

ERROR IDENTIFICATION AND CORRECTION ACROSS THE LEVELS OF EDUCATION: A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVEMENT IN WRITTEN IGBO

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Abstract

Error analysis is a branch of applied linguistics that concerns itself with the compilation, study and analysis of errors made by the language learner. Presently, Igbo language is being studied in many institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. Again, the language has been made one of the General Studies (GS) in our institutions of higher learning, still learners commit a lot of errors in writing it. The purpose of this study is to identify the consistent errors in written Igbo language across the levels of education and how to remedy them. The focus is on errors, their analysis, corrections and remedies. The origin of written Igbo was traced, appreciating the role of missionaries in that direction. Importance of proper writing was stressed. A dictation exercise was given to students to write. The exercise was marked and the errors of the students were identified. They were analyzed, identifying the linguistics areas where the errors are pointing to. They were corrected and the areas of linguistic deficiencies were stressed and retaught to remedy the errors. The study recommends that teachers should give students dictation exercises and essays from time to time to identify their errors and direct their teaching to them with the sole aim of correcting them. The study concluded that if the students are given dictation exercises and essays at different levels, their errors identified and corrected, there will be improvement in the teaching and learning of Igbo language.

1.0 Introduction

Man has been communicating with one another right from the time he was created. This communication has been in two forms: verbal and non-verbal communication. Man communicates non-verbally using signs, signals, symbols, etc. He communicates verbally using language. Animals can communicate but they do not have the capacity to use language. The capacity to use language is a special gift to man by God. The four basic language skills in learning any language are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Igbo language and other African languages have undergone various stages in their development.

Before 1882, educational activities had been the exclusive concern of the missionaries in Nigeria with much interest in developing some Nigerian languages (Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba and Efik). Then in 1882 the British

Government enacted her first educational ordinance in her West African colonies. This infamous ordinance was inimical to indigenous languages. A lot of people were against the ordinance. In 1926, a new education ordinance was enacted. It was in favour of indigenous languages. As a result of this, International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (IIALC) was inaugurated in London. One of the effects of the 1926 Educational Ordinance was the first orthographic reform in Igbo. Africa orthography was used to replace the Lepsius orthography in 1929. This sparked off the great orthography controversy.

A committee set up by government in 1961 came up with the present orthography we are using now. This helped in putting the orthography controversy to rest at the time almost everybody was tired. A lot of effort has been put in place in various dimensions by various agencies and bodies to raise

the standard and status of the Igbo language. Among such bodies are Society for Promoting Igbo Language and Culture (SPILC). SPILC is in coma now as a result of leadership tussle. In 2006, some well meaning individuals who love Igbo language gathered at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, to inaugurate Igbo Studies Association (ISA). ISA was put in place to continue the work of SPILC in Igbo studies so that Igbo language would not go into extinction. Otu S?bakwa, Igbo on its own part, is also gearing efforts towards the development of Igbo language. Governments of the states where Igbo language is spoken, through their Ministries of Education, are making effort, in the development and sustenance of Igbo language and culture. Even the Federal Government of Nigeria in its National Policy on Education recognizes Igbo as one of the three major Nigerian languages. The Federal Government of Nigeria (1981, 1998, 2004) states 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.

Presently, Igbo language is being studied in many institutions of higher learning in Nigeria ranging from Colleges of Education and polytechnics to Universities, turning out middle to high level manpower with National Certificate in Education and First Degree Certificate respectively. Again, Igbo language has been made one of the General Studies (GS) in our institutions of higher learning. Yet, learners commit a lot of errors in writing Igbo language, hence this study.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual review

Error is connected to language writing. Language existed in its oral form before its written form emerged. According to Crystal (1971), the pioneering effort towards reducing most languages of the world to writing is credited to the missionaries. It is important to mention here that writing existed in Africa ever before the coming of the missionaries but it was not alphabetical writing. According to Ricard (2007:7):

Africa is everywhere inscribed: from rocks to masks, sculptures, pyramids and manuscripts. One needs but a stubborn and narrow minded commitment to alphabetic writing to deny that the continent has left graphic marks of their history everywhere.

The history of writing follows the art of expressing words by letters or other marks because what is written down is more permanent than what is said orally. The importance of written language cannot be overstressed. According to Storck (1976), written language is relatively permanent because one can refer to what one has written. Written communication or language is more authentic than the oral form because it is without much variation. The Igbo according to Nwadike (2002:13), "...evolved sign writings like the Egyptians and the Sumerians through which they preserved and transmitted information." The most well-known of these writings according to him was the Nsibidi script which was greatly used by

many Igbo communities of the South-east and their Ibibio neighbours of the present Cross River and Akwa Ibom States. Nsibidi is "...a pictographic writing, and can be likened to the Egyptian Hieroglyphics or the Chinese Cuneiform in character. Its origin is controversial" (Nwadike, 2002:15). Please note that Nsibidi is still in existence.

Igbo language and other African languages were reduced to alphabetic writing by G. C. A Oldendorp in 1777 in West Indis using the data he collected from the ex-slaves of African origin. Igbo studies later on started in earnest in places like Sierra Leone, Farnando Po, etc. The first orthography used in writing Igbo was the Lepsius orthography. The study was first based on the Isuama dialect which was an exparento, pidgin or coined Igbo. For any language to be written down, it has to be written down in its standard form. Igbo language in its journey so far in the course of its standardization has passed through the following periods in history: Isuama period (1700 - 1900), Union Igbo period (1901 - 1929), Central Igbo period (1939 - 1962) and Standard Igbo period (1973 till date) (Oraka, 1983; Nwadike, 2002 & Obidiebube, 2007).

A lot of books and other reading materials have been published in Igbo (grammar, culture and literature: drama, poetry and prose). When we are writing, we are encoding some information which the reader will in turn decode and utilize. For writing, as a very important aspect of communication, to be effective, we have to write/encode correctly and appropriately too. In writing, we put together the various elements of language like morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, etc. Little

(1973) recognizes the sentence as the basis of writing, and if not properly handled, may make it difficult for the receiver to understand what we have written. Our effort is in futility if what we have written cannot be understood. In support of this, Kwofie (1981:101) quoted in Anedo, Ezeokoye and Chima (2000) points out as follows:

The aim of language teaching process is to enable the learner acquire either a reading knowledge of the language in question, or the ability to understand and produce in speech as well as in writing and appropriate utterances in the language.

Despite all the efforts put in place by some organizations, individuals, government, schools, teachers, etc in developing Igbo language, writing of the language across the levels is not without errors. Students, some teachers and some authors of Igbo language do commit a lot of errors in writing. Pearson (2001:462) defines error as "A mistake especially a mistake in speaking or writing or mistake that causes serious problem." In considering the frequencies of the nouns "error" and "mistake" in spoken and written English, Pearson observes that the word "mistake" is more common in spoken English than the word "error". The reason given for this is that error is not used in a very general way. It is, used when describing particular types of mistake, for example, in the expressions "computer error" or "error of judgment". It sounds formal when used error on its own. It is, therefore, more common in written English.

Anasiudu (1983) disagrees with

the definition that sees error and mistake as meaning the same, and only differing in usage: formal (written) and informal (oral/spoken). He makes a serious distinction between error and mistake. He sees error as those deviances in linguistic performance which are due to ignorance or incompetence. They are recognized by their systematic and regular occurrence. He describes mistake as deviance in linguistics performance which are due to tiredness, nervousness, strong emotions, memory lapses and preoccupations. Akidi (2016) and Anasidu agree that there are differences between errors and mistakes. Akidi adds that errors are not easy to dictate and correct by the learner, but mistake can easily be identified by the learner and corrected.

From the above definitions, one can see that both errors and mistakes are "deviances in linguistic performance". Errors or mistakes are pointers to an area of deviance or weakness in linguistic study of any language. Error is important to both the teacher and the learner. Lee (1973) recognizes this when he states, "The errors of the learner and the response to the errors help him to learn." Etherton (1976:69) on his own part, in recognition of the importance of error to the teacher, says:

The errors may show a teacher where his teaching has not been effective. A systematic study of errors may lead to improved teaching methods through a greater awareness of the nature and causes of the mistakes which pupils make.

2.2 Theoretical Studies

Error analysis as a branch of applied linguistics evolved in 1960s. Contrastive error analysis pervaded before 1960. The earliest proponents of error analysis were Pit Corder (1967) and his colleagues (in Akidi, 2016). Error analysis was used to identify types and manner of errors, their sources and causes. It differentiates errors from mistakes in the target language. Error analysis describes, explains and evaluates the errors collected from the language being analyzed. Corder assumes that there is no learning without making mistakes or committing errors and this has inspired the study of errors.

Error analysis is an alternative to contrastive analysis. Errors cannot be avoided by both the learner and the teacher no matter the technique employed. Error analysis suggest that attention is paid to identifying learners' errors, the difficulties in the process of second language acquisition, and how to effect corrections to achieve the desired language performance. Ike (2007:109) asserts that error analysis helps to establish what the error is and the possible sources of the error. The identification of error and its source helps to handle the error accordingly and as a result, the strategy for accurate correction. Errors according to Izuagba (1998:93) are seen as being facilitative rather than inhibitory in the language learning process. In the view of David (1991:59), "Errors are corrected through comparison of the standard form and usage." Ubahakwe (1979:27) posits that the focus of error analysis lies with the second language learner's error in trying to produce the target language. The first language learner also commits error in writing the language. The rule of the

target language has to be put into consideration in analyzing error. In error analysis, the teacher should focus on the violation of rules to which the learners have been exposed (Corder, 1981:10).

Error analysis is related to several other theories as many authorities have expressed their own views on language acquisition. They include the psycholinguistic school of thought or the behavioural theory of language acquisition, a theory led by Bloomfield. Error analysis is related to language acquisition, human learning, second language learning and testing, contrastive analysis, theories of learning, etc. Language learning is a process that involves making mistakes just like error analysis. In language learning also learners are bound to commit errors. All learning processes and skills involve mistakes and errors just like error analysis (Akidi, 2016:169).

In the 1970s, error analysis was modified to interlanguage where the error made by second language learners were based on the learner's competence rather than mother tongue as posited by contrastive analysis. Interlanguage starts from the learner and not learning materials. In interlanguage, learners are studied as they are using their original speech and writing. Steps in error analysis research according to Corder (1973) include: (1) collecting samples of learner's language, (2) identifying the errors, (3) describing the errors, (4) explaining the errors, (5) evaluating/correcting the errors.

2.3 Empirical Studies

Anedo, Ezeokoye and Chima (2000) is a study on "error analysis of written composition in Igbo language of SS3 students in Anambra Local

Government Area of Anambra State". The objective of the study is to identify and remedy the students' errors in writing the Igbo language. The findings show that mechanical and expressional errors were committed with mechanical errors taking a larger share of 93.20%. It is similar to the present study in the sense that it provided empirical evidence of error analysis which is the variable in the present work. It differs from the present study in the sense that this study focuses on the error identification and correction across the levels of education as a strategy for improvement in written Igbo.

Obidiebube (2008) is a study on "analysis of errors made by senior secondary school students in written Igbo composition". The objective of the study is to analyze the errors made by senior secondary school students in writing Igbo composition. The findings show that mechanical errors present the greatest difficulty to students. It differs from the present study which focuses on the identification and correction of errors across the levels of education.

Ezeuko (1989) has a study on "students' problems in writing Igbo essays in secondary schools in Njikoka Local Government Area of Awka Educational Zone of Anambra State". The objective of the study is to discover and highlight the problems militating against good performance in Igbo written composition by the students. The data collected were analyzed using percentages and frequency. The findings of the study reveal that lack of qualified Igbo language teachers, paucity of written exercises in Igbo essays, poor marking of students' essays, lack of proper feedback, poor method of teaching, lack of teaching materials, heavy teaching load are the problems

facing the writing of Igbo language. The study differs from the present work in the sense that it does not focus on identification and correction of errors across the levels of education.

Okeke (1989) studies error analysis in written Igbo composition of secondary school students in Anambra State (old Anambra State). The objective of the study is to find out, classify and analyze errors of students in written Igbo composition in order to discover their area of strength and weakness and to make recommendations for improvement. It differs from the present study in the sense that the study did not focus on the identification and correction of errors across the levels of education.

Asuzu (1992) is a study on "error analysis of junior secondary Igbo in Nnewi Local Government Area of Anambra State". The study is similar to Okeke (1989) but only differs from it by location. All the studies highlighted were carried out in secondary schools and in primary schools and none in higher institutions. The present study posits that error identification and correction should be done across the levels of education.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

Related literatures were reviewed with the view of creating a gap for present study. The studies are related to the present study because they are on error analysis. They differ from the present study because none of them focused on identification and correction of errors across the levels of education.

2.5 Framework for the Study

The framework adopted for this study is error analysis. Error analysis collates, studies and analyses errors by language learners. Its target is geared

towards investigating aspects of language acquisition. Since errors cannot be avoided, it suggests that attention be paid to identifying learners errors, the difficulties in the process of language acquisition and how to effect corrections to achieve desired language performance.

It is not enough to establish errors without identifying the causes, sources and how to remedy the error. Ike (2007:109) maintains that error analysis helps to establish what the error is and its possible sources. The identification of error helps to tackle the error accordingly and in effect, the strategy for accurate correction. In the opinion of Izuagba (1998:93), errors are facilitative rather than inhibitory in the language learning process. Corder (1981:10) suggests that the teacher should focus on the violation of rules to which the learners have been exposed, to assess learner's performance in the target language so as to help him to improve and perform better.

3.0 Research Methodology

A descriptive survey design is adopted. In a descriptive survey research design, a group of people or item is studied by collecting data from only a few people or items considered to be a representative of the entire group (Nworgu, 2006). In this study, a dictation exercise was administered on the first year degree students of Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe running a four year degree programme in affiliation with the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The students are fresh from secondary school and so, the researcher wishes to assess their knowledge of written Igbo.

The students' scripts were collected and carefully marked by the

researcher. The errors identified provided data for error analysis. The data collected were properly studied and analyzed in line with the grammar or rules of the Igbo language.

4.1 Identified errors and their corrections

Errors	Corrections
nakwa	na kwa (and also)
ah?kwa	ah? kwa (that also)
gʰn?kwa	gʰn?kwa (what again)
ked?z?	ked? z?(how the)
?z?kwa	?z? kwa (again)
eriri ji	e riri ji (yam was eaten)
e riri m ji	eriri m ji (i ate yam)
agbara egbe	a gbara egbe (gun was shut)
mmiri naezo (n'ezo)	mmiri na-ezo (rain is falling/it is raining)
az? bi n'mmiri	az? bi na mmiri (fish lives in water)
an? (bee)	a?? (bee)
?n?n? (drinking)	???? (drinking)
nla	nta (hunting)
onwem	onwe m (myself)
onwe?n?	onwe ?n? (yourselves)
n'ile	niile (all)
ndewonu	ndewo n? (greeting to you all)
eferecha	efere cha (plate as well)
unukwu b?ara	unu kwu b?ara (you (plural) also came)
g?kwa	g?kwa (you (singular) also)
onyekwa	onye kwa (who again)
ng?z?kwa	Ng?z?kwa (Ng?z? also/again)
b?a kwa	b?akwa ((you) come also)
asambodo	Asambo (certificate)
ahaa, o riela ya	Ahaa! O riela ya (Ahaa! He has eaten it)
nagba egwu	na-agba egwu (is dancing)
neri nri	na-eri nri (is eating)
?m? nwoke	?m?nwoke (men)
?m? nwaay?	?m?nwaany?(women)

4.2 Analysis and Remedy of the Errors

Looking at the errors listed above, one immediately confirms that the major cause of the errors is ignorance of the rule

4.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

The errors committed by the students were identified, analyzed and corrected.

of the grammar of the language. Grammar according to Pearson (2001:619) refers to “the rules by which words change their forms and are combined into sentences, or the study or

use of these rules”. Parts of speech (form class according to modern grammar), morphology, voice, polarity, etc are some of the areas of coverage of grammar. A grammar is the scientific approach to the study and description of languages. This means that Igbo grammar is the scientific approach to the description of that important vehicle which the Igbo use to communicate between themselves – the Igbo language (Emenanjo, 1975).

A teacher, student or author that writes *nakwa, ah?kwa, ked?z?, ked?kwa, ndewonu, aj?j?z?, eferecha, g?kwa, onyekwa, Ng?z?kwa, b?a kwa, b?a kwa kwa*, etc, show that he or she is not conversant with enclitic in Igbo. Enclitic in Igbo is an aspect of the parts of speech. Emenanj? (1978:90) asserts that “Suffixes and enclitics feature so consistently and so prominently in the Igbo language that each group qualifies to be called a part of speech in the context of this language.” He further informs that “Like suffixes, enclitics and suffixes were until fairly recently lumped together and collectively called “suffixes”, but there are, however, outstanding differences in the grammatical behaviour of these elements to justify their separation.

Some of the differences are:

- I. While suffixes appear only in the verbal slot and as part of the verb stem, the enclitic appears both in the verbal and in the NP slots without appearing to be essential parts of these.
- ii. Deriving from the above point is that while the suffix occurs only with (or after) one part of speech, the verbal, the enclitic can, in principle, appear with (or after) practically all parts of speech with the possible

exception of the preposition. It is essentially because of (i) above that suffixes are written together with verbs while enclitics are written together with verbs but separately from non-verbs (Emenanj?, 1978:90 -91).

Verb is the only part of speech in Igbo that accepts affixes. *Ked?, Gʰn?, Olee, ebee, aaa, ?l?a*, etc, are interrogatives. Interrogatives as a part of speech in Igbo, do not accept affixes. They are written separately. The above listed words are non-verbs and, therefore, should not be written together with any element of the language.

Going back to the identified errors listed in this work, *na, ah?, ked?. Ndewo, aj?j?, efere, g?, onye, Ng?z?* etc are not verbs and so, they cannot be written together with the enclitics *kwa, z?, cha, n?* as indicated in the errors committed. On the other hand, *b?a* is a verb and so, enclitics are bound or written together with it e.g, *b?akwa, b?akwakwa*.

Again, lack of the proper knowledge of pronouns especially the impersonal pronouns constitutes errors. Impersonal pronouns are two in Igbo: a and e. Impersonal pronouns are those that are not referring to anyone in particular. When somebody writes; *E gburu m ewu*. “I killed a goat”, *Egburu ewu*. “A goat was killed”.

It is an indication that the writer does not know the difference between the functions of a and e, as prefixes bound to the verb and as impersonal pronoun i.e. referring to person. *Egburu ewu*, “A goat was killed”, 'E' here is an impersonal pronoun, referring to the person who performed the action of killing the goat. It is not part of the verb and therefore

should be written separately from the verb: *Egburu ewu* “A goat was killed”. *Egburu m ewu* “I killed a goat” is equally wrong on its own part. The doer or performer of the action indicated by the verb *gburu* is the first person singular pronoun *m* not *e*. *E* is a prefix and it should be written together with the verb *gburu*. *Egburu m ewu* “I killed a goat”.

Looking at the reflexive pronoun, some writers commit errors by writing them together. They write them together

being misguided by what their English equivalents mean forgetting that grammar is language specific and language is also arbitrary. They seem to over-generalize the present trend in the language now that one thought is represented by one word. Because *myself, yourself, himself, ourselves, themselves, yourself, yourselves*, etc are single words in English, they want their equivalent in Igbo to be written as one word too.

Error	Corrections
Onwem	onwe m ‘myself’
onweg?	onwe g? ‘yourself’
Onweya	onwe ya ‘himself/herself’
onweany?	onwe any? ‘ourselves’
Onweha	onwe ha ‘themselves’
onwe?n?	onwe ?n? ‘yourselves’

Some people still do not know how to write 'na' when it is performing its varied functions in the language: as preposition, verb root, auxiliary verb and conjunction. Ifeagwazi and Okaf? (2006) observe that error in written Igbo occurs more in the area of diacritic marks. Furthermore, error occurs in writing *na* when it is performing its various functions. Most people know and can enumerate the various functions of *na* in Igbo sentences but they do not know how to write them. Ngoesi (2004) (in Ifeagwazi and ? kaf?, 2006) confirms that *na* performs the four functions mentioned above. In writing *na* as auxiliary verb, a hyphen is used to join it to the verb: *Any? na-agba egwu*, not *Any?nagba egwu*, *Obi na-eri nri* not *Obi neri nri*. In this case, *na* performs the function of the auxiliary verbs 'is/are' in English language.

When *na* functions as conjunction it joins two nouns, two clauses, two

phrases or more. According to Nwachukwu (1987) (in Ifeagwazi and ? kaf?, 2006), when *na* performs the above function, its equivalent in English is 'and'. *Na* is written separately: *Ji na ede b? ihe oriri*. Nwachukwu further informs that in some dialects like Nnewi and its environs *na* as conjunction also represents the word 'because'. Example: *Mee ?s?s? na ay?ya-agba egwu*. “Be fast because we will dance”.

Preposition is one of the parts of speech in Igbo. Lack of proper knowledge of it in Igbo results in error that is why we see people writing like this: *n'Leg??s, n'mmiri*. When writing *na* as preposition, it is done in the following two ways: if the word following *na* begins with vowel, backward elision takes place. Therefore *na* drops its 'a' and replaces it with apostrophe.

e.g. na+Aba - n'Aba (in/at Aba)

na+elu - n'elu (on top)
na+ala - n'ala (on land/ground)

But if the word following *na* begins with consonant or syllabic nasal, *na* retains its 'a' and it is written separately. E.g:

na+nk? - na nk? (on firewood)
na+mmiri - na mmiri (in water)
na+Kano - na Kano (in/at Kano)
na+Leg??s - na Leg??s? (in/at Lagos)

'Na' also functions as verb-root or verb stem. In this case, it is written together with its affixes. Examples:

na+ra = nara - Nara ya ego “collect/receive money from him/her”
na+ba+ta = nabata - Nabata ya “receive/accept him/her”
a+na+ra = anara - Anara m ya ego “I asked/begged him/her for money”.

We have quantifiers in Igbo. *Niile* is a quantifier and some people write it with apostrophe as if it is a preposition: *n'ile* instead of *niile*. Example: *Any?niile riri nri ah?*

Again, language is dynamic. It is not static. A lot of changes do take place in language from time to time because it is conventional. In the past some words like *iche iche, ma ? b?, ?ha na eze, ezi na ?l?, ?m? nne, ?l? ?ka, ?l? akw?kw?*, etc were written separately as shown above. But today, the reverse is the case. They are written together because one word represents one thought. We have them written as *icheiche, ma?b?, ?hanaeze, ezina?l?, ?m?nwoke, ?m?nwaany?, ?m?nne, ?l??ka, ?l??gw?, olenaole. ?l?akw?kw?*, etc.

Error occurs when people fail to use diacritic marks appropriately. Without the diacritic marks, some Igbo

words are open to many interpretations.

Examples:

an? - a?? (bee), an? (meat),
?n? - ??? (joy/happiness), ?n?
(mouth), onu (neck)
?n?n? - ????? (hearing), ?????
(drinking), onunu (pushing).

Some people do not cross their t's e.g. *nla* (hunting) instead of *nta*. *Nla* can be taken for disease but the writer mean *nta* (hunting). The implication in the above listed errors is that somebody may be writing one thing while he/she means the other. A lot of bad spelling, over generalization, ignorance of rule restriction and incomplete application of rules (Richards, 1971) persist in Igbo language. ? gbal? (1975:139-140) confirm this when he lists the causes of errors as follows:

The influence of bad spelling in the few publications in circulation, inconsistency in spelling among authors not only in their individual works but from one author to another and difficulty on the part of the students in mastering the sounds which different symbols represent especially in identifying the difference between i and ?, u and ?.

Going further, ? gbal? identifies “the greatest prolific source of spelling errors of students in writing Igbo language and comments as follows:

The greatest prolific source of spelling – errors is the carelessness of students in writing characters with diacritic marks such as ?, ?, ?, ?. They do not consider it a serious spelling error if they write these characters

without putting the dots. Teachers and students should realize that the omission of the dots are as serious as spelling error as the non-crossing of the letter 't'. There is a world of difference between ʔ? 'to hear' and ʔʔ? 'to drink' and inu 'to push'. The failure of students to master a few spelling rules which are necessary for purposes of consistency.

5.1 Summary

The errors committed by the students in their dictation exercises were identified, analyzed and corrected to remedy the errors so as to help the students to perform better in the language. The errors are mainly grammatical errors.

5.2 Conclusion

Students' errors are important to the students, the teacher and researchers as they are pointers to areas where students need help. If the teacher, identifies students' areas of weaknesses through the errors they commit, he will direct his teaching towards those areas of weaknesses in order to remedy them. If teachers and authors also identify their own areas of weaknesses and remedy them, Igbo language will grow as the language will be better written, giving room for better understanding of the language.

5.3 Recommendations

Teachers should from time to time give students essays and dictations to write. They will then mark the scripts, identify the errors and help in remedying

them by teaching and re-teaching the areas of students' weaknesses where their errors point to. Students, teachers, authors, etc should make effort to remedy their errors in written Igbo by learning the rules of the grammar of Igbo language because language is rule governed.

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