

RESEARCH IN IGBO FOOTBALL TERMINOLOGY: THE CASE FOR REVIEW AND EXPANSION.

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Abstract

Football is no doubt the most popular sporting activity in the 21st century. Interest in football is always on the increase, as it has proven to be perhaps the fastest and surest means of promoting universal understanding, culture, peace and unity, besides guaranteeing the physical fitness of its participants and entertaining the watching public. A recreation activity regularly used to entertain both the young and the old during festive periods like, New yam (festival), Christmas, Easter and New year, especially in Igbo land. Football has become a source of huge financial income to members of winning teams in major competitions, as well as professionals in the round leather game, to the benefit of their families and relatives. The Igbo nation of Nigeria famed for her inclination to activities geared towards guaranteeing economic growth is,

to a very large extent now focusing on such developmental prospects of football, a trend that has constantly engendered rapid growth of football spectators in the region. Interestingly, indigenous language engineers have over the years been taken to task to create Igbo football terms that can readily serve as authentic equivalents to those of English, French and other languages of wider diffusion, with a view to attaining the vision of regular live commentaries in Igbo during football matches, especially those involving the Igbo, in particular, and Nigerians in general. Unfortunately, a breakthrough is yet to be recorded in the task, due mainly to apparent lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Igbo linguists, as a good number of the terms created have either not stood the test of time or have been wrongly used by the public, coupled with the trend of arbitrary creation of alternative terms by overzealous mass media practitioners. The need to review, expand and standardize Igbo football terminology through fresh research undertakings thus arises.

Introduction

After the civil war in Nigeria, Igbo ethnic nationality that championed the course of the aborted Republic of Biafra, have been crying of marginalization of the Igbo ethnic group. The average Igbo man or woman is very sensitive, sensible, enterprising and resourceful. As such, the Igbo, famed for their inclination to economic developmental activities have ever since toiled to hold their

own in the speculative face of harsh political, economic and socio-cultural policies as rolled out from the Hausa-Fulani usurped Federal government since July 29, 1966. Igbo youths have found a safe haven in football in the face of the high degree of unemployment that has characterized the Nigerian nation under successive governments, as it widely opens the window of wealth creation and economic growth to their talent. They win mouth-watering contracts as professionals at home and overseas, as well as huge sums of money as members of victorious teams in major competitions at local, national and international levels. The popular adage: “A healthy nation is a wealthy nation” finds absolute credence in the case of the Igbo nation, as majority of her youths are energetic and healthy, maintaining physical fitness and agility through sporting activities, especially the lucrative soccer.

Thus, it is becoming part of the Igbo culture to encourage youths, right from infancy, to search for their talents in soccer, which, if perfected catapults some Igbo families from poverty to wealth. Trophies are donated by public-spirited indigenes, and competed for, before, during and after festivities, to discover, harvest and subsequently market these talents, on the one hand, strengthen the bond of peace and unity in the region, on the other hand. The social value of this culture is most pronounced in the huge presence of the Igbo in Nigerian national teams at all levels, including super falcons. The Igbo have always played outstanding role in most of Nigeria’ victorious

international soccer tournaments, either as team captains, coaches or supporters on whose skills and talents such teams are built. We remember among many others, the Ugbades (Nduka) of the China “85”glory, the Osondu of the Canada “87”and Riyad “89”(Daman miracle) silver glory, the Kanus of the Japan “93”and Atlanta “96”glory, the Okechukwu –Keshis and the Amunekes of the Tunisia ‘94’glory, the Iheanachos of the U.A.E 2013 glory, the Nwakalis of the Chile “2015”glory, the Chukwus of the Nigeria “80”glory, the Mbas of the South Africa “2013”glory, the Uches, the Mbachus, the and many Nkwochas and others of Igbo extraction, for the continued Nigerian dominance of female football in Africa and appreciable their impacts in world championships. Nobody in the world will forget the exploits of J.J. wonder “(Austin-J.J. Okocha) in the history of football in the 20th century, having been listed among the best 100 footballers in the world in the last century. The list is indeed inexhaustible!

Concerted efforts should be made to sustain and consolidate the joy and gains football has brought to the nation through schemes geared towards sustaining and promoting football culture as a survival or coping strategy, by the visionary Igbo themselves. One of such efforts is seen in attempts to institutionalize running of commentaries in Igbo language during football matches, thereby promoting interest in the game among its teeming populace.

Nwanjoku observes:

This growing nature of Igbo football audience has called for a possible breakthrough in Igbo live commentary on soccer. Efforts being made in this vein by sports lovers and broadcasters seem to have been hampered by absence of the right terms (93-113)

In agreeing with Nwanjoku on the lack of appropriate Igbo football terminology, research on Igbo language is not in place to fill the lacuna. Beside Nwanjoku's work on the subject, we are yet to see any other published work on Igbo football. Evidently, Igbo linguistics, translators and interpreters should strive to fill the lacuna in Igbo football commentary through research on terminology.

The need for Standardization

Iwunze et al (2015) aligning with Ajayi (1985) observe that term creation in Igbo faces a great deal of challenges, thus:

It remains worrisome that most researches in Igbo terminology are neither well sought out by the relevant agencies in Education that need them, nor easily available to them, due mainly to the fact that these researches were either done for the acquisition of higher

degrees or for advancement from one grade of job to the other.

Nwanjoku further observes that:

1. Most research findings on Igbo terminology by experts and teachers are not accepted.
2. There is a big gap between the researchers and the policy making bodies of the language.
3. There are not enough and proper avenues to disseminate findings.
4. New words are created indiscriminately without following the correct method of terminological research. (93-113)

Purpose of the study

In the light of the foregoing, this work proposes to :

1. Increase and improve bilingual (English-Igbo) glossaries of football terms as tools for enhancing the translation and interpretation of a wide range of football-related information into Igbo for the benefit of the enthusiastic Igbo soccer spectators;
2. Motivate indigenous mass media practitioners to actively embrace the challenge of commenting proceedings in football matches in Igbo, in partnership with other language professionals of Igbo origin and competence, especially translators and interpreters, for proper regulation of Igbo terminology as a mass communication tool;

3. Review and moderate terms already in use but, perceived to have been created in contravention of conventional methods codes of term creation.

Methodology

There exist several methods of term creation. The terms presented below have been sampled from journals and football magazines, on the one hand, and notes taken while listening to broadcasters of Igbo origin as recorded in our personal terminology cards on football, on the other hand. Anyaehie (1997) notes that terminology practice basically involves concept definition (including illustration of concept) and assignment of “appropriate terms” to defined concepts. Such definitions are done across modern languages in two stages-placing the concept with a category of concepts and identifying what distinguishes the concept from other concepts within the category-categorical features and distinctive features.

It should be noted however that the terms under reference in this discourse have already undergone this process in the source language (English) and as such are being translated (recreated) or created, where necessary, in the target language (Igbo) following the same process.

In our bid to ensure appropriateness, clarity and specificity as much as possible, we further consulted other terminologists, translators and interpreters, as well as general linguists with Igbo as a working language. In cases where creating new terms was inevitable, we resorted to

composition and derivation – and mainly normal derivation, prefixation and interfixation techniques. In some cases, where necessary, we relied on Dubuc's (1978) indirect methods, like semantic extension by analogy of meaning, naturalization, calque or borrowing.

Problem of Study

This research is neither sponsored by the government nor any corporate body. It is our personal measure of immediacy associated with the need to find the Igbo equivalents of English football terms, and professionally effect a critical review of some of them towards validity, before showcasing them all in a bilingual (English-Igbo) glossary as a standard working tool for translators, interpreters and soccer commentators using Igbo medium.

However, despite our personal background as translators, the glossary does not hold any final word on the subject. The product is thus subject to further scrutiny by Igbo linguistics, and Society for the Promotion of Igbo Language and Culture (SPILC), National Association of translators and Interpreters (NATI) and of course National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NILAN).

A Bilingual (English-Igbo) Glossary of Football Terms

S/No	English term	Igbo Equivalent	Grammatical category	Remark/ method
1	Attacker	Ọgbanihu	n	Verb noun derivation depicting agent and position.
2	Captain	Ọchịagha otuegwu bọọlụ	n	Adjectival noun (ọchịagha) proposed as alternative to "onye ndụ" (leader) with the suffix "otuokwe bọọlụ" for precision on the nature of action (competition) and specification of the type of group led (football team).
3	Centre circle	Okirikiri ogboetiti okwe	n	Adjectival noun derivative depicting action and position
4	Centre forward	Ọgbanihu	n	Verb noun derivation depicting agent and position.

5	Coach	Onyenkuzi okwe	n	Adjectival noun creation with relative pronoun "onye" specifying course taught "okwe" (ball).
6	Commentator Commenting Commentator	Icheokwe Ichokwe Ochekwe	n n n	A metaphorical derivation from a popular Igbo interpreting television programme, with the suffix "okwe" showing the focus of the commentator-actor (iche) on the game (football-okwe) for precision and clarity.
7	Corner kick	Nkụ nsụkọ	n	Verb noun creation of the verb root "kụ" depicting position.
8	Defenders	Ndimgbochi	n	Adjectival noun creation with relative pronoun "ndi".
9	Defensive football	Okwemgbochi	n	Adjectival creation of noun to depict purpose/type of

				action .
10	Dressing room	Ọnụlọ njigharị/my igharị	n	Compound verb noun of expanded verb root.
11	Dribble	ịkpa/ime ewu (H. Nnaji: 1995. Modern Igbo Dictionary)	n	Intransitive verb- prefixing of "ị" on verb root "kpa"/"ị" on verb root "me" with the suffix "ewu" added to depict nature or effect of action- making one look like a fool in the field with the ball.
12	Extra time	Oge mgbakwun ye	n	Adjectival compound noun derived from expanded verb root and noun.
13	Football champion ship	Asompi egwubọọlụ ọkaibe	n	Idiomatic verb noun (Asompi) with the suffixes "egwu ọọlụ ọkaibe" added for precision.
14	Football champion ship	Asompi egwubọọlụ	n	Idiomatic verb noun with suffix "ọọlụ" added for

				specification.
15	Foul (play)	Ọdịdaiwu	n	Igbo verbnoun (Gerund) by reduplicating verb root "daa".
16	Free kick	Mgbapu nwereonwe	n	Idiomatic verb noun of expanded verb root "gba" with ipu", depicting nature of action with the suffix "nwereonwe".
17	Goal	Ọkpụ goolu	N	Popular compound noun derived from the Igbo naturalisation of the word "ball" as "bọọlụ".
18	Goal- keeper	Oche goolu	N	An agent verb noun depicting agent, action and position.
19	Goal-post	Ọnụlọ ọkpụgoolu	N	Adjectival noun derivative.
20	Goal net	Nkata ọkpụgoolu	N	Adjectival noun derivation.
21	Goal post	Agalaba ụlọ ọkpụgoolu	N	Adjectival noun composition

				created to highlight role.
22	Goaless draw	ida ụkọ mgbaraaka	Inf	Prefixing of "i" to verb root "da" in accordance with Igbo vowel harmony (Accusative matching of infinitive) suffix "mgbaraaka added to depict type.
23	Heading	Ibinisi	Inf	Verb noun of expanded root to which suffix is added to depict position of action.
24	Host team	Otu egwubọọlụ na-ele ọbia	N	Adjectival noun derivation depicting role (already in use).
25	Injury time	Oge ekwenkwap ụ	N	Adjectival noun derivation depicting situation or nature of time.

26	Kick off time	Oge nkusokwe	N	Adjectival noun derivation from verb noun of expanded verb root "ku" and "su", with the suffix "okwe" depicting direction/target of action (game).
27	League	Liigi	N	Igbo naturalization of the English word "League".
28	Left half back	Agada gbachiri uzo akaekpe etiti azu	N	A metaphorical agent verb noun derivation depicting agent and position (wing).
29	Midfielder	Ogbanetiti	N	Agent verb noun depicting position.
30	Offside	Ngafeoke	N	Verb noun of expanded verb root "ga" to which suffix "oke" is added for precision.
31	Pass	Nkufenye	N	Verb noun of expanded root "ku".

32	Referee	Ochekwaiwu (okwe)	N	Agent verb noun creation depicting role.
33	Reserve bench	Ocho ndingbanwe	N	Adjectival noun creation depicting role.
34	Right full back	Agada gbachiri uzo akanri azu	N	A metaphorical agent verb noun derivation indicating agent and position (wing).
35	Second half	O karaoge nke abu/ogem malite nke abu	N	Adjectival noun already in use.
36	Spectators	Ndi nlereanya	N	Adjectival noun derivation with relative pronoun "ndi".
37	Stadium	Ama egwuregwu	N	Adjectival use of noun.
38	Supporters club	Otu ndinkwado	N	Agent verb noun creation with relative pronoun "ndi" and depicting agent/performer.
39	Throw-in	Ntubanye okwe	N	Verb noun suffixed by adverb expanded to derive

				meaning.
40	Touch	Akaraoke ogbọ (okwe)	N	Adjectival noun creation with the suffix "ogbọ" specifying object bounded.
41	Yellow Card	Akwukwọ odoodo ndọakananti	N	Adjectival noun creation depicting role and colour of object.

Conclusion

This research on Igbo football terminology is motivated by the need to provide Igbo football commentary with terms that are appropriate, adequate and authentically Igbo, thereby promoting and sustaining the interest of the enterprising Igbo population in the game (football) that has brought so much fame, wealth and joy to her people. The project has been premised upon the need to harvest football terms, as it were, through a critical review of those in use among indigenous (Igbo) mass media practitioners, as well as some contained in Nwanjoku's work, as cited, of which glossary we deemed imperative to be expanded through some new creations. To this end, a few terms that were considered appropriate have been retained as already in use, with asterisks (*) apposed to them as a status symbol. A good number of others have been modified for precision and clarity, while the entirely new ones have alongside

been created guided by our professional background knowledge of terminological research guidelines. The preceding bilingual (English-Igbo) glossary of forty one football terms as a product of this research, as earlier stated, does not promise any final word on any of the concepts, and as such, is subject to further scrutiny by Igbo language specialists. We hope that this work will serve as a ready and veritable tool in the hands of Igbo applied linguists, as well as motivate them to research further into the area, and urgently too, with a view to attaining the objective of this communication. In the grammatical category column, “n” represents the word “Noun”, while “Inf” is a short form of the word “Infinitive”.

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