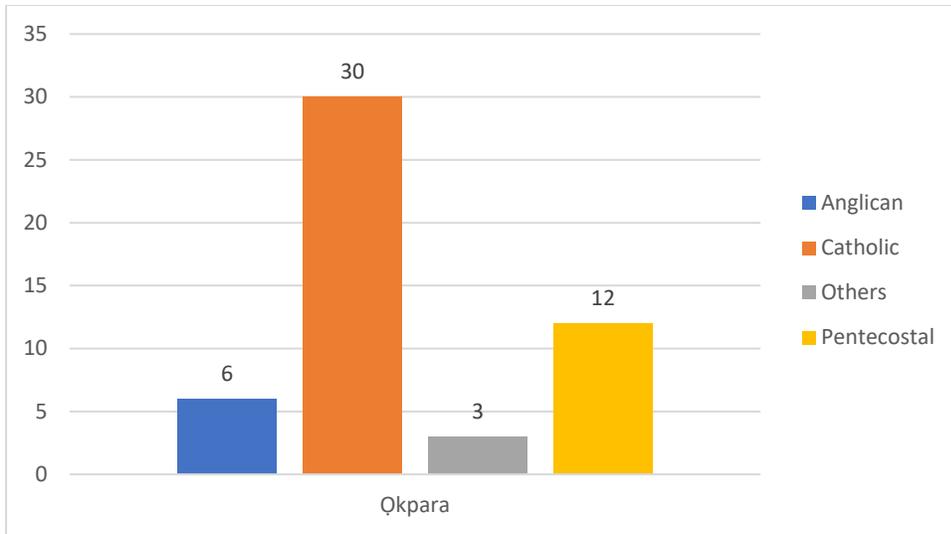
Figure 7. 20. Denomination of respondents who supplied *ọkpara*

From Figure 7.20, 6 of the respondents who supplied *ọkpara* for *heir* were Anglican, 30 were Catholic, 12 were Pentecostal and 3 Others. This statistic shows that the use of *ọkpara* for *heir* cuts across denominational boundaries. That notwithstanding, the widespread use of *ọkpara* for *heir* is not likely to be influenced by the use of the term in the IIB. For one, the IIB is a translation of portions of the NT and not of the full OT and NT. Secondly, it has been out of print since the late 1800s. As such, not many Igbo speakers would have copies of it. What is more plausible is that the respondents supplied *ọkpara* because it is traditional among the Igbo for the first son of a man to take over responsibility of the household in the event of the death of the man. In other words, *ọkpara* was supplied because of this Igbo tradition and not so much because of its use in the IIB to represent *heir*.

The term with the second highest tokens in Table 7.15 is *ọnọchie*, mentioned by 45 respondents (24%). Like *ọkpara*, *ọnọchie* was supplied mainly by respondents within ages 16-25, as seen in Figure 7.21.
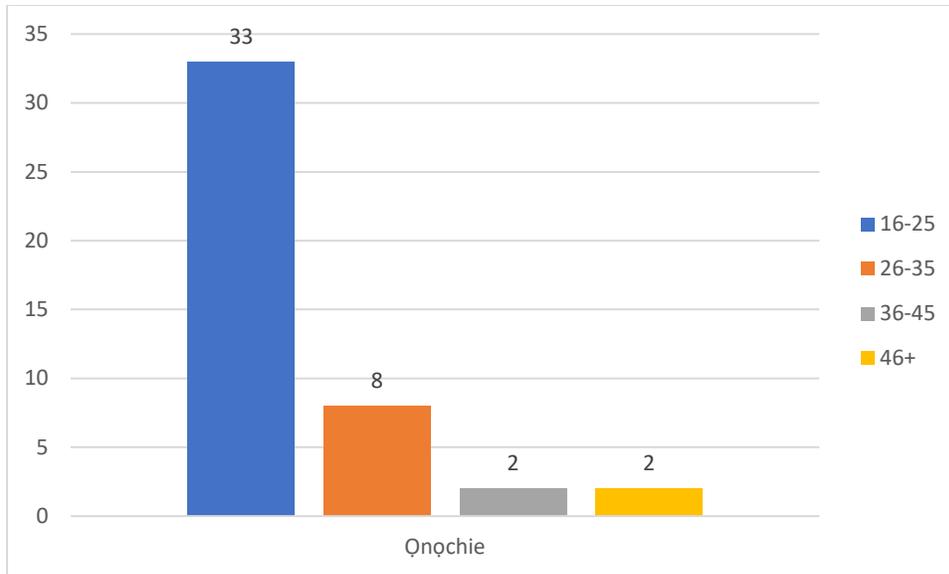
Figure 7. 21. Age range of respondents who supplied *ọnọchie*

From Figure 7.21, 33 of the respondents who mentioned *ọnọchie* for *heir* were 16-25, 8 were 26-35, 2 were 36-45 and 2 were above 45. Although this statistic shows that the respondents come from all the different generations, most of the respondents were within 16-25. Table 7.16 presents these figures in percentages.

Table 7. 16. Percentage of *ọkpara* according to age range

Age Range	Total Number of Respondents according to Age Range	Number that Supplied *Ọnọchie*	% of Number that Supplied *Ọnọchie*
16-25	96	33	34%
26-35	53	8	15%
36-45	25	2	8%
46+	12	2	17%

Table 7.16 shows that *ọnọchie* was supplied by 34% of the respondents within 16-25, 15% of those within 26-35, 8% of those within 36-45 and 17% of those above 45. This suggests that *ọnọchie* is used more by Igbo speakers within the 16-25 age range.

From Figure 7.22, the respondents who supplied *ọnọchie* come from different denominations: 11 Anglican, 22 Catholic, 9 Pentecostal and 3 Others.
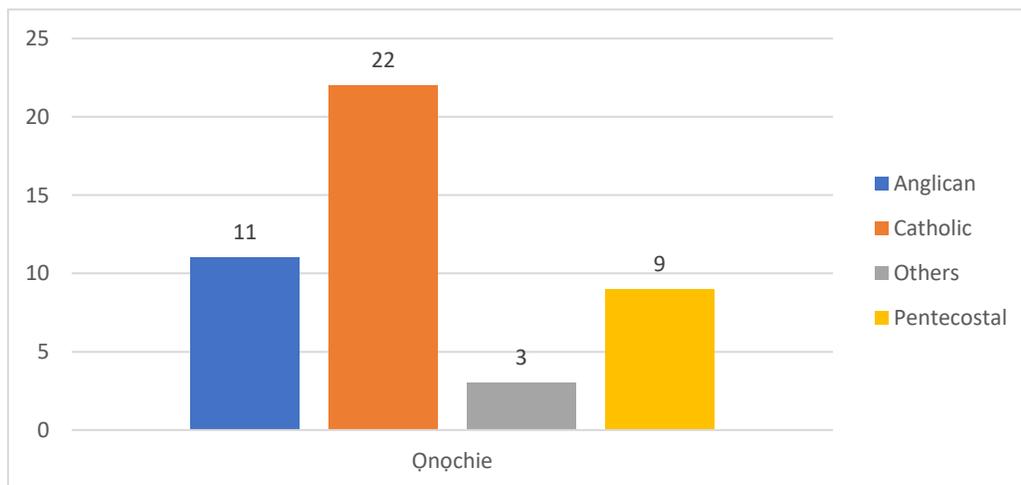
Figure 7. 22. Denominations of respondents who supplied *ọnọchie*

Interestingly, *ọkpara* and *ọnọchie*, the lexical items with the highest tokens, did not spread via the Bible. As noted above, the use of *ọkpara* for *heir* could not have resulted from its use in the IIB. On its part, *ọnọchie* was not used in any of the IBTs for *heir*. From Table 7.15, the other lexical item used in the IBTs (specifically the UIBN, UIB, IRE and INWT) for *heir* and supplied by the respondents is *onye nketa* "the person who gets a share of something". This term has 16 tokens (9%). In comparison to *ọkpara* (27%) and *ọnọchie* (24%), *onye nketa* is not used much for *heir*. This indicates that for the concept of *heir*, *ọkpara* and *ọnọchie* are used more and have probably restricted the use of *onye nketa* to Bible readings.

The distribution of the respondents who supplied *onye nketa* according to age range (Figure7.23) indicates that the use of the term for *heir* is not restricted to any specific generation.
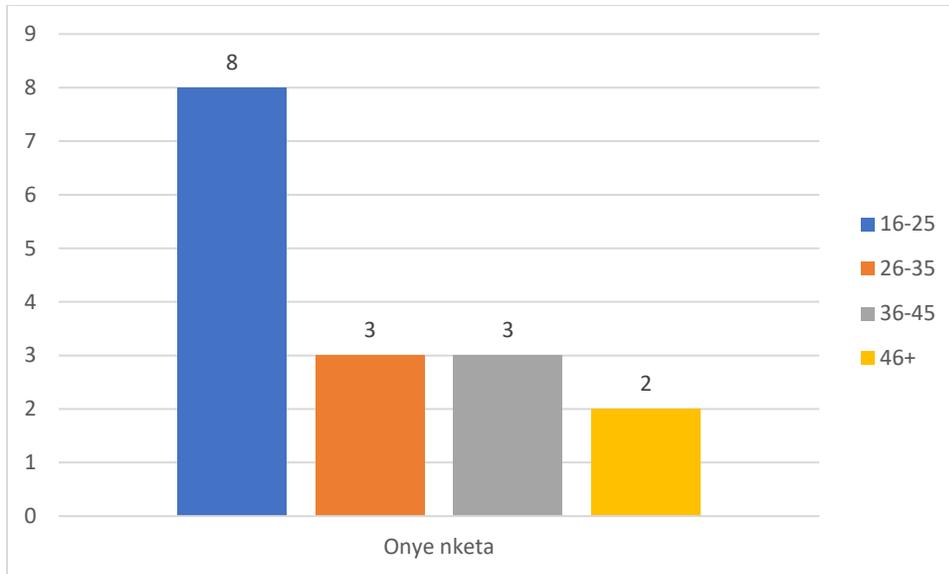
Figure 7. 23. Age range of respondents who supplied *onye nketa*

From Figure7.23, 8 of the respondents who supplied *onye nketa* were within 16-25, 3 within 26-35, 3 within 36-45 and 2 above 45. However, the distribution of the respondents according to denomination (Figure 7.24) indicates that the Catholics hardly use *onye nketa* for *heir*. From Figure 7.24, 5 of the respondents were Anglican, 1 Catholic, 7 Pentecostal and 3 Others. From these figures, members of the Pentecostal and Anglican Churches constitute the majority of respondents who supplied *onye nketa*, while only one Catholic mentioned the term. This is significant because the Catholics constitute 52% of the total respondents in the survey. These figures are significant because they indicate that the use of *onye nketa* for *heir* was influenced by Bible reading. On the one hand, the ICB that was done by the Catholic Church did not use *onye nketa* for *heir*. On the other hand, the UIBN and UIB that were produced by the Anglican Church used *onye nketa* for *heir*. So, the members of the Anglican and Pentecostal Churches who supplied *onye nketa* must have been influenced by Bible reading.
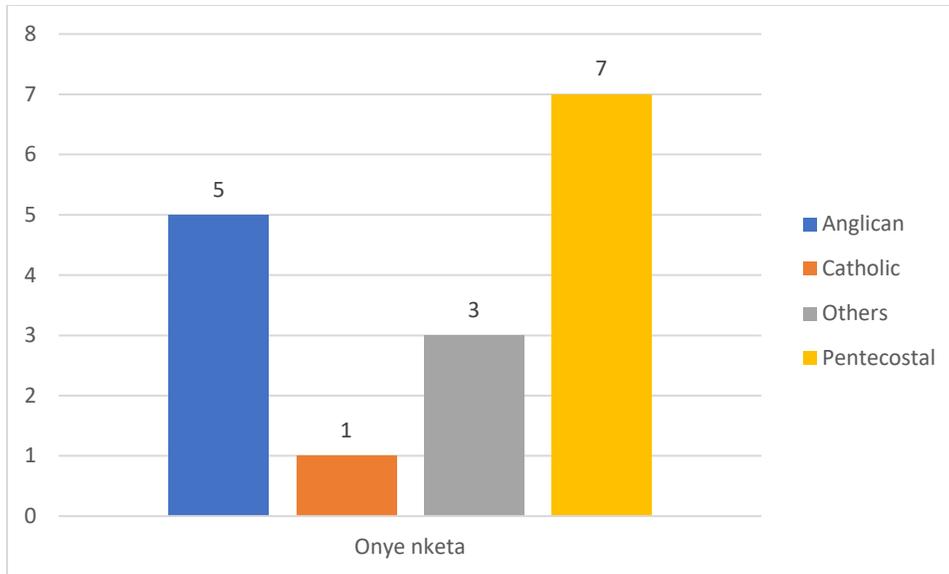
Figure 7. 24. Denomination of respondents who supplied *onye nketa*

In conclusion, the survey shows that Igbo speakers are aware of the term *onye nketa*, used in the UIBN, UIB, IRE and INWT for *heir*. However, this term does not have widespread use as do *ọkpara* and *ọnọchie*, both terms for cultural concepts used to represent *heir* outside the Bible. So, *ọkpara* and *ọnọchie* seem to have restricted the use of *onye nketa* to Bible reading. Furthermore, the conceptualization of heirship in Igbo appears quite different from its conceptualization in English. The definition of *heir* that was presented in the survey refers to inheriting a property or position. However, the terms with the highest tokens emphasize taking over an office than receiving a property. What is more, the different terms supplied by the respondents (Figure 7.15) suggest the institutions where the given term is used for *heir*. For instance, *ọkpara* "first son", *ọkpara eze* "the king's first son", *nwa* "child", and *nwa igwe* "the king's child" talk about who inherits the responsibility in a household when the man or father of the house dies. *Ọnọchie* "a person who sits in another person's stead", *onye nnochi anya* "a person who sits in another person's stead", *ọnọchie eze* "the person who sits in the king's stead", and *osobe* "next in line" all suggest taking over an office or acting in a position occupied earlier by another person. The *Onowu* is a title, and the holder of this title acts for the king in the king's absence or, in some communities, death. These terms suggest that heirship is not conceptualized as merely

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receiving some property. Rather, they suggest that the heir takes over responsibilities as well.

7.2.3   Terms from Description and Terms from Translation of Concepts

This section explores the difference between terms supplied by the respondents when a concept is described and terms supplied when the English term for a concept is presented. The hypothesis is that describing a concept or presenting dictionary definitions of the concept would not link them (the concepts) to any specific contexts or domains, except if a word or expression in the definition makes such allusions. As such, the terms that would be supplied by the responds would not be restricted to one specific domain. However, when the English (specifically Christian) term for a concept is presented, or when some word or expression in the definition links the concept to the Christian domain, terms supplied by the respondents would be from the Christian domain, usually the terms used in the Bible for the said concepts. In other words, the respondents would supply the standard terms for the concepts, especially those used in the Bible. This section thus demonstrates the emergence of a distinct Christian register, i.e., the fact that the English terms for Christian concepts elicited Igbo terms used in the IBTs or terms that link the concept to the Christian religion indicates the emergence of an Igbo Christian register.

Terms supplied when a concept is described or defined are called *terms from description* (TDs) while terms supplied when the English word is presented are called *terms from translation* (TTs). Below, I present the TDs and TTs supplied for *prophet*, *creation*, *church* and *parable*. These are clearly Christian concepts but the lexical items supplied for them validate the hypothesis that the form of the questions influenced the choice of terms supplied in the survey.

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a. Prophet

The concept of *prophet* is represented as *onye amụma* in all the IBTs. As explained in Section 4.1.1.1B, *onye* means "person" and *amụma* relates to shivering and ecstasy. The IBTs semantically extended the word to also mean *prophet* apparently because it somehow reflects how prophets in the Old Testament behave, i.e., they go into a frenzy when they prophesy. It was also observed that there are several potential functional equivalents in Igbo for diviners or people that see the future, viz – *eze mmụọ* "chief priest" and *dibịa afa* "diviner". These existing Igbo terms for cultural equivalents of *prophet* were not used in the IBTs apparently in order to distinguish Biblical prophets from traditional Igbo diviners. In the questionnaire, the concept of *prophet* was described as "a person who has special powers to tell people about things that will happen in the future". Table 7.17 presents all the TDs supplied for *prophet.*

Table 7. 17. Igbo TDs for *prophet* supplied by the respondents

Terms from Description	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Onye amụma	A prophet	103	Yes (all the IBTs)
Ọhụ ụzọ	A seer	37	No
Onye ọhụ	A seer	35	No
Ọgba afa	A diviner	25	No
Dibịa	A diviner or traditional doctor	14	No
Onye ozi	A messenger	5	No
Onye nwere anya ime mmụọ	A person with spiritual eyes	2	No
Ịnyama	A great yam farmer/a woman dedicated to a deity	2	No

Table 7.17 shows that the term with the highest number of tokens is *onye amụma*, the same term that was used for *prophet* in all the IBTs. The term has 103 tokens (55%), which shows that the semantic extension of the compound in the IBTs has spread among Igbo

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speakers. Table 7.18 shows that the same term has the highest tokens when the word "prophet" was presented to the respondents.

Table 7. 18. Igbo TTs for *prophet* supplied by the respondents

Terms from Translation	Meaning	Tokens	IBTs
Onye amụma	A prophet	149	Yes (all the IBTs)
Onye ozi	A messenger	16	No
Onye ozi Chukwu	God's messenger	4	No
Ọhụ ụzọ	A seer	3	No
Ọhụ na mmụọ	One who sees 'in the spirit'	2	No
Onye ọhụ	A seer	2	No

Table 7.18 shows that *onye amụma* has 149 tokens (80%), which further confirms the spread of *onye amụma* as the Igbo term for *prophet* beyond Bible reading.

Interestingly, the difference between *onye amụma* as TD and as TT supports the hypothesis that when a concept is described or defined, it is not usually associated to a specific domain, especially when no expression in the definition makes such direct connections. When the concept of *prophet* was defined, 55% of the respondents supplied *onye amụma* as its Igbo equivalent. This high number could be attributed to the fact that *onye amụma* has been integrated into the Igbo lexicon as an Igbo term for prophet. However, when the word "prophet" was presented in the survey, the number of respondents who supplied *onye amụma* increased markedly from 103 to 149, i.e., 55% of the respondents mentioned *onye amụma* when the concept of *prophet* was described, but the figure increased to 80% when the word "prophet" was presented. This indicates that Igbo speakers are aware of the standard term used for the concept in Christian contexts, which the mention of the English term suggested.

An investigation of the different terms supplied as TDs and TTs further support the position that the mention of the English term linked the concept to the Christian domain and thus influenced the choice of terms supplied. The terms are grouped into three

categories based on the religious contexts in which they are used: religion-inclusive terms, terms associated with traditional Igbo religious practices and terms associated with Christianity. The religion-inclusive terms are those that could be used in Christian as well as in traditional Igbo religious practices. These are presented in Table 7.19.

Table 7. 19. Religion-inclusive terms for *prophet* supplied by the respondents

Term	Meaning	Tokens as Terms from Description	Tokens as Terms from Translation
Ọhụ ụzọ	Seer	37	3
Onye ọhụ	Seer	35	2
Ọhụ na mmụọ	One who sees in the spirit	0	2
Onye nwere anya ime mmụọ	One with spiritual eyes	2	0

Table 7.19 shows that *ọhụ ụzọ* "seer" and *onye ọhụ* "seer" were mentioned as TDs and as TTs. However, *ọhụ ụzọ* has 37 tokens as TD and only 3 tokens as TT. On its part, *onye ọhụ* has 35 tokens as TD and 2 tokens as TT. *Ọhụ na mmụọ* "one who sees in the spirit" was mentioned only as a TT, with 2 tokens, and *onye nwere anya ime mmụọ* "a person with spiritual eyes" was mentioned only as TD, also with 2 tokens. Table 7.19 indicates that the religion-inclusive terms have more tokens as TDs than as TTs.

Table 7.20 shows the terms supplied for *prophet* that are associated with traditional Igbo religious practices.

Table 7. 20. Igbo terms for *prophet* associated with traditional Igbo religious practices

Terms	Meaning	Tokens for Terms from Description	Tokens for Terms from Translation
Ọgba afa	A diviner	25	0
Dibịa	Traditional doctor	14	0
Ịnyama	A great yam farmer/a woman dedicated to a deity	2	0

Table 7.20 shows that no term associated with traditional Igbo religious practices was mentioned as a TT. On the contrary, the TDs feature three of such terms, namely *ọgba afa* "a diviner" (25 tokens), *dibịa* "traditional doctor" (14 tokens), and *ịnyama* "a great yam farmer" or "a woman dedicated to a deity". The fact that no term associated with Igbo traditional practices was mentioned as TT indicates that the mention of "prophet" in the questionnaire made the respondents avoid terms that are associated with Igbo traditional practices, which the Christians see as pagan practices.

Lastly, Table 7.21 presents the terms that are associated with Christianity.

Table 7. 21. Igbo terms for *prophet* associated with Christianity

Terms	Meaning	Tokens for Terms from Description	Tokens for Terms from Translation
Onye amụma	A prophet	103	149
Onye ozi	A messenger	5	16
Onye ozi Chukwu	God's messenger	0	4

From Table 7.21, two terms associated with Christianity were mentioned as TDs and TTs. *Onye amụma* "a prophet" has 103 tokens as TD and 149 tokens as TT, while *onye ozi* "a messenger" has 5 tokens as TD and 16 tokens as TT. *Onye ozi Chukwu* "God's messenger" is mentioned only as a TT, with 4 tokens. These figures indicate that terms associated with Christianity have more tokens as TTs than as TDs.

This analysis of the terms supplied for *prophet* according to the religious contexts they are associated with demonstrates that there is a marked difference between terms supplied when a concept is defined and terms provided when the English term for the concept is mentioned. Where the same terms were mentioned as TDs and TTs, the religion-inclusive terms and terms associated with traditional Igbo practices have more tokens as TDs than as TTs. On the contrary, terms associated with Christianity have more tokens as TTs than

as TDs. Furthermore, the TDs featured some terms that are associated with Igbo religious practices which the TTs did not feature, and the TTs contained some terms associated with Christianity that were not featured in the TDs. In conclusion, the TDs and TTs demonstrate the emergence of an Igbo Christian register, markedly influenced by Bible translation. The continual reading of the Bible among Igbo Christians has exposed them to the standard term used for *prophet* in the Igbo Bible. Thus, when the word "prophet" was presented, the respondents associated it with Christianity and provided the standard term used in the IBTs as well as terms associated with Christianity.

b. Creation

In Section 5.3.1.1a, it was mentioned that the concept of *creation*, specifically creating out of nothing, was introduced into Igbo via Christianity, and spread through the Bible. In all the IBTs, the concept is represented as *okike*, a noun derived from the verb root *ke*. The Igbo verb root *ke* originally meant "share, divide or apportion". Its use in the IBTs to mean "create" involves the semantic extension of the original sense of the root. In this survey, the respondents were first asked for the Igbo term for "the act of making something new". Table 7.22 presents the terms that were supplied.

Table 7. 22. TDs for *creation* supplied by the respondents

Terms from Description	Meaning	Tokens	IBTs
Ime ihe ọhụrụ	To make new things	46	No
Mgbanwe	Change [of form]	33	No
Mmepụta	Creating out	23	No
Mmeghạrị	Re-making	21	No
Okike	Creation	14	Yes (all the IBTs
Ime ihe ka ọ dị ọhụrụ	To make something to be new	14	No
Ịrụ	To build or make	10	No
Ịkepụta	To carve out	7	No
Ọmụmụ ọhụrụ	New learning	6	No

			No
Nwogharị	To change form or appearance	5	
Nrụgharị	To rebuild or remake	5	No
Mkpụgharị	Re-moulding	4	No
Ndozi	Repairing or putting in order	3	No
Nka na ụzụ	Science and technology	2	No
Nsacha	Washing clean	2	No

Table 7.22 shows that the term with the highest number of tokens is *ime ihe ọhụrụ* "to make new things", with 46 tokens (25%). This is followed by *mgbanwe*, with 33 tokens (18%). These two terms with the highest number of tokens were not used in the IBTs for *creation*. The term used for *creation* in the IBTs, *okike* "creation", was the fifth most mentioned term, with only 14 tokens (8%). (This point is expatiated shortly).

The verb roots from which the different terms supplied as TDs for *creation* were formed reflect different conceptualizations of the definition given in the questionnaire. These terms are grouped below according to the verb roots from which they were formed:

1) *me* "make": *ime ihe ọhụrụ* "to make a new thing", *mmepụta* "making out of" *mmegharị* "re-making", *ime ihe ka ọ dị ọhụrụ* "to make something to be new"

2) *gbanwe* "change [form]: *mgbanwe* "change [of form]"

3) *ke* "divide, share, apportion or create": *okike* "creation", *ikepụta* "to create out of or to carve out"

4) *rụ* "make": *ịrụ* "to build or make", *nrụgharị* "to re-build or remake"

5) *mụ* "learn": *ọmụmụ ọhụrụ* "new learning"

6) *nwo* "change": *nwogharị* [108] "to change form or appearance"

7) *kpụ* "mould": *mkpụgharị* "re-moulding"

8) *do* "put": *ndozi* "putting in order or repairing"

9) *sa* "wash": *nsacha* "washing clean"

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[108] Used in the Bible for *conversion*

10) *nka na ụzụ* Igbo terms for "science and technology"

From this analysis, only two of the terms supplied were formed from the root *ke* namely, *okike* and *ikepụta*. The majority of the terms supplied (13 terms) were derived from other verb roots. This confirms Nwoga's (1984: 56) submission that

> [i]n all its known uses, the *ke* root refers to the act of dividing and sharing. *Oke* = a share*; okike* = the act of sharing; *eke* = one who shares; *kee* = divide. All acts akin to "making" have different roots.

Table 7.22 has demonstrated that *ke* is not the main verb root from which terms that portray "acts akin to 'making'" are formed. The terms with higher tokens than *okike* were formed from other roots, e.g., *ime ihe ọhụrụ* "to make new things" (46 tokens), *mmepụta* "making out of" (22 tokens), and *mmegharị* "re-making" (21 tokens) were formed from the verb root *me* "make", while *mgbanwe* "change [of form]" (33 tokens) was derived from *gbanwe* "change form".

One feature of all the terms supplied, except for *okike*, is that they all presuppose the existence of an item from which the new one is made, i.e., apart from *okike*, none of the terms suggests creating something out of nothing. On its part, outside Christian usage, *okike* means "sharing, dividing or apportioning". It means "creating" only within Christian contexts, a point that is further demonstrated by the terms supplied when the word "creation" was presented in the survey (Table 7.23).

Table 7. 23. The TTs for *creation* supplied by the respondents.

Terms from Translation	Meaning	Tokens	IBTs
Okike	Creation	170	Yes (all the IBTs)
Mmepụta	Making out [of]	9	No
Ike ihe	To create something	6	No
Nkepụta	Creating out [of]	4	No
Okike ụwa	The creation of the world	3	No

Unlike the TDs for *creation* which feature 15 unique terms, only 5 terms were mentioned as TTs for creation. This is attributed to the fact that the mentioning of the term "creation" evoked the Christian context. Consequently, the respondents restricted the domains from which they supplied terms. From Table 7.23, the term with the highest number of tokens is *okike* "creation", with 170 tokens (90%). In other words, only 8% of the respondents mentioned *okike* when the definition of "creation" was presented, but 90% of the respondents mentioned *okike* when the word "creation" was presented. The point is that the concept of *creation* is associated with Christianity. Thus, the respondents provided the standard term used in the IBTs for the concept. The fact that they privileged terms not used in the IBTs when the definition of "creation" was presented and *okike* (the term used in the IBTs) when "creation" was mentioned emphasizes that the concept of *creation*, especially creating out of nothing, is a distinctly Christian usage. Besides, unlike the TDs that do not feature any term that refer to the creation of the world, one of the TTs supplied is *okike ụwa* "the creation of the world" (3 tokens). This emphasizes that the word "creation" evoked the idea of the Christian creation story.

However, despite the fact that the Christian idea of creation suggests creating out of nothing, the respondents supplied two terms that suggest creating something new from an existing item namely, *mmepụta* "to make [out of], and *nkepụta* "to create [out of]". This reiterates that the idea of creating something new from existing things is the norm in Igbo cosmology.

In summary, this section has shown that the term used in the IBTs for *creation* was not privileged as the Igbo word for *creation* when the concept was defined. Other terms were privileged instead and the Biblical term was mentioned by only 8% of the respondents. However, when "creation" was presented to the respondents, 90% of them mentioned the term used in the IBTs as the term for *creation*. This supports the hypothesis that when a concept is defined, it is not linked to any specific domain. Consequently, the terms used to express the idea could be sourced from different domains. However, when the English term for the concept is mentioned, it generally evokes a given context, in this case the Christian context. This also suggests the emergence of a distinct Igbo Christian register.

c. Church

The concept of *church* could refer to the building where Christians hold their activities or to the Christian faithful themselves. Table 7.24 presents the terms with which the IBTs represented this concept.

Table 7. 24. The representation of *church* in the IBTs

Bibles	Terms for *Church*	Meaning
IIB	*Ezuko*	A gathering
NIB	*Otu*	A union
UIBN	*Nzukọ*	A gathering
UIB	*Nzukọ*	A gathering
ILB	*Ụlọ chọọchị/* and *ndị chọọchị*	Church house/church people
ICB	*Nzukọ*	A gathering
IRE	*Nzukọ*	A gathering
INWT	*Ọgbakọ*	A gathering

Table 7.24 shows that only the ILB makes a distinction between *church* as a building and *church* as a gathering of Christian faithful. For *ụlọ chọọchị* is a compound formed from a combination of *ụlọ* "house" and *chọọchị*, a graphologically integrated form of "church", while *ndị chọọchị* is formed from *ndị* "people" and *chọọchị*. Both terms then mean "church house" and "church people" respectively. The terms used for *church* by all the other IBTs refer to the church building and not to the people. The IIB, UIBN, UIB, ICB and IRE all translated *church* as *nzukọ* "a gathering", the NIB as *otu* "a union", and the INWT as *ọgbakọ* "a gathering". In the survey, to elicit the TDs for *church*, the following definition was presented in the questionnaire: "a building for Christian religious activities". This definition emphasizes the understanding of *church* as building. It also makes a clear statement that the concept is a Christian one, which means that 1) it is expected that the term with the highest number of tokens should also be the same term with the highest number of tokens when "church" is presented to the respondents, and 2) the difference in the number of tokens would not be significant. Table 7.25 presents the TDs supplied for *church* by the respondents.

Table 7. 25. TDs for *church* supplied by the respondents.

Terms from Description	Meaning	Tokens	IBTs
Ụlọ ụka	Church building	154	No
Ụlọ nsọ	Holy house	31	No
Ụlọ ekpere	Prayer house	15	No
Ụlọ nzukọ	Meeting/assembly house	8	No
Church	The English word is borrowed	4	No
Ebe ikpere Chineke	House for praying to God	3	No
Ụlọ ukwu Chineke	God's big/great house	3	No
Ụlọ nsọ Chineke	God's holy house	3	No
Ụlọ ofufe Chukwu	House of worship of/to God	2	No
Ebe nchụ aja	Place of sacrifice	2	No
Ụlọ ọgbakọ	Assembly house	2	No

From Table 7.25, none of the exact terms used in the IBTs is supplied. However, *nzukọ*, used for *church* in the IIB, UIBN, UIB, ICB and IRE is joined with the noun *ụlọ* "house" to form the compound *ụlọ nzukọ* "meeting house". Also, *ọgbakọ*, used by the INWT, is joined with *ụlọ* to give *ụlọ ọgbakọ* "meeting house". In other words, the respondents clarified that the referent is to the building because the description in the questionnaire stipulated that. The low tokens of these terms – 8 for *ụlọ nzukọ* (4% of the respondents) and 2 for *ụlọ ọgbakọ* (1% of the respondents) – show that they did not have much spread but are used mainly during Bile reading. Table 7.26 shows that *ụlọ ụka* is the most mentioned term. *Ụlọ ụka* is a compound formed from *ụlọ* "house" and *ụka* "talk". Literally, it means "talk house". However, as mentioned in Section 4.1.1.5A, a Christian was called *onye ụka* "talker" at Onitsha apparently because Christians were of the habit of gathering and discussing. Over time, *ụka* became a term associated with Christianity. As such, *ụlọ ụka* means "church house". With 154 tokens, *ụlọ ụka* was mentioned by 83% of the respondents. The fact that it was the most mentioned term by the respondents indicates that, despite the non-use of *ụka* in the IBTs, the word did not disappear from the Igbo lexicon, but rather spread to become the most popular Igbo term for anything Christian.

The second most mentioned TD for *church* is *ụlọ nsọ* "holy house", with 27 tokens (15%). Although none of the IBTs used this term for *church*, the NIB, ILB, ICB and INWT used it for

a different concept – *temple*. So, the fact that Igbo speakers supplied it for *church* suggests that they do not make a distinction between *church* and *temple.* That is, although both concepts – *temple* and *church* – are represented differently in the IBTs, the fact that none of the terms used for *church* in the IBTs was supplied and the term used for *temple* was supplied for *church* suggests that the distinction made between both terms in the IBTs might not have spread into Igbo beyond Bible reading.

Table 7.26 shows the terms supplied by the respondents when the term *church* was mentioned*.*

Table 7. 26. TTs for *church* supplied by the respondents

Terms from Translation	Meaning	Tokens	IBTs
Ụlọ ụka	Church	130	No
Ụka	Church	27	No
Ụlọ nsọ	Holy house	23	No
Ụlọ ekpere	Prayer house	5	No
Church	Loanword	3	No
Ụlọ okpukpere chi	House of prayer to a god	2	No
Ụlọ	House	2	No
Ụlọ Chukwu	House of God	2	No

From Table 7.26, none of the exact terms used in the IBTs is supplied by the respondents when the word "church" was presented. Of the terms supplied as TTs, the closest to a term used in an IBT is the loanword *church*. However, unlike the ILB which distinguishes between the church building (*ụlọ chọọchị*) and the congregation of Christian faithful (*ndị chọọchị*), the loanword in Table 7.26 does not make such distinctions. In other words, none of the lexical innovations of the IBTs to represent *church* did spread into Igbo. Rather, they seem to be restricted to Bible reading.

The term in Table 7.26 with the highest number of tokens is *ụlọ ụka* "church house", with 130 tokens (70%). *Ụlọ ụka* was also the same term with the highest number of tokens in the TDs. The fact that the same term has the highest number of tokens as TD and TT confirms that *ụlọ ụka* has spread as the standard term for *church*. However, that *ụlọ ụka* has

more tokens as TD than as TT could be traced to the fact that "church" is ambiguous – it could refer to the church building or to the Christian faithful. The ambiguity in "church" thus made the respondents to supply terms that refer to the church building as well as those that refer to the church members, e.g., *ụka* "church" and the loanword "church". Interestingly, *ụka* is the term with the second highest number of tokens – 27 tokens (15%). In other words, fewer respondents mentioned *ụlọ ụka* as TT than the number that mentioned it as TD because of the ambiguity in the word "church". That notwithstanding, it is significant that the two TTs with the highest number of tokens contain the word *ụka*. This validates the hypothesis that when a definition of a concept specifies the domain of the concept, the TD with the highest number of tokens would be the same as the TT with the highest number of tokens. Despite the fact that "church" is ambiguous, the TTs supplied with the highest tokens both contain *ụka*. This further indicates that *ụlọ ụka* and *ụka* are the standard terms for *church* among Igbo speakers.

In the analysis of the TDs and TTs for *prophet* and *creation* above, there is a clear difference in the domains from which terms are supplied as well as in their tokens. However, the differences between the TDs and TTs for *church* seem superficial. The same word has the highest mention in both sets and the other terms supplied are all from the same Christian domain. This is so because the definition of *church* given the respondents makes a direct reference to Christianity, and the word *church* itself is associated with Christianity. Thus, the respondents used terms from the Christian domain in their responses to both sets of questions. This is unlike the concepts discussed above where the definitions provided do not make any reference or allusions to any specific context or religion.

d. Parable

The concept of *parable* is represented as *ilu* by all the IBTs apart from the ICB. The ICB represents it as *akụkọ*. As highlighted in Section 6.1.2A, *ilu* is the Igbo conceptual equivalence for *proverb* while *akụkọ* simply means "story or tale". The use of *ilu* for *parable* in the IBTs involves the semantic extension of the term to also mean *parable*. The ICB

apparently does not accept the earlier IBTs' use of *ilu* for *parable* and so it replaces the term with *akụkọ*. Furthermore, the ICB's use of *akụkọ* for *parable* involves an extension of the register of *akụkọ* from an everyday term with its everyday usage to a religious term with some religious signification. Incidentally, the closest Igbo conceptual equivalent of *parable* is *ụkabụilu*, a compound formed from *ụka* "talk/speech", *bụ* "is", and *ilu* "proverb". Thus, *ụkabụilu* literally means "talk or speech is proverbial". Emenanjo (2012: 73) defines *ụkabụilu* as "a short withy story with a proverbial or parabolic motif or thrust". It is shorter than the folktale but more prosaic than the proverb, "which is essentially poetic and cryptic in its use of language" (Emenanjo 2012: 75). In effect, *ụkabụilu*, often translated as an anecdote, belongs to a genre that is different from the folktale and the proverb. It is different from the folktale in that it is proverbial, and from the proverb because of its prosaic nature. In other words, it has features of both folktales and proverbs, a quality seen in the literal meaning of the term - "talk or speech is proverbial". This clarification is necessary because *ụkabụilu* is also provided as a term for *parable* and with high tokens both as a TD and as a TT.

To elicit the TDs for *parable*, the following definition was presented to the respondents: "a short simple story that teaches or explains an idea, especially a moral or religious idea, like those told by Jesus Christ in the Bible". The allusion to the stories told by Jesus Christ in the Bible clearly suggests that the concept belongs to the Christian domain. Table 7.27 shows the TDs supplied by the respondents for *parable*.

Table 7. 27. TDs for *parable* supplied by the respondents

Terms from Description	Meaning	Tokens	IBTs
Ilu	Proverb	52	Yes
Ụkabụilu	Anecdote	41	No
Akụkọ ifo	Folktale	21	No
Akụkọ	Story	14	No
Akụkọ nkuzi	Didactic story	5	No
Oziọma	Good news/gospel	4	No
Okwu dị omimi	Deep word	4	No
Akụkọ akwụkwọ nsọ	Story [from] the scriptures	2	No
Ilu okwu	Proverb	2	No
Akụkọ ntuzi aka	Didactic story	2	No

Obere ihe nkọwa dị omimi	A little deep explanatory story	2	No
Akwụkwọ nsọ	Holy book/ scriptures	2	No
Parable	Loanword	2	No
Ihe omimi	Deep/mysterious thing	2	No
Akpalaokwu	Idiom	2	No

In Table 7.27, *ilu* "proverb" is the most mentioned TD, with 52 tokens (28%). The other terms with high tokens include *ụkabụilu* "anecdote" with 41 tokens (22%), *akụkọ ifo* "folktale" with 21 tokens (11%), and *akụkọ* "story" with 14 tokens (8%). The fact that *ilu* has the highest tokens is attributable to the direct reference to Jesus Christ in the definition provided, i.e., mentioning Jesus Christ in the definition suggested the Christian context and, consequently, more respondents provided the standard term used for such stories in most of the IBTs. The ICB is a relatively recent translation and has had less influence on the language use of the respondents in comparison to the older translations. In effect, its use of *akụkọ* for *parable* has little influence on the respondents. This explains the low number of tokens for *akụkọ*, 14 tokens (8%).

Interestingly, *ụkabụilu*, mentioned above as the Igbo conceptual equivalent of *parable*, has the second highest tokens. The import of this is that the IBTs' use of *ilu* for *parable* did not displace *ụkabụilu* as the Igbo term for *parable*. In fact, it could be surmised that *ụkabụilu* would have had the highest number of tokens if not for the direct reference to the Christian context in the definition provided. For one, the difference between the tokens of *ilu* and *ụkabụilu* is not significant – *ilu* (52 tokens) and *ụkabụilu* (41 tokens). The reference to the Christian context makes *ilu* in this context a religious (Christian) term, i.e., *ilu* is used for *parable* in the Christian context while *ụkabụilu* is used outside this context.

Just like the distinctions between TDs and TTs supplied for *church* above, the TTs supplied for *parable* do not have any marked distinction from the TDs, as seen in Table 7.28.

Table 7. 28. TTs for *parable* supplied by the respondents

Terms from Translation	Meaning	Tokens	IBTs
Ilu	Proverb	79	No
Ụkabụilu	Anecdote	50	No
Akụkọ	Story	7	No
Akpalaokwu	Idiom	5	No
Okwu omimi	Deep/mysterious word	4	No
Ihe omimi	Deep/mysterious thing	4	No
Ilu okwu	Proverb	3	No
Okwu dị omimi	Deep/mysterious word	3	No
Akụkọ ifo	Folktale	3	No
Okwu nka	Old saying	2	No
Akụkọ igwe	Story about heaven	2	No
Akụkọ nkuzi	Didactic story	2	No

Table 7.28 shows that *ilu* has 79 tokens, which means 42% of the respondents mentioned the term. This is followed by *ụkabụilu*, with 50 tokens (27%) and *akụkọ*, with 7 tokens (4%). Several similarities could be seen in the TTs and the TDs for *parable*. One, the same terms have the highest tokens – *ilu*, *ụkabụilu* and *akụkọ*, in the same order. Two, almost the same terms are supplied for both sets of terms. These similarities are a result of the domain evoked by the questions. For the TDs, the definition of *parable* given made a direct reference to the Christian context, and for the TTs, the term *parable* represented a Christian concept and thus evoked the Christian context. Thus, the terms supplied for both questions feature mainly terms from the Christian register.

So, both sets of terms (TDs and TTs) indicate that the semantic extension of *ilu* to also mean *parable* has spread into the language. However, *ilu* did not displace *ụkabụilu*, the existing Igbo equivalent for *parable*. Rather, both terms co-exist as terms for *parable*, but they are used in different contexts. *Ilu* seems to be used for *parable* only within the context of Christian discourse while *ụkabụilu* is used outside the Christian*. This supports the proposition that an Igbo Christian register is emerging.

7.2.4 Distinct Denominational Lexical Forms

The preceding section explores the emergence of an Igbo Christian register. This section investigates the possibilities of the emergence of a distinct denominational register. The point is that the spread of the lexical and conceptual innovations among Igbo speakers not only indicates the emergence of an Igbo Christian register, it also suggests the emergence of a distinct denominational register. The terms for concepts analysed in this section show that there are some distinct lexical forms associated mainly with Igbo Catholics. Concepts that exhibit this linguistic markedness include *angel*, *eternity* and *holiness.*

a. *Mmụọ ozi* vs *Mmụọọma* (Angel)

For the concept of *angel*, the IIB borrowed the English word as *angeli*, the ICB used *mmụọọma* "good spirit", while all the other translations used *mmụọ ozi* "spirit messenger". The IIB, UIB and IRE also used *onye ozi* "messenger", although this use is minimal. Section 5.3.1.1Ci explains that the ICB's preference for *mmụọọma* as against *mmụọ ozi* is therapeutic, aimed at correcting the perceived anomaly in the conceptualization of *mmụọ ozi*. *Demon* is conceptualized as *mmụọ ọjọọ* and *ajọ mmụọ*, both terms meaning "evil spirit". Thus, the conceptualization of *angel* as *mmụọ ozi* "spirit messenger" does not present *angel* as the opposite of *demon.* This apparent anomaly is rectified in the ICB's representation of *angel* as *mmụọọma* "good spirit", thereby clarifying the binary of "evil and good", which *ozi* "message" does not clarify.

For clarity, *mmụọọma* was not first used by the Igbo Catholic in the ICB. The Igbo Catholic Church had been using *mmụọ ọma* many years before the ICB was translated. This term is used in the Igbo Catholic liturgy and prayers. For example, in the Angelus, the line "the angel of the Lord declared unto Mary" is said in Igbo as "*mmụọ ọma nke Osebuluwa bịakutere Marịa*". So, this term has been taught the Catholic faithful for decades and has

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become a part of their linguistic repertoire. Thus, the ICB only adopted a lexical form that has been in use among Igbo Catholic faithful.

In the questionnaire, the word *angel* was presented to the respondents who were then requested to provide its equivalent in Igbo. Table 7.29 shows the different terms supplied as the Igbo terms for *angel*.

Table 7. 29. Igbo terms for *angel* supplied by the respondents

Terms	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Mmụọ ozi	Spirit messenger	115	Yes
Mmụọ ọma	Good spirit	57	Yes
Mmụọ nsọ	Holy spirit	8	No
Onye ozi	Messenger	5	Yes

Table 7.29 shows that the three terms used in the IBTs for *angel* – *mmụọ ozi*, *mmụọ ọma* and *onye ozi* – were also supplied by the respondents, which indicates that they are aware of the use of the terms in the IBTs. The fourth term, *mmụọ nsọ*, is used in the IBTs for the *Holy Spirit.* Table 7.29 shows that *mmụọ ozi* is the most mentioned term in the survey, with 115 tokens (62%). The term with the second highest number of tokens is *mmụọ ọma*, with 57 tokens (31%). These figures suggest that *mmụọ ozi* is the most used term for the concept of *angel*.

As mentioned above, the only IBT that used *mmụọ ọma* for *angel* is the ICB, a translation that was done by the Catholic Church. The distribution of the respondents that supplied *mmụọ ọma* according to their denominations (Table 7.30) reveals that the term is used more by members of the Catholic church.

Table 7. 30. Denominations of respondents who supplied *mmụọọma*

Denominations	Tokens
Anglican	3
Catholic	38
Others	1
Pentecostal	15
Total	57

Of the 57 persons that mentioned *mmụọ ọma*, 38 were Catholic (67%), 15 Pentecostal (26%), 3 Anglican (5%)and 1 Others (2%). The fact that 67% of the respondents who supplied *mmụọ ọma* were Catholic indicates that this lexical item is used mainly by members of the Catholic Church. What is more, the lexical item was used only in the Bible translated by the Catholic Church. It is also used only in the Catholic liturgy and prayer books. In other words, this distinct linguistic usage by Igbo Catholic faithful suggests the emergence of a denominational (Catholic) register.

b. *Nsọ* vs *Asọ* (Holiness)

All the IBTs used *nsọ* "holiness" or *ịdị nsọ* "being holy" for *holiness.* The UIB and IRE also used *ịdị ọcha* "being pure" for the concept. As explained in Section 5.3.1.1Ci, *nsọ* was originally an Igbo term for sacred prohibitions. The early missionaries semantically extended the term to also mean *holiness.* In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked for the Igbo word for *holiness*, and Table 7.31 presents the terms supplied.

Table 7. 31. Igbo terms for *holiness* supplied by the respondents

Terms	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Ịdị nsọ	Being holy	78	Yes
Nsọ	Holiness	72	Yes
Ịdị asọ	Being holy	23	No
Asọ	Holiness	6	No
Ịdị ọcha	Being pure	6	Yes
Ezi omume	Good behaviour	2	No

Table 7.31 shows that *nsọ* is the most mentioned term for *holiness*, alone or as a component of a compound word, i.e., the two terms that have the highest tokens contain the word *nsọ*.

Ịdị nsọ has 78 tokens (42%), while *nsọ* has 72 tokens (39%). This shows that the semantic extension of *nsọ* in the IBTs has spread into the language.

The next two terms with high tokens contain the word *asọ*, alone or in combination with another word. *Asọ* is a dialectal variant of *nsọ*. From Table 7.31, *ịdị asọ* has 23 tokens (12%) while *asọ* has 6 tokens (3%). In comparison with terms that contain *nsọ*, terms formed from *asọ* do not seem to have widespread usage. However, an investigation of the background of the respondents who supplied terms formed with *asọ* (Table 7.32) reveals that majority of them were Catholic.

Table 7. 32. Denominations of respondents who supplied *asọ*

Terms with *Asọ*	Anglican	Catholic	Pentecostal	Total
Ịdị asọ	3	18	2	23
Asọ	-	6	-	6

Table 7.32 reveals that, of the 23 respondents that provided *ịdị asọ* for *holiness*, 18 were Catholic (78%), 3 were Anglican (13%) while 2 were Pentecostal (9%). All the 6 persons that mentioned *asọ* are Catholic. These figures show that the use of *ịdị asọ* and *asọ* as terms for *holiness* is distinctly Catholic.

Although *ịdị asọ* or *asọ* is not used in the IBTs, including the ICB, it is found in other Catholic texts. This usage is the norm especially in references to Catholic saints*.* For example, from *Katikizim nke okwukwe nzukọ Katọlịk n'asụsụ Igbo* (the 1996 Igbo Catechism of the Catholic Church)[109], the Catholic "Prayer to St Joseph" is written in Igbo as "*Arịrịọ a na-arịọ Josef dị asọ*" (p. 132). Also, in the Catholic "Hail Mary", the line "Holy Mary, Mother of God" is written as "*Marịa dị asọ, Nne nke Chukwu*" (p. 127)*.* So, even though *asọ* is not used in the ICB, the Igbo Catholics have internalized this peculiar form such that it has become a part of their linguistic norms as Catholics.

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[109] This 1996 edition by Jeremiah Nwosu and Emmanuel Otteh is a revision of the 1941 edition of the Igbo Catholic catechism, which shows that the usage is not recent.

c. *Ebighi ebi* vs *Ebeebe* (Eternity)

The adjective *eternal* is represented in all the IBTs as *ebighi ebi* "un-ending", while the noun *eternity*[110] does not have a uniform representation in the translations: *mgbe niile ebighi ebi* "all the time without end" (UIB and IRE), *mgbe ebighi ebi* "time without end" (INWT), and *ebighi ebi* and *ebeebe*, dialectal variants of "without end" (ILB and ICB respectively). In all these terms, elaboration is seen in the extension of the register of the nominal compound *ebighi ebi* from that of everyday usage to also include a religious usage. In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked for the Igbo word for *eternity*. Table 7.33 presents the terms supplied by the respondents.

Table 7. 33. Igbo terms for *eternity* supplied by the respondents

Terms	Meaning	Tokens	Used in the IBTs?
Ebighi ebi	Without end	121	Yes (ILB, ICB)
Ebeebe	Without end	34	No
Ndụ ebighi ebi	Life without end	6	No
Ndụ ebeebe	Life without end	5	No
Mgbe ebighi ebi	Time without end	3	Yes (INWT)
Ndụdụgandụ	One life-time to another life-time	2	No
Ụwatụwa	Life after life	2	No

Table 7.33 shows that the most mentioned term for *eternity* is *ebighi ebi*. It has 121 tokens (65%). This indicates that *ebighi ebi* is the most used term for *eternity*. In other words, the use of the term in the IBTs has spread among Igbo speakers. The next most mentioned term is *ebeebe*, which has 34 tokens (18%). Although fewer respondents mentioned this term in comparison to *ebighi ebi*, the fact that it is the second most mentioned term indicates that it must be used by a large population of Igbo speakers. *Ebeebe* is also a component of the compound *ndụ ebeebe* "life without end". An investigation of the background of the

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[110] The noun *eternity* appears only in Isaiah 57: 15, which is why there is no term provided for the IIB, NIB and UIBN.

respondents who supplied *ebeebe* and *ndụ ebeebe* for *eternity* (Table 7.34) reveals that they are mainly Catholic faithful.

Table 7. 34. Denominations of respondents who supplied *ebeebe* and *ndụ ebeebe*

Terms with *ebeebe*	Anglican	Catholic	Pentecostal	Total
Ebeebe	1	26	7	34
Ndụ ebeebe	1	3	1	5
Total	2	29	8	39

Table 7.34 shows that, of the 34 persons that mentioned *ebeebe*, 26 were Catholic (76%), 1 Anglican (3%) and 7 Pentecostal (21%). Of the 6 respondents who supplied *ndụ ebeebe*, 3 were Catholic, 1 Pentecostal and 1 Anglican. So, *ebeebe*, alone or as a component of a compound word, is a distinctly Catholic usage.

Again, like the last two lexical forms analysed above, the use of *ebeebe* among Igbo Catholics predates the publication of the ICB. It is used in many Igbo Catholic prayers to represent many expressions denoting *eternity*. For instance, the last line of the Apostles' Creed that reads

51. "I believe in the Holy Spirit […] and life everlasting. Amen"

is said in Igbo thus:

52. "*Ekwe m na Mụọ Nsọ […] na ndụ ebebe. Amen*" (Ursula 1966: 5).

The repeated use of this lexical form over time has made it an integral part of the Igbo Catholics' linguistic repertoire.

In summary, this section has demonstrated that there are lexical forms that are associated with or used mainly by Igbo Catholics. The few non-Catholics who supplied the terms might be former Catholics who converted to other denominations or persons who have had close contacts with the Catholic Church. Whatever the case may be, these peculiar lexical forms indicate that a distinct Igbo Catholic register has emerged or is gradually evolving.

To conclude this chapter, the last four sub-sections have provided answers to four of the questions raised at the beginning of this chapter. Answers to the first sub-question – "Are the Igbo aware of these innovations?" – are implied in the analyses in the four sub-sections. The lexical innovations of the IBTs are part of the terms supplied by the respondents, which indicates that there is a high level of awareness among Igbo speakers of these lexical innovations. The awareness could be attributed to the background of the respondents most of whom have been taught Igbo up to secondary school level and beyond. Thus, the Igbo they speak has been influenced by the formal education system. They also read the Bible in Igbo and so have been exposed to these lexical innovations in the IBTs.

For some of the lexical innovations, Igbo speakers not only use the terms elaborated via Bible translations, they also use the elaborations as springboard for further lexical creations. However, further investigation reveals that not all the lexical innovations have this widespread acceptance and use in the same sense as used in the Bible, for there are lexical innovations in the IBTs that are understood differently and thus used in contexts different from the ones used in the IBTs. Such peculiar understandings and usages are usually a result of the relations between the terms in question and other terms in the Igbo language. One such relation is synonymy, as seen between *akwa nkwụba* and *akwa mgbochi*, used in the IBTs for *curtain* and *veil* respectively. These two concepts have distinct representations and conceptualizations in the Bible. However, it appears this distinction has not spread beyond the Bible. Rather, Igbo speakers use the terms as synonyms for the same concept. With this re-conceptualization of *veil* and *curtain*, the term used in the IBTs for *veil* became the popular term among Igbo speakers while the term for *curtain* gradually goes into disuse. Thus, the respondents provided *akwa mgbochi* as the Igbo term for *curtain*, rather than *akwa nkwụba* that was used in the IBTs.

Furthermore, some of the lexical innovations in the IBTs are restricted to Bible reading by other terms in the language that function in the same capacity as the innovated term. That is, the lexical innovations of the IBTs are used mainly during Bible reading and in Christian discourse. Outside this context, other terms are used instead. A case in point is *mkpụrụ obi*, coined in the IBTs for *soul.* However, *mmụọ* "spirit" performs the same function as intended for *mkpụrụ obi*. Thus, *mmụọ* has restricted *mkpụrụ obi* to the Christian context. A similar

example is *iko nwaanyị*, used in the IBTs for *harlot.* This term is not used outside Bible reading for *harlot.* This is because *akwụna* has gained more acceptance in the language for the same concept.

An interesting finding in this chapter is that the nature of the question posed on concepts influenced the range of the contexts from which the respondents supplied terms. When a concept was defined or described, the respondents supplied terms from Christian and non-Christian contexts. In fact, terms supplied from outside the Christian contexts tend to be more than those from within the context. They also have higher tokens. This is so especially when the definitions provided did not make any direct allusion to Christianity. However, when the definition contained terms that linked the concept to Christianity, the terms supplied by the respondents tend to be from within the Christian register, most of which were the same terms used in the IBTs for the concepts under study. On the contrary, when the English term for the concept was mentioned, the respondents supplied mainly terms from the Christian context. This shows that a distinct Igbo Christian register has emerged. Thus, the lexical innovations of the IBTs not only expanded the vocabulary of Igbo and the concepts in the people's cosmology. They also set the stage for some competition between the lexical innovations on the one hand and existing Igbo terms on the other. Over time, this competition has resulted in a separation of roles and contexts in which some of these terms are used. Terms that are viewed as mere synonyms might not be just that – they could be distinct terms used to clarify the domain in question, like *alaeze* for the heavenly *kingdom* and *obodo* for an earthly kingdom, or *okike* for creating out of nothing and *mmepụta* for creating from an existing thing.

Beyond the emergence of a distinct Christian register, this chapter also shows that some Christian denominations, e.g., the Catholic Church, also seem to be evolving a distinct denominational register. Section 7.2.4 demonstrates that there are some lexical forms used by members of the Catholic Church, which are hardly used by members of other denominations. These lexical items were not necessarily introduced into Igbo via the ICB. Indeed, their use predates the translation of the ICB. However, the ICB adopted some of them, while some were used in other texts of the Catholic Church. Whatever the case may

be, the fact that they are terms associated mainly with the Catholic Church suggests the emergence of an Igbo Catholic register.

CONCLUSION

> *Dennis did not invent or manufacture a new brand of Igbo. What he and his team of translators did was mere intra-language borrowing – introducing certain words from dialects into the mainstream of Igbo in order to enrich it, and adopting the more universal versions of lexicals to become the standards. (Nwadike 2005: 98)*

8.1 Overview of Major Findings

This study set out to investigate how Bible translation has contributed to the elaboration of the Igbo language. Besides adopting the applied linguistic perspective of language elaboration as the expansion of the functions of a language to cover other domains, this study also embraced the lexical and semantic elaboration of the lexicon of the language to enable it express ideas in the new domain. Language elaboration has, therefore, been used in this study to track the expansion of the functions of Igbo in Christianity, and the lexical and semantic changes its lexicon underwent in order to accommodate the new religion and its ideas. The study also explored the spread of the lexical and conceptual innovations among Igbo speakers. It was guided by the following questions: 1) What lexical processes were adopted in creating new terms in Bible translation into Igbo? 2) What strategies were employed in representing Christian concepts in the IBTs? How have these lexical and conceptual innovations evolved across the different IBTs? How have the Biblical lexical and conceptual innovations spread among Igbo speakers? Below, is a summary of the major findings of the study.

Firstly, the IBTs enriched the lexicon of the Igbo language mainly by utilizing the existing resources in the language. The major lexical process used is compounding. In some instances, the words were first semantically extended before being combined with other

words. Other lexical processes used include descriptive phrases and direct lexical borrowings. These processes entail some lexical or semantic changes to existing Igbo words, or the introduction of loanwords into the language.

Secondly, the IBTs introduced Christian concepts into Igbo mainly by appropriating existing terms for Igbo concepts and giving them new significations. The strategies utilized include semantic shift, semantic extension, and register extension. Some of the semantic changes effected by the IBTs entail valorising or pejorizing some terms for traditional Igbo concepts in order to front the ideologies of the Christian institutions. As more Igbo people convert to Christianity, they are exposed to the Christian concepts as expressed in the IBTs and, over time, these terms become integrated into Igbo and are given dictionary entries.

Thirdly, the diachronic study of the lexical and conceptual innovations reveals some aspects of language elaboration that are not captured in earlier studies. For one, the later translations of the Bible were done partly in reaction to the earlier translations, i.e., to correct the perceived shortcomings of the earlier translations. For instance, the later IBTs replaced potentially ambiguous terms with unambiguous terms that make their meanings clearer. This is seen in instances where the older IBTs use the same Igbo term for two Christian concepts, and where the lexical choices of the older IBTs for some Christian concepts also refer to non-Christian concepts. The lexical and semantic differentiation of these concepts by the latter IBTs further expanded the lexicon of the Igbo language as well as the Igbo Christian register. The later IBTs also took extra steps to further indigenize the language of the Bible to the local Igbo context by using as few foreign elements as possible. This is achieved by replacing English loanwords with Igbo words, and adapting the spellings of some loanwords to reflect the Igbo grapho-phonological system.

Fourthly, the survey on the spread of the IBTs' lexical and conceptual innovations shows that 1) some of the innovated terms are used in Igbo in non-religious contexts with the same meanings as used in the IBTs, 2) some of the innovations are restricted to religious contexts (e.g. Bible reading) because other terms in the language perform the same function, 3) some of the innovations are associated more with the Christian domain, which indicates the emergence of an Igbo Christian register, and 4) some innovated lexical forms

are peculiar or associated with specific Christian denominations, e.g., the Catholic Church, which signals the emergence of an Igbo Catholic register. Very importantly, the survey reveals that some of the innovations of the IBTs form the basis for further elaborations, this time by Igbo speakers outside the IBTs. An example is the metaphorical use of the verb *ma* "to know" in the IBTs to also mean 'to have sex', as seen in the descriptive phrase used for *virgin* (c.f. Section 4.2a). The descriptive phrase used in the IBTs refers only to the female virgin. However, the terms supplied for *virgin* in the survey includes terms for male virgins and terms for both male and female virgins.

In summary, the Christian institutions that did the Bible translations might have embarked on the projects with the sole aim of spreading Christianity to the Igbo people. However, the translations have had a remarkable impact on the Igbo language and cosmology. The decision to translate the Bible into Igbo expanded the functions of the language by using it to express Christian ideas. Expressing these ideas in Igbo entailed elaborating the forms and meanings of existing Igbo terms to accommodate the new ideas. The continuous use of these elaborated terms in the IBTs engendered their spread into Igbo beyond their use in the IBTs and in religious contexts.

8.2   Implications of the Study

Studies of the elaboration of Igbo have been generally silent on the contributions of Bible translation to the evolution and standardization of Igbo. The few studies that acknowledge this (e.g., Echeruo 2005, Akwanya 2014) do not show the enormity of the impact, thereby giving the impression that such contributions are minimal. This study has demonstrated that Bible translation has played a central role in elaborating Igbo. Bible translation activities set the stage for the first descriptive linguistic studies of Igbo. Bible translation also engendered the first attempts by an institution at expanding the Igbo lexicon to cope with new realities. What is more, there are new and on-going Bible translation projects into Igbo. For example, Christ's Embassy Church, a Pentecostal Church founded in Nigeria, produced an Igbo translation of the New Testament in 2015. This means that the complete

translation, i.e., Old and New Testaments, is on-going and would be published soon. Unfortunately, these new translations could not be used in this study because they were not published when the research started.

Consequently, there is need for educational institutions that offer courses in Igbo Linguistics to include modules on the contribution of Bible translation to the elaboration of Igbo in the curriculum. This would engender a better understanding of the changes Bible translation has triggered in the language since the mid-1800s till date. Igbo linguists and language planners also need to collaborate with religious institutions that evangelize in Igbo, especially those that were involved in Bible translation. Igbo language planners would benefit a lot from the success, though inadvertent, of these religious institutions in introducing and spreading novel lexical items through the Bible.

8.3   Suggestions for Further Research

Despite the depth of this study, some of its findings indeed open new areas that deserve further scholarly investigation. Findings on the recent Bible translations done by denominations, i.e., the ICB and INWT, stand out in this regard. Beyond their contribution to the elaboration of Igbo and indigenization of the Bible, these translations are also sites for some ideological statements by the Catholic Church and the Watch Tower Society. The fact that, despite the existence of other Bible translations in Igbo, these Christian denominations embarked on producing Bible translations for their respective denominations indicates that they were dissatisfied with the existing translations. Igbo Bible translation scholars could build on the findings of this study to further explore the strategies adopted by the institutions in promoting their respective denominational ideologies.

Findings on the emergence of an Igbo Christian register and denominational registers could be complemented with data from outside the Bible. For instance, the Catholic Church, Anglican Church and Watch Tower Society have many other religious texts published in

Igbo. Data from these texts and the IBTs could be used for a more comprehensive study of the Igbo Christian register. The texts published by individual denominations could also be compared to understand the distinctive linguistic usages of the denominations.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello,

Many thanks for taking out time to fill out this questionnaire. The project is part of my on-going doctoral research at the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies, University of Bayreuth on Bible translations and language elaboration. Findings from this survey would be treated with the utmost confidentiality it deserves.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Tick the option that best describes you and, where required, provide precise answers to the questions.

A. **Personal profile**

1. State of Origin: ☐ Abia

    ☐ Anambra

    ☐ Delta

    ☐ Ebonyi

    ☐ Enugu

    ☐ Imo

    ☐ Rivers

2. Local Government Area: _____

3. Town/village/city: _____

4. Age range: ☐ 16-25

    ☐ 26-35

    ☐ 35-45 ☐

    ☐ 46+

5. Sex: □ Female

                       □ Male

6. Profession: □ Student

                       □ Unemployed

                       □ Civil servant

                       □ Academic

                       □ Farmer

                       □ Business man/woman

                       □ Other _____

B. Religion

1. Your religion: □ Traditional Igbo

                       □ Christianity

                       □ Islam

                       □ Atheist/agnostic

                       □ Others _____

2. If Christian, which denomination?

                       □ Catholic

                       □ Anglican

                       □ Jehovah's Witnesses

                       □ Pentecostal

                       □ Others (please specify)

3. You attend church services/mass/ meetings in

                       □ English

                       □ Igbo

                       □ English and Igbo

                       □ Others (specify)

C. Proficiency in Igbo

1. At what level did you stop formally learning/studying Igbo?

                       □ I never learnt/studied Igbo

                       □ Primary

                       □ Secondary

                       □ Post-secondary

2. How well can you read in Igbo?

                ☐ I cannot read in Igbo

                ☐ Below average

                ☐ Average

                ☐ Above average

                ☐Very well

3. What do you read often in Igbo?

                ☐ Facebook posts

                ☐ Bible

                ☐ Other religious texts (specify) _____

                ☐ Fiction

                ☐ Academic set texts

                ☐ Others (specify)

D. How are the following called in Igbo? Feel free to provide more than one response

1. A piece of material, especially cloth, that hangs across a window or opening to make a room or part of a room dark or private

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

2. The person that inherits a property or position, like a throne, from another person when the second person dies

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

3. The person that sees some event happen, for instance, a crime or an accident and is called to testify

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

4. A strong belief in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual conviction

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

5. A short, simple story that teaches or explains an idea, especially a moral or religious idea, like those told by Jesus Christ in the Bible

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

6. The act of making something new

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

7. An unusual and logically unexplainable happening that is thought to have been caused by God because it does not follow the usual laws of nature

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

8. A follower or pupil of a teacher, leader, or philosopher

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

9. A building devoted to the worship of a sacred or holy being

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

10. A person who has never had sex before

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

11. A person who has special powers to tell people about things that will happen in the future

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

12. A building for Christian religious activities:

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

13. A table or flat-topped block used for making offerings or sacrifices to a deity

    i.   _____

    ii.   _____

14. (In Christian and Jewish belief) the supreme spirit of evil

    i.   _____

ii. _____

15. The place where sinners are sent after death to be punished forever

    i. _____

    ii. _____

16. A tenth of a person's income given to the Church

    i. _____

    ii. _____

17. The spiritual part of a person that continues to exist in some form even after their body has died

    i. _____

    ii. _____

18. A Christian ceremony in which a person has water sprinkled on their head, or is immersed into a pool of water

    i. _____

    ii. _____

19. The place good people go to after death to be rewarded for their good deeds

    i. _____

    ii. _____

20. The day of the week God rested after creation

    i. _____

    ii. _____

E. **What are the Igbo word(s) for the following? Also feel free to provide more than one response**

	English	Igbo	Other Igbo words	Context of usage
1.	Beast			
2.	Kingdom			
3.	Witness			
4.	Parables			
5.	Conversion			
6.	Saint			
7.	Angel			

8.	Apostle			
9.	Eternity			
10.	Sacred			
11.	Messiah			
12.	Sacrilege			
13.	Creation			
14.	Church			
15.	Baptism			
16.	Taboo			
17.	Harlot			
18.	Gospel			
19.	Priest			
20.	Demon			
21.	Holiness			
22.	Concubine			
23.	Sabbath			
24.	Scripture			
25.	Altar			
26.	Temple			
27.	Salvation			
28.	Snow			
29.	Synagogue			
30.	Righteousness			
31.	Wilderness			
32.	Prophet			
33.	Unclean spirit			
34.	Summer and winter			
35.	Christianity			
36.	Religion			
37.	Repentance			
38.	Gentile			
39.	Confession			