

UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

**THE INFLUENCE OF IZON ON THE SYNTAX AND LEXIS OF THE ENGLISH OF
IZON-ENGLISH BILINGUALS**

**BY
URIEL OKUNRINMETA
B.Ed. (ADO-EKITI), M.A. (LAGOS)**

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the thesis:

**THE INFLUENCE OF IZON ON THE SYNTAX AND LEXIS OF THE ENGLISH OF
IZON-ENGLISH BILINGUALS**

**Submitted to the
School of Postgraduate Studies, University of Lagos
For the award of the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.)
is a record of original research carried out
by
URIEL OKUNRINMETA
in the Department of English**

AUTHOR'S NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

1ST SUPERVISOR

SIGNATURE

DATE

2ND SUPERVISOR

SIGNATURE

DATE

3RD SUPERVISOR

SIGNATURE

DATE

INTERNAL EXAMINER

SIGNATURE

DATE

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

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DATE

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

SIGNATURE

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P.G. REPRESENTATIVE

SIGNATURE

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DEDICATION

This doctoral thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father, Mr. Samuel Okunrinmeta.



ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation of the influence of the Izon language and culture on the English of Izon-English bilinguals and the extent to which the variations manifested in their English usage can be induced by such variables as the bilingual's linguistic, cultural and educational background. One hundred (100) Izon-English bilinguals, who have lived within the Izon culture for at least two years, were randomly selected from the Arogbo-Izon community of Ondo State for the study. After analyzing the qualitative and quantitative data collected from the sampled subjects mainly through observation and structured interview, it is found out that the Izon language and culture have tremendous influence on the syntax and lexico-semantics of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. In the area of syntax, this influence is manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals in terms of their use of agreement, tense, aspect, the indefinite article, the relative pronoun, prepositions, stative verbs and non-count nouns as well as in their modification system and their preference for statements uttered with the rising tune to tag-questions, among others. In terms of lexico-semantics, this fascinating influence is noticed in the way such words and expressions as "uncle", "village", "madam", "to lick an orange", "to share a husband", "how do you do?", "evil month", "Ijawness", "Agadagbanship tussle", "duburuku rite of passage", "to cross to the other side of the river", "the head of the family-head is a refuse dump" and many others have been domesticated to reflect the Izon socio-cultural experience. It is also found out that English usage in the Izon setting is closely linked to the Izon culture and, thus, the Izon culture determines or influences appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context. Thus, the variations manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, especially in the area of lexico-semantics, are appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context because they are in line with the Izon socio-cultural experience. Similarly, it is found out that the educational level of the user affects, either negatively or positively, the degree of the

influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals. There is a negative effect, especially in the area of syntax, where an increase in the educational level of the user brings about a decrease in the degree of this influence. On the other hand, there is a positive effect in the area of lexis since an increase in the educational level of the user brings about a corresponding increase in the degree of the linguistic influence manifested in his/her English usage. Finally, it is found out that a distinction can be made between temporary influences and permanent influences. Those linguistic influences whose manifestation in the English of Izon-English bilinguals decreases or totally disappears as the bilingual's level of education and exposure to good English usage increase are temporary influences (or errors). On the other hand, those influences whose manifestation, because of their appropriateness to the Izon socio-cultural context, is seen even in the English of the most educated Izon-English bilingual in spite of his/her high level of education and exposure are permanent influences (or variants). This study therefore provides rich syntactic and lexico-semantic data to prove the legitimacy and appropriateness of Nigerian English and to support the existence of sub-varieties in Nigerian English. The study makes a significant contribution to the Nigerian component of the International Corpus of English (ICE) Project.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This study investigates the influence of the Izon language and culture on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals and the extent to which the variations manifested in their English usage can be induced by such variables as the bilingual's linguistic, cultural and educational background. This introductory chapter, therefore, gives the background to the study and goes further to argue for the need to study the influence of Izon on the English of Izon-English bilinguals. The research problem, aims and objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, research questions and hypotheses, conceptual clarifications and theoretical framework are also presented in this introductory chapter.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1.1 The Linguistic Situation in Izonland

The Ijo language belongs to the Kwa Branch of the Niger-Congo family of African languages (see Williamson, 1968). It is spoken in Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, Edo and Ondo States of Nigeria. Although Ijo is usually spoken of as a single language and its speakers think of themselves as related and, therefore, like to refer to the differences between the various forms of Ijo as differences between dialects, Jenewari (1989) observes that there is neither mutual intelligibility between all the dialects¹ nor an accepted standard variety for its speakers. For this reason, Jenewari (1989:107) suggests that Ijo should be treated as a language cluster comprising seven languages (defined in terms of mutual intelligibility) – four isolated dialects and three clusters of dialects. These are: (1) Biseni (2) Okodia (3) Oruma (4) Nkoroo (5) Eastern Ijo, comprising Kalabari, Okrika, and Ibani (6) Brass Ijo (or Nembe-Akassa) and, (7) Izon, comprising all the remaining dialects of Ijo – about thirty west

and north of Akassa (see Appendix B, Fig 1.). Izon is spoken in Ondo, Edo, Delta and Bayelsa States of Nigeria. It is usually sub-classified into Southwestern (including Arogbo), Northwestern (including Mein), South-central (including Bumo) and North-central (including Kolokuma) (see Williamson, 1965, 1968; Lee and Williamson, 1982 and Jenewari, 1989).

Southwestern Izon comprises mainly the dialects spoken by the Ibe² of the Western Delta Fringe including Apoi³, Arogbo, Furupagha, Olodiana, Egbema, Gbaramatu and Ogbe Ibe (see Appendix B, Fig. 2.). The Apoi and Arogbo live among the Ilaje and Ikale in the Old Okitipupa Division of Ondo State and, as such, they experience varying degrees of Yoruba influence. The Apoi, for example, have, perhaps because of the strong Yoruba influence they are exposed to in Ondo State, adopted Yoruba as their common language, but still use Izon in their religious ritual, funeral songs and masquerade plays, despite the fact that many of them no longer understand the language (see Alagoa, 1972: 25). The Arogbo, unlike the Apoi, still retain their Izon speech, but sometimes use Yoruba as a second language⁴. Thus, while the Arogbo speak Izon as their first language and, in most cases, English as their second language, some of them also speak Yoruba. It is, therefore, possible to have Izon-English bilinguals, Izon-Yoruba bilinguals⁵ or even Izon-English-Yoruba trilinguals in the Arogbo-Izon Ibe.

The Furupagha, who live in the boundary between the Old Western and Mid-Western States, have, because of their location, been influenced both by Yoruba and Edo. The Furupagha communities in the present Odigbo Local Government Area of Ondo State, especially Taribo and Yaradina, have some degree of Yoruba influence not merely because they live in a predominantly Yoruba-speaking State, but also because they interact with Yoruba-speaking people almost everyday through trade, government etc. Those in Edo State, especially Kekere and Zide who are surrounded to the north, west and east by Edo-related

groups and are, thus, exposed to the Edo language, have some degree of Edo influence. Thus, the Furupagha can, apart from Izon and English, speak Yoruba and Edo.

The Olodiana and Egbema are in the present Edo State, though some prominent Egbema towns like Opuama and Polobubogho are in Delta State⁶. The Olodiana and Egbema have, therefore, received varying degrees of Edo influence and vice versa. The Olodiana, according to Alagoa (1972: 38), is the closest Ijo sub-group to Benin. Ikoro, the capital of the Olodiana, is actually less than twenty miles from Benin City by road. This proximity has made it possible for both groups to have contacts thereby having mutual influence on each other. Despite the proximity of the Olodiana to Benin and its influences, they have retained their Izon dialect and culture, but speak Edo as a second language. The Egbema, like the Olodiana, have links with the Edo, though they also make contacts with the Itshekiri in Delta State. The implication is that there can be varying degrees of bilingualism in Izon and English, Edo or Itshekiri among the Egbema.

The Gbaramatu and Ogbe, who live in the present Delta State, have the Itshekiri as their neighbours. Both groups have made commercial and other contacts through time. One of the consequences of these contacts is that there are varying degrees of bilingualism in Izon and Itshekiri among the Gbaramatu and Ogbe as evident in such communities as Oproza, Binitu, Bakokodia and Ogbe-Ijoh.

Northwestern Izon, which comprises the dialects of the Ibe of the Western Delta, includes Obotebe, Mein, Seimibiri, Tuomo⁷, Tarakiri, Kabowei, Operemo, Oyakiri, Ogulagha and Iduwini (see Appendix B, Fig.3.). Almost all the Ibe of the Western Delta are in the present Delta State. One striking aspect of the dialects of the Northwestern Izon listed above is that many of them have, in one way or the other, come in contact with other non-Izon groups either through proximity in terms of sharing borders, trade or inter-marriage. Some of the non-Izon speaking groups with which contacts have been made include the Itshekiri,

Urhobo and Isoko. Through these contacts, there exist, among the speakers of the Northwestern Izon dialects, those who speak Itshekiri, Urhobo or Isoko alongside Izon and English. Take the Obotebe, a small Ibe lying on the border land between the Western Delta and the Western Fringe, for example. The Obotebe have contacts with both the Itshekiri and the Urhobo through the sharing of border and through trade. Through these contacts, they are exposed to both Itshekiri and Urhobo thereby producing bilinguals who speak Izon and Urhobo, Itshekiri or English. Like the Obotebe, the Mein who live along the Forcados River especially Kiagbodo, also speak Urhobo and Isoko, apart from Izon and English probably because of the close link they have with the Urhobo and Isoko mostly through inter-marriage.

The dialects of the Ibe of the Central Delta are divided into two major sub-groups: North-central Izon (including Kolokuma, Opokuma, Ekpetiama and Tungbo) and South-central Izon (including Bumo, Oporoma, Tarakiri and Ogboin) (see Appendix B, Fig. 4.). Both North-central Izon and South-central Izon are widely spoken in the present Bayelsa State of Nigeria. Before the creation of Bayelsa State, and even before the creation of the Old Rivers State from which Bayelsa was carved in 1996, almost all the Ibe of the area now known as Bayelsa State were within the Old Eastern Region. Since the Izons in this area were in the Old Eastern Region, there was the tendency to learn and speak the Igbo language which was the major language spoken in the then Eastern Region. Thus, it will not be surprising if some of the speakers of the dialects of North-central and South-central Izon speak Igbo as a second language. This probably explains why there are speakers who are bilingual in Izon and English or Igbo in the Ibe of the Central Delta.

Though the picture presented above portrays that in Izonland there is a situation where individuals can be bilingual in Izon and one or more of the following languages: English, Yoruba, Edo, Itshekiri, Urhobo, Isoko, Igbo and Nigerian Pidgin, the bilinguals that have been used for this study are those who speak only Izon and English, who have lived

within the Izon culture for at least two years. This is to, at least, ensure that the English of the bilinguals under study is not influenced by any other Nigerian languages and culture other than Izon.

1.1.2 Izon Orthography

The Ijo people, perhaps because of their closeness to the Atlantic Ocean, were among the first West Africans to come into contact with Europeans. One major consequence of this early contact was that Ijo was written down early. According to Jenewari (1989:105), “Kalabari was, as far as is known, the first Nigerian language recorded by Europeans” – the numerals one to five were recorded by Dapper (1668). Other early records of Ijo include “word lists” in Clarke (1848) and Koelle (1854), and “a vocabulary and grammatical outline” in Koler (1848) (see Jenewari, 1989:105). However, the development of practical publications in Ijo began in the second half of the nineteenth century when the Niger Mission published various materials in Nembe (in which a complete translation of the Bible was done later in 1956), Ibani, Izon, Kalabari and Okrika for educational and religious usage.

The fact that educational and religious materials were published in Izon as early as the nineteenth century indicates that Izon has orthography (see Williamson, 1969). The Izon alphabet comprises twenty-eight letters - nineteen consonants and nine vowels:

a	b	d	e	ẹ	f	g	gb	(g)h
i	ị	k	l	m	n	o	ọ	p
kp	r	s	t	u	ụ	v	w	y
z								

These are reflected in the following Izon words:

- (i) “a” as in *palị* (whip) and *aza* (new).
- (ii) “b” as in *bịbị* (mouth) and *bẹlẹu* (tongue).
- (iii) “d” as in *desi* (jump) and *dẹrị* (laugh).
- (iv) “e” as in *ere* (wife) and *elei* (wisdom).
- (v) “ẹ” as in *ẹrẹ* (name) and *ẹlẹi* (a kind of fish).

- (vi) “f” as in *ẹferu* (air) and *fiye* (speak).
- (vii) “g” as in *giriwo* (sudden) and *segi* (crocodile).
- (viii) “gb” as in *egberi* (story) and *gba* (tell).
- (ix) “gh”/ “h” as in *gha* (exclamation) and *duhin* (night).
- (x) “i” as in *siri* (to rub) and *aki* (a type of tree).
- (xi) “i” as in *siri* (to cut with a blunt object) and *aki* (accept).
- (xii) “k” as in *keti* (pluck) and *iki* (guess).
- (xiii) “l” as in *kala* (small) and *lẹlu* (dirty).
- (xiv) “m” as in *mamun* (two) and *epemu* (a type of wood).
- (xv) “n” as in *bunu* (sex or sleep) and *nemu* (madness).
- (xvi) “o” as in *olou* (law) and *oko* (cup).
- (xvii) “o” as in *olou* (cough) and *boloi* (borrow or lend).
- (xviii) “p” as in *perẹ* (king) and *ẹperu* (nail).
- (xix) “kp” as in *kperi* (lift) and *ẹkpuru* (shoe).
- (xx) “r” as in *aru* (shirt) and *aru* (canoe).
- (xxi) “s” as in *su* (lazy) and *su* (fight).
- (xxii) “t” as in *teri* (cover) and *toru* (eye or river).
- (xxiii) “u” as in *buru* (yam) and *uku* (heavy or louse).
- (xxiv) “u” as in *buru* (decay) and *uku* (private part).
- (xxv) “v” as in *evin* (cow) and *oviri* (injury).
- (xxvi) “w” as in *wari* (house) and *ewere* (wildcat).
- (xxvii) “y” as in *yabi* (uncle) and *yin* (mother).
- (xxviii) “z” as in *zowe* (male friend) and *zara* (female friend).

A few publications have been made in Izon especially for the teaching of various aspects of the language, including vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and writing,

in primary and junior secondary schools in the Izon-speaking communities of Ondo, Edo, Delta and Bayelsa States of Nigeria. These include the self-published teaching manuals produced by Iyiun and Asuaye which have proved very useful to the teachers and students of Izon, especially at the primary and junior secondary school levels. There is also a published dictionary which serves as useful reference material particularly for vocabulary development and usage (see Williamson and Timitimi, 1983).

1.1.3 Basic Assumptions

When languages are in contact, they naturally influence each other. Izon and English are in contact in the Izon-speaking communities of Ondo, Delta, Edo and Bayelsa States since both languages exist side by side in the lives and tongues of the Izon-English bilinguals in these communities and, as should be expected, these languages influence each other in this language contact situation (see Weinreich, 1953; Spencer, 1971; Adetugbo, 1979b and Essien, 1995). However, as Greenberg (1964:194) states, “when a speaker is bilingual and one language is learned at an earlier age and with far greater thoroughness than a later second language, the influence of the primary language on performance in the secondary is far greater than in the other direction.” Since the Izon-English bilinguals use both Izon and English alternately in the Izon socio-cultural environment and since Izon was acquired at an earlier age and with far greater thoroughness than English which is usually learned later in life, it is assumed that certain aspects of Izon will interfere with corresponding aspects of the English that is used by these bilinguals (see also Bamgbose, 1971:41; Kirk-Greene, 1971:141; Adetugbo, 1977 and Adekunle, 1979). It is, therefore, the influence of Izon on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals that this study is out to investigate by means of data collected from the Izon-speaking communities of Ondo State.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the past, most of the few major studies of Izon had focused on such issues as orthography (Williamson, 1969; 1983); classification of dialects (Lee and Williamson, 1982; Jenewari, 1989); phonology (Efere, 1984); syntax (Williamson, 1965) and Izon-English dictionary (Williamson and Timitimi, 1983). Despite the tremendous influence of Izon noticed in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, very little has been done to investigate this influence and the causes that lie behind it. Perhaps, the only study that treated an issue of this kind was Smith, Robertson and Williamson (1987), though it focused on the influence of Kalabari on Berbice Dutch⁸. It is, therefore, important for us in this study to investigate the influence of Izon on the English of Izon-English bilinguals and the cultural force that lies behind this linguistic influence. This becomes necessary because some educated Izon speakers, especially the retired civil servants, principals and teachers who had the privilege to be exposed to good models of English, consider the departures that are caused by this linguistic influence as errors that must be avoided by every “competent” Izon-English bilingual. It is, therefore, necessary to investigate the force that causes these departures so as to establish their legitimacy within the Izon socio-cultural context. This will, at least, convince people to accept these departures, not as errors, but as legitimate variants whose appropriateness within the Izon socio-cultural milieu lies on the Izon culture.

Though this linguistic influence has resulted in departures from native English usage and may, therefore, not be seen as appropriate to the native speaker of English, not all of them should be seen as errors. Some should be seen as variants whose appropriateness is strongly founded on the fact that they are expressive of the cultural patterns of the Itons and are, therefore, in conformity with their worldviews. To illustrate this point, consider the meaning of the English word “uncle” within the Izon socio-cultural context. Within the English culture, “uncle” means the brother of one’s father or mother or the husband of one’s

aunt. But within the Izon culture “uncle” (*yabi*) means the brother of one’s mother. The brother of one’s father, on the other hand, is called one’s father (*dayi*) and not one’s uncle within the Izon cultural context. It is, therefore, appropriate for an Izon-English bilingual to refer to his/her father’s brother as his/her “father” and, therefore, nothing prevents him/her from using “father” for his/her father’s brother within this cultural context. Thus, the Izon culture, which is reflected in the Izon language, determines the way the IZONS see the world and interpret experience and, therefore, determines the appropriateness of the English words and expressions that are used for communication and interaction in the Izon socio-cultural environment. This is the cultural force that creates, sustains and gives meaning to the linguistic influence that the Izon language has on the English of the Izon-English bilingual. This cultural force is also reflected in the usage of many English words such as “father”, “mother”, “village”, “lick”, “sorry” etc. There are also a few structural patterns in which this cultural/linguistic influence has been reflected. These include, among others, the use of feminine pronouns to reflect the femininity of God, the use of “they” to refer to a caller whose identity or sex is unknown or as an honorific pronoun to show respect to an elderly person, the occurrence of the first person before the third person in a compound subject-NP and the avoidance of tag questions as reflected in the preference for questions like “You are going?” to “You are going, aren’t you?”. It is, therefore, our intention in this study to investigate the relationship between the Izon culture and the Izon language and how this influences or determines appropriate English usage in the Izon socio-cultural context.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our research objectives are as follows:

- (a) to ascertain the influence of Izon on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals;

- (b) to investigate the connection between the Izon culture and English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting;
- (c) to investigate the nature of these influences on appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context;
- (d) to ascertain the extent to which the educational level of the user affects the degree of the influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals and;
- (e) to investigate the possibility of drawing a line between temporary influences (that is, those that are caused by inadequate exposure) and permanent influences (that is, those that are created and sustained by their appropriateness to the Izon socio-cultural context).

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study provides answers to the following questions:

- (a) Do the syntax and lexis of Izon have any influence on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals?
- (b) Is there any connection between the Izon culture and English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting?
- (c) How does the Izon culture influence or determine appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context?
- (d) Does educational level affect the degree of the influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals?
- (e) How temporary or permanent is this linguistic influence?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant in the following ways:

- (a) providing useful insights on the influence of Izon on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals;

- (b) establishing the connection between the Izon culture and English usage and, thus, putting in the limelight the relevance of this relationship to appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context;
- (c) effecting attitudinal change towards English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting in the sense that the Izon-English bilinguals, who had earlier condemned the departures manifested in the English of Izon speakers as errors, will, because of the information provided in this study, now be persuaded to have positive attitude towards some of these departures especially those whose legitimacy and appropriateness within the Izon socio-cultural setting have been brought to the limelight in this study;
- (d) providing convincing information on the extent to which the variations manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals can be induced by such variables as the bilingual's linguistic, cultural and educational background;
- (e) serving as a useful guide to language teachers in the Izon-speaking communities in fashioning an appropriate pedagogical approach to tackle the errors that occur in the English of Izon-English bilinguals especially where these errors are caused by inadequate exposure;
- (f) providing useful information to support the existence of sub-varieties in Nigerian English. (Considering the linguistic influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals and the various socio-cultural factors which provide the context within which the language is used and understood, English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting is different from that of other socio-cultural settings in Nigeria. This provides the basis for us to distinguish Izon English from all other sub-varieties of Nigerian English such as Hausa English, Yoruba English and Igbo English) and;
- (g) providing evidence to prove that English usage in the Izon socio-cultural context is culture-dependent and, thus, the variations manifested in the English usage of Izon-

English bilinguals are induced by the Izon culture. This study, therefore, gives support to the cultural-conceptual approach to language study as explicated by Hymes (1971), Saville-Troike (1989), Kovecses (2005) and Sharifian (2006).

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

In this study, “The Influence of Izon on the Syntax and Lexis of the English of Izon-English Bilinguals”, our focus is primarily on how and why the Izon language and culture influence the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals in the Izon socio-cultural setting. Although various aspects of Izon are expected to influence corresponding aspects of the English of Izon-English bilinguals, this study is limited to the influence of Izon on the syntax and lexis of the English used by these bilinguals and the extent to which the bilingual’s linguistic, cultural and educational background can affect the degree of this influence. This becomes necessary because, despite the tremendous influence of Izon noticed in the syntax and lexis of the English of these bilinguals, very little has been done to investigate this linguistic influence and the cultural force that lies behind it. Thus, it is necessary to study the influence of Izon on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals, not only because it has been neglected for long, but also because it provides useful insights on the relationship between the Izon language and the Izon culture and the relevance of this relationship to appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context. Similarly, the study provides rich syntactic and lexico-semantic data which, if incorporated into the Nigerian Component of the ICE Project, add an Izon dimension to the description of (Standard) Nigerian English. This projects not only the sumptuous Izon flavour given to English usage in the Izon socio-cultural context but also puts an end to the doubts that people, especially in the Izon setting, cast on the appropriateness of the variations manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals and, therefore, enhances their acceptability and frequency of use both within and outside the Izon socio-cultural setting.

The findings of this study may have some limitations especially when the level of sincerity of the respondents to the questionnaire used for the study is considered. For example, on the section that deals with educational background, it is expected that some of the respondents, especially the secondary school students whose parents have low educational background, may deliberately refuse to say the truth because they feel belittled if they say so. Thus, it is not impossible for them to lie that their father or mother is a graduate and this puts them in the group of respondents with high educational background. However, to ensure that this is prevented, the respondents were told to leave the column for names in the questionnaire blank so that their identities might not be known. This was intended to encourage the respondents to respond to the questionnaire as sincerely as possible. This paid off as it was indicated in tables 4 and 5, where the respondents' educational background was ascertained, that there was a degree of consistency in the responses of the subjects. Both tables indicate that 57 subjects are of high educational background while 43 are of low educational background. It is, therefore, hoped that the findings of this study, despite the perceived limitations, will be generalized to cover other Izon-speaking communities since they have similar linguistic and socio-cultural background.

1.7 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

1.7.1 Bilingualism.

Bilingualism is a language phenomenon in which an individual functions with varying degrees of competence in at least two languages. Weinreich (1953) identifies three types of bilingualism: co-ordinate, compound and subordinate bilingualism (see Dadzie, 2004b). However, bilingualism, as it is used in this study, is synonymous with subordinate bilingualism. This is so because the focus of this study is on the influences that the Izon language and culture have on the English of Izon-English bilinguals. Thus, all the bilinguals involved in the study are those that speak Izon as their first language and are, therefore, more

proficient in Izon than in English their second language. As it should be expected, there are, therefore, profound manifestations of the influence of the Izon language and culture on the English of these bilinguals. Thus, whenever bilingualism is mentioned in this study, especially with reference to the Izon-English contact situation, it is subordinate bilingualism that is intended.

1.7.2 Izon

Izon is spoken in Ondo, Edo, Delta and Bayelsa States of Nigeria. It is sub-classified into South western (including Arogbu), North western (including Mein), South central (including Bumo) and North central (including Kolokuma) (see Williamson, 1968 and Jenewari, 1989). The Arogbu dialect of Izon is what is used in this study.

1.7.3 Variations and Deviations

In this study, the term, “variation”, describes any Izon-induced departure in the English of Izon-English bilinguals whose acceptability, especially within the Izon socio-cultural setting, is determined by its ability to satisfy the following requirements:

- (i) It must be appropriate. “Appropriateness” in this context implies that the variation in question is traceable to the Izon culture.
- (ii) It must be grammatical to a reasonable extent in the sense that it does not violate any “serious” syntactic rule in English but merely reflects a departure from the preferences that some native English speakers, especially British English speakers, have for some structures in English.
- (iii) It must be intelligible.
- (iv) It must enjoy widespread usage among educated Izon speakers.

Thus an Izon-induced departure in the English of Izon speakers becomes a variation if it is acceptable within the Izon socio-cultural context on the basis of its appropriateness, grammaticality, intelligibility and widespread usage among educated Izon speakers.

On the contrary, if the departure fails to satisfy one or all of the requirements listed above, it is rejected as a variation and, thus, it is a deviation. However, a distinction has to be made between acceptable deviations and unacceptable deviations. Acceptable deviations are those Izon influences in the English of Izon speakers that are not directly traceable to the Izon culture but are considered acceptable within the Izon context because they reflect the preferences that Izon-English bilinguals have for similar structures in the Izon language. Their acceptability within the Izon context therefore lies on the fact that:

- (i) They are not ungrammatical because they do not violate any “serious” syntactic rule in English but merely reflect a departure from the preferences which some native-English speakers, especially British English speakers, have for some structures in English.
- (ii) Some of them are similar to some American English variations which are accepted as standard usage both within and outside the American setting.
- (iii) They are intelligible.
- (iv) They occur in the English of the majority of educated Izon speakers.

Unacceptable deviations, on the other hand, are the Izon-induced departures in the English of Izon speakers which do not satisfy any of the requirements listed above. They are unacceptable because, despite the fact that they reflect the structural patterns of the Izon language, they are treated as errors, particularly because of their gross violation of the rules of Standard English syntax. Thus, they do not enjoy widespread usage among educated Izon speakers because they are inappropriate, ungrammatical and unintelligible. This implies that they are totally unacceptable even within the Izon context. They should, therefore, be considered and treated as errors that must be corrected.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The major concern of this study, which focuses on the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals and the influences that the Izon language and culture have on it, is to put in perspective why and how Izon-English bilinguals exhibit variations in their English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting and to account for these variations within an appropriate theoretical perspective. Considering the fact that the object of this study is a non-native variety of English which is used within a non-native culture and which, because of the demands for communicative appropriateness, has to reflect the influences that the Izon culture has on it, it is necessary to account for the various socio-cultural factors underlying the communicative appropriateness exhibited by Izon-English bilinguals in their English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting. This is in line with the view of Weinreich (1953) when he admits that the linguist who makes theories about language influence but neglects to account for the socio-cultural setting of the language contact leaves his study suspended in mid-air. To appropriately account for the linguistic influence inherent in the Izon-English contact situation and the various socio-cultural factors which provide the basis for the legitimacy and appropriateness of the variations manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, therefore, we employ the cultural-conceptual approach to language study as it relates to the concept of communicative competence in bilingual / bicultural situations (see also Hymes, 1962, 1971, 1972; Campbell and Wales, 1970; Gumperz, 1971; Adetugbo, 1979a and b; Saville-Troke, 1989; Malcolm, 2001; Malcolm and Sharifian, 2005; Kovecses, 2005 and Sharifian, 2003, 2005 and 2006).

The cultural-conceptual approach is an emerging theory in cultural linguistics which complements studies in sociolinguistics, especially in bilingual/ bicultural situations, to account for the various cultural schemas and metaphors that embody the cultural beliefs and experiences of the users of the language and which, by extension, provide the basis for the

legitimacy and appropriateness of the variations manifested in language use. As Sharifian (2006:11) explains,

The fundamental premise in this approach is that world Englishes should not be examined exclusively in terms of their linguistic features but rather as emergent systems that are largely adopted and explored to encode and express the *cultural conceptualisations* of their speakers.

Sharifian (2006:14) goes on to assert that:

... language is entrenched in conceptualization, which is largely culturally constructed ... language ... largely communicates and embodies our construal and conceptualisation of various experiences, which ... emerge from the interactions between members of various cultural groups.

The appropriateness of this approach to the present study, therefore, lies on the premise that the contact between Izon and English in the Izon socio-cultural setting has resulted in the emergence of bilingual / bicultural individuals who have, in a bid to achieve communicative appropriateness, domesticated the English language to accommodate the non-native Izon culture which provides the context within which the language is used and understood. Thus, there is a strong cultural force that underlies the linguistic influence manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals. It is, therefore, necessary to situate this linguistic influence within the strong cultural foundation which provides the basis for the legitimacy and appropriateness of the resultant variations in the English of Izon-English bilinguals. The cultural-conceptual approach as it relates to the concept of communicative competence in bilingual/ bicultural situations is, therefore, useful in this study because it provides a sound cultural background for the variations manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals and, thus, providing the communicative contexts within which such variations can be appropriately used to reflect the Izon socio-cultural experience. Moreover, Hymes (1971), Adetugbo (1979b), Adegbija (1989) and Sharifian (2006) have employed similar frameworks in their studies. Thus, through this approach, we account not only for the linguistic influence that the Izon language has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals, but also for the various socio-cultural factors

which provide the context within which the language is used and understood and which, by extension, provide the basis for the legitimacy and appropriateness of the variations manifested in the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals.

Before this approach was chosen in this study to account for the linguistic influence that the Izon language has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals and the various socio-cultural factors which provide the basis for the legitimacy and appropriateness of the variations manifested in their English, some other concepts are also examined to ascertain how relevant they are to the study. These are linguistic competence and linguistic relativity⁹.

1.8.1 Linguistic Competence

Chomsky, in his *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965), explains his notion of competence thus:

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogenous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance. (Chomsky, 1965:3).

Thus, Chomsky draws our attention to the distinction between competence, on the one hand, and performance, on the other. Competence, as explained by Chomsky (1965), is the innate, intuitive and purely mentalistic knowledge of the rules of language that the native speaker-hearer possesses. This abstract knowledge is common to all since every normal human being is born with the capacity to internalize the rules of his/her language. It is this abstract innate knowledge that enables the speaker-hearer to produce, understand and pass judgments on the acceptability or otherwise of any structure that is formed in the language. It is this innate, intuitive and purely mentalistic knowledge that Chomsky refers to as competence. Thus, Chomsky strongly believes that the speaker-hearer is competent in the language if he/she has internalized the rules of the language and is, thus, able to produce, understand and pass

judgements on the grammaticality or otherwise of the structures formed in the language, relying heavily on the intuitions of the ideal native speaker-hearer.

Performance, on the other hand, is the selection and execution of these rules in actual language use. It is the application of the abstract knowledge of the rules of language that the speaker-hearer possesses for actual communicative purposes in society. When a speaker-hearer applies his/her knowledge of language in actual performance, his/her performance is normally affected by a number of psychological or sociological factors. Therefore, despite the fact that the speaker has internalized the rules of the language, he/she does not exhibit mastery in his/her performance. Thus, as Adejare (1995) assumes, there seems to be a wide gap between competence and performance, since they obviously operate in two distinct worlds: the abstract world and the concrete world. Competence, on the one hand, operates in an abstract world embodied in an idealized speaker-hearer whose knowledge of the language is pure and perfect. Performance, on the other hand, is embodied in a normal human being who uses language in a concrete world where his/her knowledge of the language is, as it should be expected, normally affected by a number of psychological and sociological factors which usually accompany the actual use of language. Chomsky, however, closes this gap by reintegrating both the abstract element (competence) and the concrete element (performance) into a single normal human being who becomes the embodiment of both competence and performance. This individual wears a linguistic cap with competence (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of language which underlies his/her performance) on the inside and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations) on the outside. By implication, there is a relationship between competence and performance since the innate ability of the speaker-hearer to internalize the rules of the language underlies his/her performance in the language. Thus, competence underlies performance.

Though the speaker-hearer is an embodiment of both competence and performance, Chomsky insists that the concern of linguistics should be, not with actual performance, but with the competence that underlies it. Chomsky's preference for the study of the intuitions of the ideal native speaker-hearer to his/her actual performance in the language is based on the resolve of the generative theory to account for linguistic structure in its purest form. Chomsky maintains that the true representation of this pure linguistic form, with its characteristic uniformity and homogeneity, can only be achieved by concentrating upon the judgements of the native speaker-hearer, and not on his/her performance which is always characterized by errors and variations that are capable of corrupting the purity of linguistic form. The representation of the innate, intuitive and purely mentalistic knowledge of the native speaker-hearer is, therefore, the major concern of the generative theory. Thus, as Lamidi (2000:27) states, generative grammar attempts to specify what the speaker actually knows, not what he/she says about his/her language. This re-echoes Chomsky's view (Chomsky, 1968:62) that "if we hope to understand human language and the psychological capacities on which it rests, we must first ask what it is, not how or for what purpose it is used." To Chomsky, any theory of language that neglects this basic fact is not a fully adequate theory (see Chomsky, 1965:4-5). This explains why Chomsky insists that the object of linguistics should be the competence of the ideal native speaker-hearer, which obviously excludes the actual use of language in society.

Chomsky's linguistic competence is, without doubt, the underlying force behind both grammatical competence and communicative competence since there is no way any of them can be acquired without first acquiring linguistic competence. However, it is not used in this study because its focus - the representation of the innate, intuitive and purely mentalistic knowledge of the ideal native speaker-hearer, which obviously excludes performance (the actual use of language in society) - differs from that of this study. The focus of this study is

to account for the linguistic influence inherent in the Izon-English contact situation and the various socio-cultural factors which provide the basis for the legitimacy and appropriateness of the variations manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals. The theory that should be considered appropriate for this study should, therefore, be able to account for the socio-cultural factors which shape, sustain and give meaning to the variations manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals within the Izon socio-cultural setting. This is clearly outside the scope of Chomsky's linguistic competence. This is why it is not used for this study.

An offshoot of Chomsky's linguistic competence, which vehemently pursues Chomsky's perception of competence as a purely mentalistic phenomenon, is "grammatical competence". Foder and Garrett, in their "Some Reflections on Competence and Performance" (1966), explain the notion of grammatical competence as the "general ability or capability to do" something in language as opposed to actual performance. This Foder-Garrett notion of competence is a product of the modification of two major aspects of linguistic competence which Foder and Garrett (1966) perceive to be the major problems of the Chomskian type of competence. One, Chomsky's notion of the ideal native speaker-hearer as the repository of competence is replaced in grammatical competence by a normal human being who now becomes the embodiment of competence. Competence, as used by Foder and Garrett (1966), no longer means the innate, intuitive and purely mentalistic superhuman knowledge that is attributed to Chomsky's idealized native speaker-hearer, but the purely mentalistic general ability or capacity that a normal human being who lives in the concrete world possesses which enables him/her to do something in his/her language, as opposed to his/her actual performance in the language. To Foder and Garrett (1966), a speaker-hearer is grammatically competent since he/she possesses the general ability or capacity to construct and understand grammatical structures in his/her language but may, due

to some psychological and sociological constraints, not be able to exhibit this competence in actual performance. Two, Chomsky's notion of universal competence is modified to accommodate a language-specific notion of competence whose acquisition enables the speaker-hearer to have knowledge about the structures of his/her language. With this development, we can now talk of competence in different languages in the world as similar but distinct types of competence.

Though Foder and Garrett (1966) are able to modify Chomsky's linguistic competence by exorcizing from it the notion of the ideal native speaker-hearer and de-emphasizing universal competence in favour of language-specific competence, they still retain, in their grammatical competence, Chomsky's perception of competence as a purely mentalistic phenomenon (see also Knowles, 2000 who strongly argues in favour of this position). Thus, grammatical competence, like linguistic competence, concentrates solely, not on actual performance, but on the competence that underlies it. If grammatical competence concentrates only on competence (the purely mentalistic general ability or capacity which enables the speaker-hearer to do something in his/her language) at the expense of performance (the actual use of language in society), then, how relevant is its acquisition in Nigeria's socio-cultural environment? Is it sufficient for Nigerians to acquire grammatical competence and communicate appropriately in all contexts without taking into consideration the essential socio-cultural factors that characterize the communicative process in Nigeria's socio-cultural environment? Though the acquisition of grammatical competence is necessary for Nigerians since the structures that are formed in their English are expected to be grammatical (Banjo, 1971; Adesanoye, 1973; Adetugbo, 1979b: 179; Adekunle, 1979:34; Egbe, 1989; Mgbo-Elue, 1989:64; Bamgbose, 1995:25; Afolayan, 1995:127 and Adejare, 1995:162), this competence will not only be insufficient but also irrelevant to the communicative process in Nigeria, if Nigerians do not go a step further to learn how to use

these grammatical structures in the appropriate context. If, for example, a young Izon boy goes to a man who is as old as his grandfather, offers his hand to him for a handshake and makes the grammatical utterance, “how are you?”, everyone present there will be baffled because the boy’s action is not in consonance with the Izon culture which demands that elders be respected. Though the boy may be said to have acquired grammatical competence in English since he is assumed to have acquired the competence to produce and understand all the grammatical sentences in English, he is said to be incompetent in terms of communicative competence because he lacks the knowledge of how and when to use the grammatical structures he has acquired and to whom (Platt and Platt, 1975: 13). It is, therefore, impossible for any Nigerian to acquire this type of competence and use it to communicate appropriately in the Nigerian environment since its focus does not permit it to take into consideration the essential socio-cultural features that are important for the contextual use of language. This explains why Hymes (1967:116) claims that “the cognitive significance of a language depends not only on structure, but also on patterns of use.” Saville-Troike (1989:20) states that:

The functions of language provide the primary dimension for characterizing and organizing communicative processes and products in a society; without understanding why a language is being used as it is, and the consequences of such use, it is impossible to understand its meaning in the context of social interaction.

This re-emphasizes Hymes’ earlier view that:

... we have to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate ... as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where and in what manner ... a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events and to evaluate their accomplishment by others (Hymes, 1972).

Thus, anyone who acquires grammatical competence, without acquiring the knowledge of appropriate use, will certainly be able to produce any and all of the

grammatical sentences of the language in question, but will be eventually taken away from linguistic and functional realism (Kachru, 1988:15) since communication, which is the most essential outcome of competence in a language, does not involve only the language code, but also what to say to whom, and how to say it appropriately in any given situation. It is, therefore, necessary for any speaker of a language who has acquired grammatical competence to complement this grammatical knowledge by the knowledge of appropriate use (see Widdowson, 1978). If the speaker of a language knows how to construct and understand all the grammatical sentences in the language, but does not know how to use these sentences for communicative purposes, it is unreasonable for anyone to refer to such a speaker as proficient in the language. Proficiency in a language should not, as Savignon (1982) suggests, be determined by how much language one knows but by how well one can communicate. This is why it is important for the speaker of a language to learn, not only how to construct grammatical sentences, but also how to make the language fit the situation (see Langacker, 1968; Platt and Platt, 1975 and Gumperz, 1971). Since grammatical competence emphasizes the ability of the speaker-hearer to construct and understand the grammatical structures of his/her language without taking into consideration their appropriateness in actual use, it is, certainly, not the type of competence that Nigerians need to acquire so as to communicate appropriately in Nigeria's socio-cultural setting ¹⁰. The type of competence that Nigerians must acquire so as to function effectively in Nigeria's socio-cultural environment is that which should be able to integrate the knowledge of the structures of the language and the knowledge of appropriate usage. Since grammatical competence could not achieve this, it was considered inadequate for this study.

1.8.2. Linguistic Relativity

Linguistic relativity is a notion associated with the structure of language. The term was first proposed by Whorf (1940) to call attention to differences in linguistic structure and

to their importance for experience and behaviour. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity, as it is often called, claims that the perception human beings have of their environment is built upon the linguistic habits of the community in which they live. In other words, the structure of the native language of an individual influences how he/she understands the world around him/her and, therefore, determines what he/she sees, what he/she feels, how he/she thinks and what he/she can talk about. Thus, human beings who speak different languages live in different worlds (see Sapir, 1929: 209 – 210; Whorf, 1967:71). To adapt this view to the Nigerian situation where English is used as a second language in a non-native environment, the Nigerian user of English is normally expected to see the world through his/her first language. The first language, therefore, becomes the instrument, which guides him/her in observing the world, in reacting to it and in expressing his/her feelings about it. Thus, even if the Nigerian speaker uses English to express his/her feelings about the world in which he/she lives, this is normally done within the confines of his/her first language. This, according to Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, happens because the way human beings perceive their environment and interpret experience depends largely on the linguistic habits of the community in which they live and, thus, “linguistic habits are ... constitutive of cultural reality.”

Contrary to this view, however, research has shown that it is culture that determines the perception that human beings have of their environment. Thus, different people who speak different languages have different worldviews largely because of the differences that occur in their cultures (see Hymes, 1971; Gumperz, 1971; Fishman, 1979; Adekunle, 1979 and Saville-Troike, 1989). The differences that may be noticed in the worldviews of different people who speak different languages are therefore caused by differences in cultural values and beliefs. By extension, the differences that are noticed in the English usage of Nigerians who use the language in a non-native environment and that of the native speakers are caused

because the Nigerian culture is different from its native culture. Therefore, though it is true that English in Nigeria has been influenced by the patterns of the Nigerian languages with which it co-exists in the Nigerian environment, this linguistic influence is itself embedded in the Nigerian culture, which the indigenous Nigerian languages tend to express and reflect. Thus, it is through the Nigerian culture, which is reflected in the Nigerian languages, that Nigerians see the world and interpret experience. It thus determines the worldview of Nigerians and, by implication, the appropriateness of the English words and expressions that are used for communication in the Nigerian socio-cultural environment. This is the view that is held in this study. The influence that the Izon language has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals is embedded in the Izon culture and, as such, it is the Izon culture that determines the worldview of the Izon people. Since the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity does not accept this view, it is considered inappropriate for this study whose major objective is to situate the variations that are manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals within the Izon socio-cultural milieu which provides the context within which the language is used and understood. The theory that is relevant to this study should, therefore, be able to account not only for the influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals, but also for the socio-cultural factors which provide the context within which the language is used and understood and which, by extension, provide the basis for the legitimacy and appropriateness of the variations manifested in the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals. This is where the concept of communicative competence embedded in the notion of cultural competence becomes useful here.

1.8.3. Communicative Competence and Its Relevance to this Study

Communicative competence, according to Campbell and Wales (1970:241), is “the capability or ability to produce and understand utterances which are not so much grammatical¹¹ but appropriate in the context in which they are used.” In his *Ethnography of*

Speaking, Hymes (1962) states that, “it is a question of what a child internalizes ... beyond the rules of grammar and a dictionary, while becoming a full-fledged member of its speech community ... a question of what a foreigner must learn about a group’s verbal behaviour in order to participate appropriately and effectively in its activities.” Communicative competence is, therefore, a question of appropriateness in language use through the acquisition of the knowledge of what kinds of things to say in what message forms to what kinds of people and in what kinds of situations (see Gumperz and Hymes, 1964). Hymes insists that, for the speaker of a language to participate appropriately and effectively in any speech act in the speech community, such a speaker must know, not only the language code, but also what to say and how to say it appropriately in any given context, taking into consideration all the relevant extralinguistic factors that must be assumed to give the speech act its total meaning. Thus, communicative competence deals, not only with the knowledge of the language code, but also with the social and cultural knowledge speakers are presumed to have to enable them to use and interpret linguistic forms, and whatever skills that are needed to put this knowledge to communicative use. This knowledge, according to Saville-Troike (1989), includes not only rules for communication (both linguistic and sociolinguistic) and shared rules for interaction but also the cultural rules and knowledge that are the basis for the context and content of communicative events and communicative processes. Saville-Troike therefore suggests that culture is what the individual needs to know to be a functional member of the community because there is a correlation between the form and content of a language and the beliefs, values, and needs present in the culture of its speakers and, therefore, knowing the meaning of a speech act requires knowing the culture in which it is embedded (see also Bryan, 1988; Malcolm, 2001; Malcolm and Sharifian, 2002, 2005; Kovecses, 2005; Sharifian, 2003, 2005, 2006 and Sharifian, Rochecouste and Malcolm, 2004). As Saville-Troike (1989:22) puts it,

The concept of communicative competence must be embedded in the notion of cultural competence or the total set of knowledge and skills which speakers bring into a situation... Interpreting the meaning of linguistic behaviour requires knowing the meaning in which it is embedded.

Sharifian (2006:14 & 18) also supports this position thus:

...language is entrenched in conceptualisation, which is largely culturally constructed...and a thorough understanding of such conceptualisations may require long-time exposure to the culture and interaction with the speakers.

This corroborates Adetugbo's position that the social and cultural milieu in which a speech act takes place gives the speech act its total meaning and that, for any participant to understand the meaning of the speech act, he/she must, as a necessary condition, have the knowledge of the culture in which it is embedded. He suggests that what the Nigerian user of English needs to acquire so as to function effectively in the Nigerian environment is, not just grammatical competence, but, more importantly, cultural competence because the ability to communicate appropriately in the Nigerian socio-cultural context requires the ability to understand the culture in which such appropriateness is embedded (see Adetugbo, 1979a:139 and 1979b:176). Adetugbo therefore recommends a community-specific application for communicative competence, bearing in mind that the linguistic and extralinguistic factors that must be assumed to give any speech act its total meaning differ from community to community and, therefore, it is the specific community in which the speech act takes place that can provide the appropriate context within which it can be interpreted and understood (see Adetugbo, 1979b: 170 – 171). Since communicative competence is community-specific, communicative competence in English in Nigeria cannot be the same as for any other variety of English because of the mode of its acquisition in Nigeria, the influences that local Nigerian languages have on English in its second language situation in Nigeria and the non-

equivalence of the social and cultural environment in Nigeria with that of any other English language speaking community.

If communicative competence is community-specific, then, appropriateness must also be seen from a community-specific perspective because the way an individual structures reality, which depends mainly on the culture of his/her community, determines the appropriateness or otherwise of the utterances that are made within the culture. Therefore, what is appropriate to the Nigerian, who uses English as a second language in Nigeria's socio-cultural setting, may not be appropriate to the native speaker in Britain or America because their worldviews are different, (Haugen, 1971: 159)¹², for the reason that they live and communicate within different cultural settings. As Adekunle (1979:33 – 34) observes,

the more culturally different two linguistic groups are the greater the likelihood that they will structure the realities of life differently... variation in meaning is to be expected in the words and expressions used by native speakers of a language and the same words and expressions as used in different socio-cultural environments.

This reminds us of Hymes' notion of cultural relativity, which was an attempt to put in perspective the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity. Hymes argues that it is culture that determines the perception that human beings have of their environment. Thus, different people who speak different languages have different worldviews because of the differences that occur in their cultures. The differences that may be noticed in the worldviews of different people who speak different languages are therefore caused by differences in cultural values and beliefs (see Hymes, 1971: 116; Gumperz, 1971: 311). By extension, the differences that are noticed in the English usage of Nigerians who use the language in a non-native environment and that of the native speakers are caused, not merely by the differences in their first languages, but, more importantly, because the Nigerian culture is different from the native culture where the native speakers use the language. Though it is true that English in Nigeria has been influenced by the patterns of the Nigerian languages with which it co-

exists in the Nigerian environment, this linguistic influence is itself embedded in the Nigerian culture, which the indigenous Nigerian languages tend to express and reflect.

Thus, it is through the Nigerian culture, which is reflected in the Nigerian languages, that Nigerians see the world and interpret experience. It therefore determines the worldview of Nigerians and, by implication, the appropriateness of the English words and expressions that are used for communication in the Nigerian socio-cultural environment. It is within this framework that the researcher intends to examine the influences that the Izon language has on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. Though these influences are departures from the native-speaker varieties and, as such, may not be seen as appropriate to native English usage, all of them should not be seen as errors; some should be accepted as variants whose appropriateness is guaranteed by the fact that they are expressive of the cultural patterns of the Nigerian people and are, therefore, in conformity with their worldviews. They are, therefore, created, sustained and made meaningful by a strong cultural reality (see Fishman, 1979:56; Saville-Troike, 1989:22). It is therefore this cultural reality that sustains English usage in Nigeria and as long as this reality continues to exist in the Nigerian environment, the words and expressions that express and reflect this cultural reality will also continue to flourish in the Nigerian environment (see Banjo, 1979). By extension, the influences of the Izon language on the English of the Izon-English bilingual are created, supported and sustained by the Izon culture because they are expressive of the cultural values and beliefs of the Izon people and are, therefore, seen to be appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context. It is therefore reasonable for the researcher to examine the influences that the Izon language has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals with reference to their appropriateness within the Izon socio-cultural milieu. This functional perspective of communicative appropriateness embedded in the concept of cultural competence therefore provides the background against which the influence of Izon on the syntax and lexis of the

English of Izon-English bilinguals is examined. Thus, through the cultural-conceptual approach to language study as it relates to the concept of communicative competence in bilingual/bicultural situations, this study accounts not only for the linguistic influence that the Izon language has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals, but also for the various socio-cultural factors which provide the context within which the language is used and understood and which, by extension, provide the basis for the legitimacy and appropriateness of the variations manifested in their English usage.

ENDNOTES

1. For example, when the Nkoroo speaker living along River Opobo speaks, it is difficult for the Arogbo-Izon speaker in Ondo State to understand what he/she says.
2. Ibe means a sub-division of the Ijo ethnic group, speaking a common dialect and recognizing affinities and common interests.
3. The Apoi in Ondo State speak about 98% of Yoruba. Thus, we cannot treat the dialect spoken by the Apoi in Ondo State as a dialect of Izon since Izon elements are only found in place names, religious ritual, funeral songs and masquerade plays. This study, therefore, excludes Apoi as a dialect of Izon in Ondo State.
4. This is due to the language policy in Nigeria where pupils are required to learn the majority language in their respective states. Thus, the pupils in the Arogbo-Izon community are forced to learn Yoruba (the dominant language in Ondo State), though many of the pupils refuse to attend these Yoruba classes. Secondly, there are a few inter-marriages between the Arogbo and the Ilaje in such towns as Ajapa, Akpata, Opuba and Bolowoghu because of their proximity to the Ilaje. It is therefore, possible for the children to speak both Izon and Ilaje (a dialect of Yoruba).
5. Especially those who did not go to school and, therefore, could not learn to speak English.
6. This makes them to be bilingual in Izon and English or Itshekiri.
7. Seimibiri and Tuomo are almost extinct as their speakers now adopt Mein.
8. Berbice Dutch is a Dutch Creole language. Smith, Robertson and Williamson (1987) revealed that, consequent upon its transportation through the slave trade to America, Kalabari survived for several decades as a spoken form in Berbice, Guyana and contributed significantly to the formation of this Dutch Creole language.
9. This is not to say that linguistic competence, grammatical competence and communicative competence are not related in any way (see Williams, 1990 and Adejare, 1995).

10. This does not imply that grammatical competence is not relevant to the Nigerian situation since there is no way one can communicate appropriately in English in the Nigerian context without, first of all, acquiring grammatical competence. Thus, without grammatical competence, no one can have any form of communicative competence: they are inseparable and complementary. However, grammatical competence is considered inappropriate for this study because its focus, (the representation of the general ability of the speaker-hearer to make and understand grammatical structures in his language as opposed to his actual performance in the language), does not permit it to accommodate the essential socio-cultural factors which determine appropriate language use in society.
11. Within the framework of the generative theory, the word *grammatical* implies that the structures that are formed in the language do not violate the rules of the grammar of the language and that such structures are in conformity with the world-view of the native speakers of the language. Contrary to this view, however, Campbell and Wales (1970) suggest that even if utterances are not in conformity with the world-view of native speakers, such utterances should be considered as acceptable and, therefore, grammatical if they are appropriate in the context in which they are used. In other words, it is the appropriateness of the utterance that should determine its grammaticality and acceptability. What is *grammatical* and, therefore, acceptable to a second language user may not be seen as grammatical and acceptable to the native speaker, since they have different world-views. This is the context in which Campbell and Wales (1970) have used the expression *not so much grammatical*.
12. Haugen's comment was made during the presentation of Hymes' paper "Two Types of Linguistic Relativity: With Examples from Amerindian Ethnography" (see Hymes, 1971:159).

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodological approaches considered adequate for investigating the influence of Izon on the English of Izon-English bilinguals. It presents the research design, population and sample, research instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument and procedure for data collection and analysis. To ensure that an adequate method of investigation is chosen for this study, this chapter presents two major stages of investigation: the observation stage and the correlation stage. At the observation stage, which involves the investigation of the influence of the Izon language on the syntax and lexis of the English of the subjects, the observation method is adopted. At the correlation stage, however, the validity of the data collected at the observation stage is tested against the data collected mostly through structured interview.

2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study, which is a survey, ascertains the extent to which the variations manifested in the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals can be induced by their linguistic, cultural and educational background. In this study, the dependent variable is observed, while several independent variables are examined to ascertain the extent to which they can affect the dependent variable mainly through the use of a questionnaire. The dependent variable in this study is the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals, while the independent variables are those aspects of the bilinguals' linguistic, cultural and educational background capable of inducing variations in their English usage.

2.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The Izon-English bilingual who uses English to communicate within the Izon socio-cultural setting is the focus of this study. Though Izon-English bilinguals can be found in the

Izon-speaking communities of Ondo, Edo, Delta and Bayelsa States, the Izon-English bilinguals in the Arogbo-Izon community of Ondo State formed the population of this study¹. One hundred (100) Izon-English bilinguals, who have lived within the Izon culture for at least two years, were randomly selected from the Arogbo-Izon community of Ondo State for the study. Specifically, the sample was composed of sixty (60) SSS3 students and forty (40) graduates out of whom were twenty (20) teachers, five (5) local government workers, five (5) politicians and ten (10) retired civil servants. This sample is appropriate and sufficient for the study because all Izon speakers, whatever their state of origin, have similar linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds.

The sixty (60) SSS3 students and the twenty (20) graduate teachers used for the study were randomly selected from four secondary schools in the Arogbo-Izon community. These schools included:

- (i) Ijaw National High School, Arogbo;
- (ii) Ukparamah Grammar School, Bolowoghu;
- (iii) Okhuba-Ama High School, Ajapa and;
- (iv) St. Arenibaro Memorial High School, Amapere.

Fifteen (15) SSS3 students and five (5) graduate teachers were therefore randomly sampled from each of the four schools used for the study. The sampling was done through the following procedure. A 40-item questionnaire initially designed to measure the subjects' linguistic, cultural and educational background was administered on all SSS 3 students and graduate teachers in each of the sampled schools so as to ascertain their linguistic and cultural background. A total of 355 questionnaires were administered:

	Schools	Students	Teachers	Row Total
1.	Ijaw National High School, Arogbo.	85	20	105
2.	Ukparamah Grammar School, Bolowoghu.	72	16	88
3.	Okhuba-Ama High School, Ajapa.	69	15	84
4.	St. Arenibaro Memorial High School, Amapere.	64	14	78
	Column Total	290	65	355

After observing the responses of each respondent, it was realized that 24 out of the 290 students and 13 out of the 65 graduate teachers on whom the questionnaire was administered failed to meet the requirement since they do not speak only Izon and English and have not lived within the Izon cultural environment for up to two years. The respondents who speak only Izon and English who have spent at least two years within the Izon culture were therefore selected. Thus, the number dropped from 355 to 318:

	Schools	Students	Teachers	Row Total
1.	Ijaw National High School, Arogbo.	77	16	93
2.	Ukparamah Grammar School, Bolowoghu.	62	13	75
3.	Okhuba-Ama High School, Ajapa.	63	11	74
4.	St. Arenibaro Memorial High School, Amapere.	64	12	76
	Column Total	266	52	318

The names of the 266 students who met the requirement were copied out from the SSS 3 class register in each of the four sampled schools. Fifteen students were then sampled from each school by going through the list and picking the names which coincide with each of the multiples of 4 occurring between 1 and 60² thereby providing the sixty (60) SSS 3 students used for the study. The twenty (20) graduate teachers used for the study were also sampled by writing the names of each of the teachers who met the requirement in each school on separate

sheets of paper. These sheets of paper were wrapped and thrown on the ground. Five of these wrapped sheets of paper were then picked from each of the four sampled schools thereby providing the twenty (20) graduate teachers used for the study. The remaining twenty (20), out of the forty graduates used for the study, were sampled, through the same sampling procedure, from the workers of Ese-Odo Local Government, Igbekebo, politicians and retired civil servants. In all, twenty-two (22) local government workers, twenty-three(23) councilors and political appointees and thirty (30) retired civil servants met the requirement since they speak only Izon and English and have lived within the Izon cultural environment for up to two years. Out of these, five (5) local government workers, five (5) politicians and ten (10) retired civil servants were therefore sampled for the study. This brought the total size of the sample used for the study to one-hundred (100): sixty (60) SSS3 students and forty (40) graduates.

The sampling was done in such a manner that both the student population and the graduate class in the Arogbo-Izon community were represented so as to reflect the inclusive definition of Nigerian English, which recognizes its classification into Standard Nigerian English (SNE) and General Nigerian English (GNE) (see Egbe, 1989: 38). The graduate class represented the speakers of SNE (Robins, 1964; Francis, 1967; Haugen, 1972; Adeniran, 1979; Spencer, 1971; Banjo, 1971; Adesanoye, 1973; Egbe, 1989; Mohammed, 1995 and Adejare, 1995), while the secondary school students used in this study represented the speakers of GNE. This will, at least, serve as a basis for the researcher to classify the influences of the Izon language on the English of Izon-English bilinguals into “temporary influences” and “permanent influences”. By “temporary influences”, the researcher means those influences that are noticed in the English of GNE speakers but which, due to increased exposure, disappear as the speakers graduate into the class of SNE speakers. “Permanent influences”, on the other hand, are those influences which are able to, despite the level of the

speaker's exposure, survive through the GNE level to the SNE level and which, the researcher feels, must therefore be considered by educated Nigerians as variants whose survival has been supported and sustained by their appropriateness to the Nigerian context.

2.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

For this investigation, we used the following:

1. The sampled students' Mock Examination scripts in English Language;
2. The written responses of the sampled graduates on "The Socio-cultural Life of the IZONS";
3. Informal discussions of the sampled teachers and students in the staff common room and in the classroom respectively and;
4. A forty-item questionnaire designed to measure the subjects' linguistic, cultural and educational background and how this influences their English usage within the IZON socio-cultural setting. This was, however, supplemented with informal interviews where necessary.

The questionnaire, which was the primary source of information, was divided into two parts: *A and B*. Part A, which contained items 1 – 6, sought information about the individual respondent's name, sex, age, school/place of work, status and tribe. Part B, on the other hand, contained thirty-four (34) items designed to elicit information about various aspects of the respondents' linguistic, cultural and educational background, the extent to which these could cause the variations that are manifested in the English usage of IZON-English bilinguals and the appropriateness, acceptability and frequency of use of these variations within the IZON socio-cultural setting.

2.4 VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

Initially, a twenty-eight item questionnaire dealing with various aspects of the subjects' linguistic, cultural and educational background was constructed by the researcher to

ascertain the extent to which this background could influence the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals within the Izon socio-cultural setting. To ensure that the instrument actually measured the relationship between these two variables, it was submitted to a number of experienced scholars in the field, including the researcher's supervisors, for editing. After certain items were altered and others added to the instrument, the number of items was increased to forty.

Apart from that, before the researcher administered the instrument on the sampled subjects, it was first administered on twenty students randomly selected from the sampled schools to determine its difficulty level. Consequently, some of the items were restructured to enhance easy understanding.

2.5 RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

The test-retest method was used to test the reliability of the instrument used for this study (see also Saville-Troike, 1989: 129). The instrument was administered on a total of thirty (30) subjects: twenty (20) SSS 3 students and ten (10) graduates randomly selected from the one-hundred (100) subjects sampled for the study. The twenty (20) SSS 3 students who were picked were those whose names coincided with the multiples of 3 from 1 – 60 on the sampled students' list. Similarly, ten (10) graduates whose names coincided with the multiples of 4 from 1 – 40 were also picked from the forty (40) graduates sampled for the study. The researcher administered the instrument on the thirty (30) randomly sampled subjects and obtained their responses. After a period of one week, the same items were administered on the same subjects and the responses were again obtained. When the responses were correlated, using Pearson's Correlation Co-efficient, it was found out to be about 0.73 which showed a highly positive correlation³. Thus, the instrument proved to have a very high reliability. This means that the instrument is highly reliable in examining the

relationship between the linguistic, cultural and educational background of Izon-English bilinguals and their English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting.

2.6 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

This study explores how Izon-English bilinguals manifest variations in their English usage and the extent to which these variations can be induced by the bilinguals' linguistic, cultural and educational background and, as such, it employs both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. This methodology has been informed by the following recommendation made by Saville-Troike (1989:117 – 118):

...quantitative methods may prove useful (even essential) in some aspects of data collection, especially when variable features of language use are being explored. Quantitative methods are essentially techniques for measuring degree of consistency in behaviour, and the amount and nature of variation under different circumstances ... but if quantitative methods are to be used, they must first be developed and validated by qualitative procedures. Quantitative procedures may in turn serve to determine the reliability of qualitative observation ...

Thus, both observation and interview have been employed to provide the qualitative and quantitative data needed for the study. While observation (both participant and non-participant) is employed to ascertain the presence of the variations noticed in the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals, the questionnaire provides the quantitative data needed to establish the extent to which these variations have been induced by the bilinguals' linguistic, cultural and educational background as well as the appropriateness, acceptability and frequency of use of the variations within the Izon socio-cultural context. This is, however, supplemented by unstructured interviews where additional information, not provided by the questionnaire, is sought.

To achieve this, the study was divided into two different stages:

- (i) The observation stage and;
- (ii) The correlation stage.

2.6.1 The Observation Stage

The observation stage, which was the first stage of the study, covered six months and it involved observing and analyzing the syntax and lexis of the English of the subjects so as to ascertain whether there were variations in their English usage and to trace these variations to the influence of the Izon language. The materials observed and analyzed during this stage of the study included:

- (a) The sampled students' Mock Examination scripts in English Language;
- (b) The written responses of the sampled graduates on "The Socio-cultural Life of the IZONS" and;
- (c) Informal discussions of the sampled teachers and students in the staff common room and in the classroom respectively. These were recorded with the aid of a concealed tape recorder.

The researcher personally visited the sampled schools, the Ese-Odo Local Government Secretariat at Igbekebo and its Area Office at Arogbo to observe and analyze the English of the subjects, as it was used in the materials listed above, so as to ascertain if there was any influence of Izon on the syntax and lexis of their English.

2.6.2 The Correlation Stage

This was the second stage of the study and it covered a period of six months. After observing the English usage of the subjects and ascertaining the influence of the Izon language on the variations manifested in the syntax and lexis of their English, the study, at the correlation stage, investigated the extent to which these manifested variations can be induced by the subjects' linguistic, cultural and educational background. The appropriateness, acceptability and frequency of use of the variations within the Izon socio-cultural setting were also investigated at this stage of the study. This was done majorly through a forty-item questionnaire designed for the purpose. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that it

contained both open-ended and closed-ended precoded questions to ensure that enough information is provided on all aspects of the subjects' linguistic, cultural and educational background and the extent to which these influence their English usage and to also facilitate the statistical analysis required to produce quantitative data for the study.

To ensure that the questionnaire was properly administered, the researcher went personally to each of the sampled schools and distributed a copy each to the subjects with the assistance of the vice-principals of each sampled school. The researcher also went round each of the sampled schools, in the company of the vice-principals, to explain the content of the questionnaire to the subjects to ensure that they actually knew what they were required to do before they started to respond to the questions. The researcher also went to the Council Secretariat at Igbekebo and its Arogbo area office and did the same. After the subjects had finished filling the questionnaire, the researcher collected them and collated the responses of each subject.

2.7 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Frequency counts and simple percentages were used to analyze the data collected for this study. Frequency counts of the responses of the subjects to the questionnaire were obtained. The subjects were grouped as having either high or low linguistic, cultural and educational background using the following parameters:

(a) Linguistic Background

- (i) High** – Izon-English bilinguals who have lived within the Izon speech community for at least five years.
- (ii) Low** – Izon-English bilinguals who have lived within the Izon speech community for only two to four years.

(b) Cultural Background

- (i) High** – Izon-English bilinguals who have lived in the Izon cultural environment for at last five years.
- (ii) Low** – Izon-English bilinguals who have lived in the Izon cultural environment for only two to four years.

(c) Educational Background

- (i) High** - Those who (or whose parents) have at least first degree
- (ii) Low** – Those whose educational level is below first degree.

The linguistic, cultural or educational background of each respondent was written against his/her coded responses obtained from the questionnaire. The resultant figures obtained from the frequency counts of the subjects' responses were then converted and interpreted in terms of percentage:

$$\frac{\text{Frequency Count of Subjects' Responses}}{\text{Total Number of Subjects}} \times 100$$

The percentage derived may be favourable or unfavourable depending on whether the frequency of the subjects' responses on a particular variable is high or low. If the percentage is high, it means that the variable in question is applicable. On the contrary, if it is low, then the variable is not applicable.

2.9 CONCLUSION

The methodological framework adopted in this study is adequate for investigating the influence of Izon on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. The research design, sample and methods of data collection and analysis used are all appropriate and, thus, contributing positively to the findings of the study. The research design used in this study, for example, makes it possible to investigate the relationship between the dependent variable (English usage) and such independent variables as the bilingual's linguistic, cultural and educational background. The sample used also suits the study because only Izon-English

bilinguals, who have lived within the Izon culture for at least two years, were used for the study. This ensures that the English of the subjects is not influenced by any other Nigerian languages and culture other than Izon. All these attest to the fact that the study is situated within an appropriate methodological framework.

ENDNOTES

1. All the Izon-speaking communities have similar linguistic, socio-cultural and economic background. It is therefore hoped that the findings of this study will be generalized to cover the other communities not covered by the study.
2. Where there were two or more classes or arms in SSS 3, all the names of the students in the classes were put together and the first 15 multiples of 4 occurring between 1 and 60 were picked.
3. Correlation coefficient normally spreads from -0.9 to $+0.9$. There is negative correlation from -0.9 to -0.1 , while $+0.1$ to $+0.9$ indicates positive correlation. When there is negative correlation, it means that the scores in one test administration relate negatively with the scores in the second administration of the same test. In other words, as a group scores high in the first test, the same group scores low in the same test during the second administration or vice versa. This, therefore, implies that the instrument used is not reliable as there is no consistency in the responses of the subjects to the instrument. But when there is positive correlation, it means that the scores in one test administration relates positively with the scores in the second administration of the same test. The implication of this is that the instrument is reliable since there is a degree of consistency in the responses of the subjects to the instrument.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the concept of bilingualism as well as the notion of intra- and inter-language errors and explicates the various general views expressed by scholars on English in Nigeria. Specifically, the chapter explores the developments in Nigeria's history that have shaped and transformed English into a second language with an official status in Nigeria's multilingual setting. The consequences of the contact between English and the Nigerian languages as well as the nature and character of Nigerian English are also presented in this chapter. The chapter also presents views on the relationship between language use and culture and the relevance of this relationship to communicative appropriateness within the Nigerian socio-cultural milieu.

3.1 THE CONCEPT OF BILINGUALISM

Bilingualism is a language phenomenon in which an individual functions with varying degrees of competence in at least two languages. According to Bloomfield (1935:56), bilingualism describes "the native-like control of two languages." In contrast to Bloomfield's definition, Macnamara (1967) proposes that a bilingual is anyone who possesses a minimal competence in one of the four language skills, that is, listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing in a language other than the mother tongue. To Titone (1972:11), bilingualism is "the individual's capacity to speak a second language while following the concepts and structures of that language" rather than paraphrasing his/her mother tongue. These definitions, which range from a native-like competence in two languages to a minimal proficiency in a second language, reflect the various interpretations given to the term "bilingualism". In an attempt to facilitate better understanding of the psychological state of the individual who uses more than one language as well as two or more codes in interpersonal

and intergroup relations, Hamers and Blanc (1989:6) make a distinction between what they call “bilinguality” and bilingualism:

Bilinguality is the psychological state of an individual who has access to more than one linguistic code as a means of social communication ... The concept of bilingualism, on the other hand, includes that of bilinguality (or individual bilingualism) but refers equally to the state of a linguistic community in which two languages are in contact with the result that two codes can be used in the same interaction and that a number of individuals are bilingual (societal bilingualism).

They also propose various dimensions of bilinguality on the basis of which different types of bilinguals can be distinguished (see Hamers and Blanc, 1989:8). The first distinction, which is based on the dimension of competence, has to do with the “balanced bilingual” and the “dominant bilingual”. According to Lambert (1955), a “balanced bilingual” is the bilingual who has equivalent competence in both languages, while a “dominant bilingual” is the one whose competence in one of the languages, more often the mother tongue, is superior to his/her competence in the other.

The second distinction, which is based on the dimension of cognitive organization, involves the “compound bilingual” and the “coordinate bilingual”. Ervin and Osgood (1954) identified two types of language systems: “compound” and “coordinate”. In a compound system, two sets of linguistic signs come to be associated with the same set of meaning. This type of language system is often associated with the compound bilingual who uses the two languages as if they are sourced from the same reference point. According to Dadzie (2004b:143), this type of bilingual is unable to function effectively in either of the languages since both languages “are so integrated at a deep level of organization that one language is equated more or less with the other.”

In a coordinate system, on the other hand, translation equivalents in the two languages correspond to two different sets of representations. This type of language system can, therefore, be associated with the coordinate bilingual who, unlike the compound bilingual,

possesses the ability to function effectively in both languages since he/she is able to distinguish the systems of both languages and, thus, keeps them separate. However, as Hamers and Blanc (1989:8) suggest, a coordinate bilingual should not, because of his/her high degree of competence in both languages, be misinterpreted to be a balanced bilingual because, in the case of the latter, it is a question of the state of equilibrium reached by the levels of competence attained in the two languages as compared to monolingual competence. Thus, the competence of a balanced bilingual in both languages may be high or low depending on when the state of equilibrium is reached. Whereas, in the case of a coordinate bilingual, it is high and, thus, it is often described as “near-native” (see Dadzie, 2004b:142).

The third dimension is that of the age of acquisition. Through this, a distinction is made between “childhood bilinguality”, “adolescent bilinguality” and “adult bilinguality”, which are bilingual experiences that occur at the childhood, adolescent and adulthood stages respectively. “Childhood bilinguality”, (the bilingual experience which takes place at the same time as the general development of the child), can further be distinguished on the basis of whether the child acquires the two languages at the same time (“simultaneous early or infant bilinguality”) or at different times (“consecutive childhood bilinguality”). “Simultaneous early or infant bilinguality” describes a situation where the child develops two mother tongues from the onset of language often through informal, unintentional learning. “Consecutive childhood bilinguality”, on the other hand, occurs where the child acquires a second language early in childhood but after the basic linguistic acquisition of the mother tongue has been achieved, and this may occur either informally or through intentional learning.

There is also the dimension of exogeneity through which a distinction can be made between “endogenous bilinguality” and “exogenous bilinguality” based on whether the speech communities of both languages are present in the child’s environment or not. In an

endogenous bilinguality situation, the language that is used as mother tongue in the community, (that is, the endogenous language), may or may not be used for institutional purposes. In the case of exogenous bilinguality, however, the language that is used as an official, institutionalized language has no speech community in the political entity using it officially and, thus, it is an exogenous language. This is the situation in Nigeria where English, which has its native speakers outside the Nigerian setting, is used as an official language.

The fifth dimension is that of cultural identity. On the basis of this, a distinction can be made between a “bicultural/monocultural bilingual”, a “second-language acculturated bilingual” and a “deculturated bilingual” (see Berry, 1980). A bicultural bilingual is the bilingual who identifies positively with two the cultural groups that speak his/her languages and is, therefore, recognized by each group as a member. However, a bilingual may identify culturally with one of the groups only and, thus, he remains a “monocultural bilingual”. A second-language acculturated bilingual, on the other hand, is the bilingual who renounces the cultural identity of his/her mother-tongue group and adopts that of the second-language group. Finally, a bilingual becomes “deculturated” when he/she gives up his/her own cultural identity but, at the same time, fails to identify with the L_2 cultural group.

Another important concept that should be discussed in this review is the notion of “semilingualism” which is a negative consequence of bilingual experience. Semilingualism describes the child who fails to reach monolingual proficiency in literacy skills in any language and may, therefore, be unable to develop his/her linguistic potential (see Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa, 1976). It is, therefore, defined as a linguistic handicap which prevents the individual from acquiring the linguistic skills appropriate to his/her linguistic potential in any of his/her languages. However, semilingualism, as Hamers and Blanc (1989: 52) explain,

...does not imply failure to communicate in ordinary everyday situations, since children labelled as “semilingual” are judged to be quite fluent, but this fluency is alleged to be only superficial and to mask a deficit in the knowledge of the structure of both languages.

In an attempt to put in perspective the notion of semilingualism as an explanatory factor for poor performance, Cummins (1979) proposes two hypotheses: the “developmental interdependence hypothesis” and the minimal “threshold of linguistic competence hypothesis”. The minimal “threshold of linguistic competence hypothesis”, which is a two-fold threshold hypothesis, implies that a first-language competence threshold has to be crossed in order to avoid cognitive deficit linked to childhood bilinguality and that a second-language competence threshold must be passed if bilinguality is to positively influence cognitive functioning. Cummins explains that the first threshold, which is the lower of the two, must be reached if the child must avoid an intellectual handicap as a consequence of childhood bilingual experience and that the inability of the child to attain this might result in a below-normal level of competence in both languages. By implication, if the child is able to cross the first threshold, a handicap will be avoided. However, it is only when the second, or higher, threshold, is passed that bilingual experience can have a positive effect on cognitive processing and that competence in both languages tends towards balance (see also Duncan and De Avila, 1979, Cummins, 1984 and Hakuta and Diaz, 1984).

The “developmental interdependence hypothesis” suggests that competence in a second language is a function of competence developed in the mother tongue, at least at the beginning of exposure to the second language. By implication, when certain communicative skills are sufficiently developed in L₁, it is likely that massive exposure to L₂ will lead to a good competence in L₂ without detriment to competence in L₁. Thus, a high level of competence in a first language is related to a high level of competence in the second language. This is so because, according to Cummins (1984), instruction that develops first-language literacy skills is not just developing these, it is also developing a deeper conceptual

and linguistic competence that is strongly related to the development of general literacy and academic skills.

However, as Hamers and Blanc (1989) observe, the interdependence works in both directions in the sense that, as competence in L_1 leads to competence in L_2 , evidence has shown that children who already have a high competence in their mother tongue and who start to learn a foreign language at an early age get more improved in their competence in mother tongue than peers who do not have exposure to a foreign language (see Holmstrand, 1979).

3.2 INTER- AND INTRA-LINGUAL ERRORS

Traditionally, difficulties and errors in L_2 acquisition are attributed to a transfer of L_1 habits (see Lado, 1957). Thus, as Corder (1975) observes, negative transfer or interference is conceived as essentially interlingual in nature. Interlingual errors are, therefore, those errors in second language acquisition that are traceable to negative transfer or interference of the learner's first language. This view is hinged on the assumption that L_2 acquisition is completely determined by the learner's knowledge of his/her L_1 because, as the learner learns the L_2 , he/she transfers aspects of the L_1 to the L_2 , and that this knowledge either assists or inhibits the acquisition of the L_2 . Thus, whenever there is negative transfer of L_1 habits to L_2 , it results in errors.

A number of studies have provided evidence for L_1 influence on L_2 acquisition. Kenyeres (1938), while observing her six-year-old daughter whose mother tongue was Hungarian and who was learning French in a school in Geneva, concluded from her observations that L_2 acquisition, especially when it is achieved in a harmonious fashion, does not follow the same route as L_1 acquisition, and that the majority of errors in L_2 can be attributed to mother tongue interference. Similarly, Schumann (1982) reveals that "no + verb

form” is more difficult to eradicate for Spanish-speaking learners of English than for other learner groups because the structure exists in Spanish.

However, advances in psycholinguistics, especially in the area of L₁ and L₂ acquisition, have drawn attention to the fact that all errors in L₂ acquisition cannot be attributed to L₁ interference. There are some errors which stem from the acquisition process itself. These errors are developmental and, thus, intralingual in nature, and not interlingual. According to Richards (1974), they are caused by overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, or by developing false concepts about L₂. He argues that these errors cannot be attributed to L₁ interference because the same errors are committed by L₂ learners from different L₁ backgrounds. Such errors are, therefore, better explained through the recognition of the existence of universal developmental sequences which characterize the various developmental stages that the learner passes through in the process of L₂ acquisition.

Various studies have confirmed the existence of developmental sequences in L₂ acquisition (see Hatch 1974, 1983; Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982 and McLaughlin, 1984). Based on these developmental sequences, Ellis (1985) identifies four broad stages of development: (1) using a standard word order and propositionally reduced utterances; (2) expanding proposition to include more sentence constituents, and varying word order on the model of L₂; (3) using morphemes systematically and meaningfully and; (4) using complex sentence structures.

However, research has shown that these developmental processes are not exclusive to L₂ acquisition alone. They are also applicable to L₁ acquisition. Tits (1948), from his observations of a seven-year-old Spanish-speaking girl acquiring French in Brussels, reveals that L₂ acquisition follows the same stages of development as L₁ acquisition, though at a faster pace. Similarly, Wagner -Gough (1975) confirms that the development of questions is

identical in L₂ and L₁. Dato (1971), in a study involving English-speaking children learning Spanish, also confirms that L₂ syntactic development, in general, follows the same sequence of rules as L₁ syntactic development: base structures are acquired before transformations. This, according to Hamers and Blanc (1989), suggests that order of L₂, like L₁, acquisition is characterized by an increasing complexity.

It therefore follows that intralingual errors, (which are developmental errors arising from the various developmental stages that the learner passes through in the process of language acquisition), are not restricted to L₂ acquisition alone. The L₁ learners are also exposed to these errors since they, just like the L₂ learners, also undergo the developmental stages of acquisition which create these developmental errors. Thus, while interlingual errors, (that is, errors that are traceable to negative transfer or interference of L₁), are exclusive to L₂ acquisition, intralingual errors, (that is, those that arise from the universal developmental sequences characterizing the acquisition process itself), are applicable to both L₁ and L₂ acquisition. It can, therefore, be inferred that errors in L₂ acquisition may be attributed to negative transfer or interference of L₁, especially where the learner perceives the L₂ rules as fuzzy and ill-defined (see Zobl, 1984), or to developmental processes in language acquisition.

Adapting this to the Nigerian situation where English is used as a second language, the errors that occur in the English of Nigerians may be caused by a combination of factors, including the influence of the Nigerian languages and the universal developmental processes involved in language acquisition. This is not to say that all L₁ influences manifested in the English of Nigerians are errors. In fact, a number of renowned scholars have attested to the appropriateness and, therefore, acceptability of the various Nigerian expressions which occur especially in the English usage of educated Nigerians who have, because of the need for communicative appropriateness, domesticated the language to suit the Nigerian socio-cultural

context (see Bamgbose 1982b, 1995; Adetugbo 1979a; Adegbija 1989, 2003, 2004; Adekunle 1974, 1979 and Bamiro 1994, 2006a and b). Thus, the influences that the Nigerian languages have on English in Nigeria may result both in errors (unacceptable deviations) and non-errors (variations and acceptable deviations). As discussed in section 1.7.3 of this study, the term, “variation”, describes any culturally-induced departure in the English of Nigerians whose acceptability, especially within the Nigerian socio-cultural setting, is determined by its ability to satisfy the following requirements:

- (i) It must be appropriate. “Appropriateness” in this context implies that the variation in question is traceable to the Nigerian culture.
- (ii) It must be grammatical to a reasonable extent in the sense that it does not violate any “serious” syntactic rule in English but merely reflects a departure from the preferences that some native English speakers, especially British English speakers, have for some structures in English.
- (iii) It must be intelligible.
- (iv) It must enjoy widespread usage among educated Nigerians.

Thus, any departure in the English of Nigerians can be treated as a variation if it is acceptable within the Nigerian socio-cultural context on the basis of its appropriateness, grammaticality, intelligibility and widespread usage among educated Nigerians.

“Acceptable deviations”, on the other hand, are those influences in the English of Nigerians that are not directly traceable to the Nigerian culture but are considered acceptable within the Nigerian context because they reflect the preferences that Nigerians have for similar structures in the Nigerian languages. They are, therefore, acceptable within the Nigerian context because:

- (i) They are not ungrammatical since they do not violate any “serious” syntactic rule in English but merely reflect a departure from the preferences which some native-

English speakers, especially British English speakers, have for some structures in English.

- (ii) Some of them are similar to some American English variations which are accepted as standard usage both within and outside the American setting.
- (iii) They are intelligible.
- (iv) They occur in the English of the majority of educated Nigerians.

Finally, “unacceptable deviations” are the departures in the English of Nigerians which do not satisfy any of the requirements listed above. They are unacceptable because, despite the fact that they reflect the structural patterns of the Nigerian languages, they are treated as errors, particularly because of their gross violation of the rules of Standard English syntax. Thus, they do not enjoy widespread usage among educated Nigerians because they are inappropriate, ungrammatical and unintelligible. This implies that they are totally unacceptable even within the Nigerian context. They should, therefore, be considered and treated as errors that must be corrected. Thus, while unacceptable deviations are errors, variations and acceptable deviations are non-errors.

3.3 ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN NIGERIA

English, Nigeria’s official language today, initially came to Nigeria as a language of trade. However, as Bamgbose (1995: 9) observes, the initial contact through trade led to a more formalized relationship during the colonial period, and subsequent developments later converted the language into a second language with a distinctive Nigerian flavour and ensured for it a dominant position as Nigeria’s official language. This section explores the developments in Nigeria’s history that have shaped and transformed English into a second language with an official status in Nigeria’s multilingual setting.

The initial contact of English with the people and languages of present-day Nigeria has been traced to trading activities as far back as the 16th century ¹ (see Spencer, 1971;

Banjo, 1995 and Awonusi, 2004a). This was the period when Portugal's unchallenged monopoly of the African coastal trade collapsed as a result of the weakness of her military and naval defences thereby paving the way for such relatively stronger nations as England, France and Holland. One interesting effect of this development was that an English-based Pidgin, which later became and is now referred to by many as "Nigerian Pidgin"², was evolved in the coastal settlements to replace the Portuguese-based Pidgin used earlier as the language of trade between the European traders and the inhabitants of the coastal settlements who served as middlemen between the Europeans and the Nigerians in the hinterland.

Though Nigerian Pidgin (widely called Pidgin English) was prominently used as a trade language in Nigeria's coastal settlements, its continued use was later discouraged by the English traders who felt that the language was inferior, unintelligible especially to the English speakers who newly arrived from England and, thus, inappropriate for record-keeping. The English traders, therefore, made frantic efforts to encourage Nigerians to learn and speak English. According to Spencer (1971:12), as early as 1554, Nigerians in the coastal settlements were taken back to England to learn English in order to assist future trading expeditions. Even those who did not have the opportunity to be taken to England to learn English were able to pick up bits of the language through their interactions with Englishmen in the coastal settlements³. Little wonder that Archibald Dalzell reported to the African Association in 1804 that, at Bonney and Calabar, many "Negroes" spoke English (see Spencer, 1971:12).

The picture presented above clearly shows that in the pre-colonial period some Nigerians, because of their contact with the English traders, were able to speak one form of English or another. While it is reasonable to assume that those sent to England to learn the language would exhibit a relatively high level of proficiency because of the length and quality of the exposure they had, it is doubtful if the majority of the learners who picked up

the language in the Nigerian setting would be able to exhibit this high level of proficiency. As a matter of fact, it is expected that the majority of these “home-grown” speakers of English would, at that time, end up speaking what Bamgbose (1995:12) refers to as “Broken English”⁴ which is a “depraved or sub-standard” form of English (see Spencer, 1971:19 and Awonusi, 2004a:51).

Another significant event, which led to the development of English in Nigeria, was the slave trade which flourished in the 17th and 18th centuries because of the high demand for cheap labour in the “New World”. Though the slave trade has widely been described as the greatest crime in human history, we cannot but acknowledge the fact that it was significant to the development of English in Nigeria and other parts of Africa because it afforded many Africans⁵ the opportunity to have contact with the English language and culture through their sojourn in the “New World”. Following the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, thanks to the industrial revolution in Europe, the freed slaves came back to Nigeria and other parts of Africa via Sierra Leone bringing along with them the English language and culture. With the coming of the freed slaves also came into the Nigerian linguistic scene a new brand of English which Bamgbose (1995:15) calls “Victorian English”⁶. This transplanted variety of English, with its frequent quotations and allusions to the classics and other display of learning, was what was freely used as a medium of communication and interaction among the resettled slaves in their new settlements particularly in Lagos and Abeokuta. Thus, it became a lingua franca among this “non-native upper class of civilized Africans sharing a common historical and racial identity with the Negroes of black America.”⁷

The 19th century, besides the abolition of the slave trade and the eventual resettlement of the freed slaves, also witnessed two significant events, which led directly, or indirectly, to the elevation of the English language in Nigeria. The first was the influx of missionaries into Nigeria which led to the institutionalized learning of English in Nigeria. During the period,

various Christian missionaries⁸ came to Nigeria to primarily plant and propagate the Christian faith and to inculcate a full Christian culture that was aimed at fighting “the social evils of poverty, ignorance, disease, inter-ethnic wars and slavery” (see Akere, 1995: 180). To achieve these primary objectives, however, the Christian missionaries felt that it was necessary for them to establish mission schools that would serve as agents not only for inculcating the intended Christian culture, but also for training Nigerians who would aid the process of Christian evangelization. It was not, therefore, surprising that churches and mission schools were established in the 19th century especially in the southern and eastern parts of the country. The curriculum of these mission schools was, according to Adetugbo (1979c : 77), dominated by English at the expense of the indigenous languages, and it was taught as a subject under such sub-heads as reading, writing, dictation, composition and grammar, and was used as the sole medium of instruction⁹ (see also Fafunwa, 1974).

Also during the 19th century, the presence of the British government was visibly seen, especially in the coastal settlements, following the 1821 Act which empowered the British government to take over all British trading settlements in West Africa (see Spencer, 1971:16). In the guise of protecting the missionaries, traders and other British nationals operating in the area now called Nigeria, the British government, through the operations of its consuls especially in the coastal settlements of Southern Nigeria, dismantled all the perceived obstacles and opposition to British control¹⁰. The ground was, therefore, cleared for the unopposed control of Southern Nigeria by the British through the Royal Niger Company.

The presence of the British government was felt more visibly in the area of intervention in education. With the 1882 Ordinance, English was made the language of instruction in schools while the indigenous languages were relegated to the background. This action of government was, however, indicative of the desires and feelings of the parents whose children attended the schools. Akere (1995: 182) explains that Nigerian parents felt

that the use of the indigenous languages was a deliberate attempt to hold back the advancement of their children and, thus, they insisted on English being used as the sole medium of instruction. These feelings were confirmed in 1945 when parents withdrew their children from a school in Ogoja where the study of vernacular languages was introduced. This happened because they, according to Awonusi (2004a: 56), “felt that studying their languages was a waste of time when the hallmark of education was the ability to communicate in English.” Even with the enactment of the 1887 Ordinance which attempted, on the surface, to allow the indigenous languages to compete with English ¹¹, the government deliberately ensured that the imbalance remained in favour of English since the teaching and learning of English was made a condition for accessing government grants ¹². The schools, especially those in the south, were therefore compelled by government to adopt English education at the expense of the indigenous languages because of the urge to survive as this was strongly determined by the availability of government grants.

The situation was, however, different in the north where the incursion of Christian missionaries and western education was impeded obviously because of the strong influence of the Islamic religion. Adetugbo (1981: 6) explains that the process of establishing schools in the north was slowed down because it was feared that Christianity and western education would have disruptive effects on the settled Islamic society of the north “which had its own monotheistic religion and formal education.” According to Awonusi (2004a:58), one of the conditions for getting permission to establish a school in the north was the use of the vernacular until a certain level of proficiency was attained before English was taught. This was, perhaps, in line with the pledge which Lord Lugard made to the Sultan of Sokoto in 1903 when he swore that his government would not interfere with the Muslim religion and that he would also disallow missionaries who might want to do so ¹³. Thus, in the north,

unlike in the south where English was unduly favoured, the vernacular was favoured in a way.

With colonial rule fully enthroned in Nigeria, following the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates in 1914, it appeared as if attempts were made by government to encourage the use of the indigenous languages. It was reported, for example, that the Phelps- Stokes Commission of 1925 recommended that the mother tongue be used in the primary and secondary schools while English be used for Science and Mathematics classes. The 1927 Education Report also confirmed that vernacular books were produced and their teaching was encouraged. Special agencies like the Language Bureaux and the Hausa Language Board were set up to produce materials and books in Yoruba, Igbo and Efik, and Hausa respectively ¹⁴. Despite these efforts, English still had an edge over the Nigerian languages. During the colonial period, English was transformed not only into a lingua franca among the educated class throughout the country but was also rapidly assuming the status of an official / national language ¹⁵. The result was that more attention was paid to the teaching and learning of English to the neglect of the Nigerian languages.

After the attainment of political independence in 1960, though English still plays a dominant role in Nigeria's national life as the country's official language, this dominant position of English has been challenged because English connotes the colonial period of Nigeria's history and should, therefore, not be adopted as the official / national language of independent Nigeria. On the question of which indigenous language to be adopted as Nigeria's official /national language, though a number of proposals have been made ¹⁶, none of them is acceptable to the generality of Nigerians for certain obvious reasons ¹⁷. Thus, the only option open to Nigerians is the continued use of English as Nigeria's official language. English has today become the principal medium of instruction and evaluation in Nigeria's educational system ¹⁸, the dominant language of government ¹⁹, politics and the law, the

language of the mass media ²⁰, science and technology and international relations. It is the principal medium of inter- ethnic communication and, thus, acts as a vital weapon through which national unity, national consciousness and cultural awareness have been achieved (see Ogu, 1992; Adekunle, 1995; Mohammed, 1995; Jowitt, 1995; Odebunmi, 2001; Adedimeji, 2004; Awonusi, 2004b; Egbokhare, 2004; Bamgbose, 2004; Adegbija, 2004; Akere, 2004; Adetugbo, 2004 and Owolabi, 2007).

3.4 CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONTACT BETWEEN ENGLISH AND THE NIGERIAN LANGUAGES

Languages in contact naturally influence each other. In Nigeria's multilingual setting where English and over 250 Nigerian languages are in contact, these languages are expected to mutually influence each other since they exist side by side in the lives and tongues of the Nigerians who use them. This mutual linguistic influence existing between English and the Nigerian languages is said to have manifested itself in various ways, chief among which are through borrowing, code-mixing, code-switching and through what is now generally referred to as "domestication" (see Bamgbose, 1971, 1995; Ansre, 1971; Adetugbo, 1979b; Essien, 1995; Adegbija, 2004; Akere, 2004; Bamiro, 2006a and Osoba, 2007).

3.4.1 Borrowings

One of the commonest ways through which the influence between languages in a contact situation is manifested is by borrowing. Borrowing occurs when the vocabulary of each of the languages in contact witnesses an influx of items from the other. In the Nigerian situation where English and the Nigerian languages are in contact, borrowing is expected to be mutual since it is natural for each language in a language contact situation to borrow from the other. However, as Essien (1995:271) observes, the traffic is almost one way, (from English into the Nigerian languages), probably because of the higher technology, industrialization, education, military prowess etc associated with English-speaking nations.

Thus, there is large-scale influx of English items into the vocabulary of the Nigerian languages. Such English words as “street”, “bread”, “table”, “meeting”, “jigger”, “dirty”, “lawyer”, “tailor”, “alum”, “technology” and “chief” are just a few of the numerous words in English that have found their ways into the vocabulary of the Nigerian languages. However, to ensure that these borrowed items conform to the patterns of the Nigerian languages, they have been modified thus: *titi* (street), *buredi* (bread), *tabili* (table), *mitini* (meeting), *jiga* (jigger), *doti* (dirty), *loya* (lawyer), *telo* (tailor), *alomu* (alum), *tekinoloji* (technology) and *shiiifu* (chief) (see also Bamgbose, 1995: 24 and Akere, 2004: 278).

This notwithstanding, there are some borrowings from the vocabulary of the Nigerian languages into the English of Nigerian speakers: *kiakia*, *tokunbo*, *suya*, *edikan ikon*, *akamu*, *danshiki*, *oba*, *eze*, *juju*, *egunje*, *babalawo*, *wahala*, *mekunu* and *talakawa* just to mention a few (see also Jowitt, 1991 and Igboanusi, 2001).

3.4.2. Code-Mixing

Ansre (1971:147), while showing the influence of English on West African languages, observed a situation whereby speakers who are bilingual in English and a West African language insert varying chunks of English into their performance of the West African language. This phenomenon is today called code-mixing. In the Nigerian situation where we have speakers who are bilingual in English and at least one Nigerian language, code-mixing can, according to Ansre’s observation, be described as the retention of the Nigerian language syntax and the insertion into it of English words or phrases (see also Banjo, 1986 and Bamgbose, 1995). Essien (1995), Bamgbose (1995) and Dadzie (2004b) have demonstrated how Nigerian speakers insert varying chunks of English into their performance of the Nigerian languages especially Yoruba, Ibibio and Igbo:

- (i) *O transfer services e*. (He transferred his services).

(ii) *Akparawa odo âtake home N1000 daily.* (The young man takes home N1000 daily).

(iii) *E needili m somebody di very supportive.* (I need somebody who is very supportive).

However, Ansre's view of code-mixing cannot be said to have presented the true picture of what happens in the Nigerian multilingual setting. It should be noted that while Nigerians who are bilingual in English and a Nigerian language can, in the process of communication, insert English words or phrases into the structure of a Nigerian language sentence, it has equally been observed that these bilinguals also insert Nigerian language words or phrases into English sentences especially when they cannot, because of the constraints the English language puts on the second-language user, easily and immediately find an appropriate word or expression in English for what they intend to say. Even in literary contexts, as Bamiro (2006a:24) observes, a (Nigerian) author may decide to make lexical transfers from his/her native (Nigerian) language into the mode of narration (English). This, according to him, should be seen as an instance of code-mixing. Thus, it is possible for Nigerians to insert varying chunks of a Nigerian language into the structure of an English sentence as demonstrated by Olafioye (2000:110) and (2004:110) respectively in the following sentences:

(i) In the wake of his departure from campus, the University Senate had pity on him, and this included even the *Oga patapata* – the Vice-chancellor. (*Oga patapata* in Yoruba means the overall boss).

(ii) All of us have spoken well, *abi*, haven't we? (All of us have spoken well, or, haven't we?).

To reflect the Nigerian situation, therefore, we have to adopt Wardhaugh's (1986) view of code-mixing as a situation in which people "occasionally prefer to use a code formed

from two other codes by mixing the two.” It is, therefore, a language phenomenon in which two codes or languages are used for the same message or communication (see Essien, 1995:272). Thus, Nigerians can prefer to insert varying chunks of English into their performance of a Nigerian language or to insert varying chunks of a Nigerian language into their performance of English.

Akere (2004) notes that code-mixing is rule-governed since there is a grammar underlying it and, thus, one can determine the grammaticality or otherwise of code-mixed structures depending on whether such structures adhere to or deviate from the rules governing code-mixing. Essien (1995:276) asserts that as part of the grammar of code-mixing, no repetition of the same item or category in the two languages is allowed in the code formed from them. Thus, it is, according to Essien (1995:279), ungrammatical to have such a code-mixed structure as *Akparawa odo âtakes home N1000 daily*, (The young man takes home N1000 daily), where both the prefix *a-* and the English suffix *-s*, which mark subject-verb agreement in Ibibio and English respectively, are repeated. Thus, the preferred version is:

Akparawa odo âtake home N1000 daily.

Code-mixing in the Nigerian multilingual environment therefore involves not only the insertion of English words or phrases into Nigerian language sentences as observed by Ansre (1971), but also the insertion of the words or phrases of Nigerian languages into English sentences provided the resultant structures do not violate the rules of the grammar underlying code-mixing.

3.4.3. Code-Switching

Code-switching is another significant manifestation of bilingualism in Nigeria’s multilingual setting. Code-switching describes a situation whereby the speaker or the initiator of speech changes or switches from one language or code to another depending on the situation, audience, subject matter and some other social factors (see Essien, 1995 and

Bamiro, 2006a). In the Nigerian setting where Nigerians speak English and at least one Nigerian language, a Nigerian speaker can switch from English to the Nigerian language he/she speaks if he/she thinks this is appropriate to the situation, audience, subject matter etc. If, for example, a Nigerian who speaks English and Yoruba is engaged in speech with another speaker of the same languages, he/she may be forced to switch from English to Yoruba if he/she realizes that his/her listener is unable to understand what he/she is saying, or if he/she feels that he/she is unable to use English to appropriately express what he/she has to say.

Various scholars have attempted to draw a distinction between code-switching and code-mixing. Kachru (1978:108) asserts that code-switching entails the ability to switch from code A to code B depending on the function, the situation and the participants, while code-mixing entails the transfer of linguistic units from one code into another thereby forming a new code of linguistic interaction. Bamiro (2006a:24) views code-mixing from a literary perspective to include those instances where there are lexical transfers from the author's native language into the mode of narration such as English; while code-switching entails those instances where a character in the text switches from code A to code B. Thus, as Hatch (1976) and Bokamba (1988) assert, code-mixing is intra-sentential while code-switching is inter-sentential. This is also the position taken in this study.

Code-switching, according to Bamiro (2006a), performs various pragmasociolinguistic functions in Nigeria's multilingual setting: a mark of identity, solidarity, region, exclusion from an in-group membership, status manipulation and social and communicative distance among others (see also Essien, 1995 and Osoba, 2007). Code-switching is, therefore, a significant aspect of the communicative process in Nigeria's multilingual environment.

3.4.4 Domestication

The contact between English and the Nigerian languages in Nigeria's multilingual socio-cultural setting has also manifested itself through what is now popularly referred to as the "domestication of English in Nigeria" (see Adegbija, 2004). Owing to the contact between English and the Nigerian languages and cultures in the Nigerian linguistic and socio-cultural environment, the English language has been forced to undergo changes so as to reflect the local touch of the local Nigerian environment, the local Nigerian languages, the local Nigerian ideas and the local Nigerian attitudes to life. The English language has, therefore, been adapted to suit local conditions, to express local experiences and to cater for the local needs of the local Nigerian environment. Thus, domestication, according to Adegbija (2004:20), refers to the adaptation of English in the Nigerian environment for home use thereby making it applicable to the numerous conveniences, experiences, nuances and sensibilities of the Nigerian people. This adaptation, according to Bamgbose (1995: 11), involves not only the usual features of transfer of the phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic patterns of the Nigerian languages into English, but also the creative development of English including the evolution of distinctively Nigerian usages, attitudes and pragmatic use of the language. Thus, the term "domestication" captures the changes that are manifested in various aspects of English in Nigeria: phonological, grammatical/syntactic, lexical, idiomatic, semantic and pragmatic/ cultural. These aspects are treated in detail under "Nigerian English" in section 3.5.

3.5 NIGERIAN ENGLISH

English in Nigeria has, in recent times, been the recurrent theme in several academic discussions, essays and books both in Nigeria and in other parts of the world. Though this extra-ordinarily interesting theme has generated many controversial views, it is generally held that the English, which is used in the Nigerian environment, is a new English²¹ in the sense

that it has been given a distinctive Nigerian flavour because of its existence as a medium of communication and interaction in Nigeria's socio-cultural environment. Many of the renowned scholars in this field such as Banjo, Bamgbose, Adetugbo, Adeniran, Adekunle, Kujore and Adegbija believe that the English language has undergone an inevitable process of modification in the Nigerian environment and that this has subsequently transformed the language into an indigenized or domesticated variety that is different from the native-speaker varieties spoken in Britain or America. Bamgbose (1995), for example, is of the view that English has been "nativized, acculturated and twisted to express unaccustomed concepts and modes of interaction" in the Nigerian environment and that, as a result of this, "it is now a Nigerian English at par with other world Englishes" (see also Banjo, 1971; Adetugbo, 1977, 2004; Adekunle, 1979; Jowitt, 1991; Adegbija, 1989, 2004; Okoro, 2004a and b and Akere, 2004). Bamgbose explains that the process of indigenizing the English language to reflect the Nigerian experience involves not only the usual features of transfer of phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic patterns of Nigerian languages into English, but also the creative development of English, including the evolution of distinctively Nigerian usages, attitudes and pragmatic use of the language (Bamgbose, 1995:11). As a result of this distinctive Nigerian flavour that has been given to the language in the Nigerian environment, English in Nigeria is now a Nigerian English tamed to accommodate and reflect the new Nigerian surroundings and tailored to suit the unaccustomed roles it has to perform as a new medium of communication to which we, Nigerians, now resort to appropriately reflect our own respective cultures and to express our own ideas, thinking and philosophy in our own way (see Achebe, 1963; Okara, 1963; Adetugbo, 1979a and b; Soyinka, 1993; Emenyonu, 1995; Adekunle, 1995; Bamgbose, 2004; Awonusi, 2004b and Owolabi, 2007). Thus, English has now become an inalienable part of the linguistic property of Nigerians who have now indigenized or domesticated it to suit local conditions, to express local experiences and to

cater for the local needs of the local Nigerian environment (see also Quirk, 1962; Spencer, 1971; Adekunle, 1979; Kachru, 1995 and Adebija, 2004).

The indigenization of English in Nigeria is seen, not as a surprise, but as an expected development. English, as a living language which must adapt to new situations so as to survive (Ubahakwe, 1979b; Macrae, 1995), is bound to undergo changes in such a foreign environment as Nigeria's whose socio-cultural and linguistic background is different from that of the EMT (English as a Mother Tongue) environment in which the native-speaker variety exists (see also Adetugbo, 1979a and b; Mgbo-Elue, 1989; Adebija, 1989; Jowitt, 1991; Adejare, 1995 and Kujore, 1995). These changes, as Banjo 1979 asserts, are inevitable since they are usually created and sustained by a sociolinguistic reality and as long as this reality exists in the Nigerian environment, the Nigerian variety of English which captures and reflects this sociolinguistic reality will also continue to exist and flourish (see also Adekunle, 1979; Adebija, 2004; Adetugbo, 2004 and Awonusi, 2004c). Thus, the existence of Nigerian English is a reality and, therefore, the real issue, as Ubahakwe (1979a:284) submits, should no longer be with its presence but with its development (see also Kirk-Greene, 1971:127 and Bamgbose, 1995:26). Despite the fact that the existence of Nigerian English has been widely acknowledged, various shades of attitudes have been developed towards this Nigerian variety of English²² (see Egbe, 1989; Jowitt, 1991; Kujore, 1995; Okoro, 2004a and Akere, 2004).

Various studies have been conducted on the varieties of English in Nigeria (see Banjo, 1971, 1996; Adesanoye, 1973, 1980; Egbe, 1989; Jowitt, 1991 and Udofot, 2004). Based on the extent of mother tongue transfers and of approximation to standard British English, Banjo (1971) identifies four varieties of spoken English in Nigeria. Variety One, spoken by people with elementary school education and semi-literate people, is marked by wholesale transfer of the systems of the mother tongue to English, and because of the imperfect knowledge that the speakers of this variety have of English, the variety is unacceptable both nationally and

internationally. Variety Two is associated with post-primary school leavers and it is characterized as being close to standard British English in syntax but has strong phonological and lexical peculiarities. This variety is relatively more acceptable nationally and more intelligible internationally than Variety One. Variety Three is associated with the graduate class. It is close to standard British English in syntax and semantics, similar in phonology but different in terms of phonetic and lexical features. This variety, which Banjo (1971) identifies as the emerging “Standard Nigerian English”, is acceptable and intelligible both nationally and internationally. Variety Four is described as being identical with standard British English in syntax, semantics, phonology and phonetics. Though Variety Four is the most internationally intelligible and acceptable of the four varieties, it is not socially acceptable within Nigeria because it sounds “affected” and, therefore, “unNigerian”. Thus, while Varieties Two and Three are said to be socially acceptable within Nigeria, Varieties One and Four are not.

Egbe (1989), while using Banjo’s (1971) classification as a basis for defining the varieties of English in Nigeria, identifies four varieties: Imperfect English (IE), General Nigerian English (GNE), Standard Nigerian English (SNE) and Foreign English Models (FEM). Egbe interprets “Nigerian English” as representing one or two, and not all, of the four varieties. These are GNE and SNE. Thus, Nigerian English, as a regional dialect of English, has two sub-dialects- GNE (the non-standard variety) and SNE (the standard variety). However, Egbe asserts that whenever Nigerian English is mentioned as the model of English for Nigeria, it is the SNE variant that is intended. Thus, in the strict sense, Nigerian English is synonymous with SNE (see Egbe, 1989:38). This is, however, based on the assumption that since SNE, the acrolect of Nigerian English, is associated with the educated class in Nigeria, it should be good enough to be used as the model of English for Nigeria (see also Banjo,

1971; Spencer, 1971; Adesanoye, 1973; Adeniran, 1979; Mohammed, 1995 and Adejare, 1995).

However, Udofot (2004) strongly opposes this position. He argues that it is unrealistic to assume that all graduates speak Banjo's Standard Nigerian English (SNE) because of their level of education. Udofot asserts that there are some graduates who speak the type of English associated with Variety One (see also Jibril, 1982 and Bamgbose, 1982b). As Udofot (2004:110) puts it, "our study actually showed that some holders of Master's degrees in English fell into Variety One." Thus, in Udofot's (2004) classification where there are three varieties: Variety One (Non Standard), Variety Two (Standard) and Variety Three (Sophisticated), graduates are found in almost all the groups depending on their level of performance in spoken English. Udofot (2004:111) also argues that, instead of Banjo's Variety Three which is an ideal that most educated Nigerians hardly ever attain, his (Udofot's) Variety Two should be used as the model of English in Nigeria since it is the variety that is spoken by most educated Nigerians including the teachers who teach at the primary, secondary and even at the university levels.

Udofot's position suggests that there is the problem of making a generally accepted clear-cut differentiation of all the varieties of Nigerian English since some of the classificatory parameters used, particularly educational level, do not always appear to correlate with performance in (spoken) English. Thus, as Jowitt (1991) observes, the task of devising a classificatory parameter that can adequately take into cognizance all the forms of English in Nigeria such that all occupational, educational and linguistic groups can be represented is not an easy one. To solve this problem, however, Okoro (2004a:169) suggests that Nigerian English should be seen as a single variety "which contains standard and non-standard usages", which vary in their relative frequency of occurrence in the English of each Nigerian according to his or her level of competence in the language. This will at least solve

some of the problems associated with the classificatory parameters used for defining the varieties of English in Nigeria. If Nigerian English can be seen as a single variety containing standard and non-standard usages as Okoro (2004a) observes, then, one can easily identify the English usage of a Nigerian graduate, for example, as conforming to the standard (standard usage) or deviating from it (non-standard usage) and not to erroneously assume that such a graduate speaks Standard Nigerian English (SNE) because of his/her level of education. Similarly, with this arrangement, a secondary school leaver, who is generally assumed to be speaking non-standard Nigerian English, may fall within the group of SNE speakers if his/her English is characterized by the frequent occurrence of standard usage which, according to Banjo (1996), may depend on his/her home background and quality of education at the primary and secondary levels, among other factors.

Various research efforts have been geared towards the identification of the features of Nigerian English (see Bamgbose, 1971; Jibril, 1979; Adekunle, 1979; Egbe, 1979, 1989; Odumuh, 1984a and b; Kujore, 1985; Adegbija, 1989, 2003, 2004; Jowitt, 1991; Bamiro, 1994, 1996, 2006b; Okoro, 2004a and b and Udofot, 2004). These studies reveal that the features of Nigerian English, which occur majorly at the phonetic, phonological, syntactic and lexico-semantic levels and, thus, set Nigerian English apart from all other Englishes in the world, are exhibited in varying degrees in the English of every Nigerian English speaker depending on his or her level of competence in the language. In terms of phonetic and phonological features, Nigerian English is characterized by a reduced vowel system of seven simple vowels and six diphthongs, consonant substitution including the replacement of /θ/ and /ð/ with /t/ and /d/ in such words as “thing” and “thine”, complete devoicing of /z/ in inter-and post-vocalic positions (e.g. “visit”, “wishes”, “boys” and “terms”), voicing of the alveolar stop when it occurs after voiceless sounds (e.g. “wished”, “missed”, “puffed” and “tipped”), deviant stress (e.g. “bed'room”, “'technique”, “recapitu'late”, “solidi'fy” and

“admini'strative” for BE “'bedroom”, “tech'nique”, “reca'pitulate”, “so'lidify” and “ad'ministrative”), a reduced intonation system with an inclination towards using the unidirectional tones (the falling and the rising tones) and non-differentiation in the length of vowels (see Egbe, 1979, 1989; Jibril, 1979; Adetugbo, 1979b, 2004; Amayo, 1980; Akere, 1980; Kujore, 1985, 1995; Awonusi, 1986, 2004c; Bobda, 1995 and Udofot, 2004).

A few studies have also focused on the syntax of Nigerian English (see Odumuh, 1984a and b; Kujore, 1985 and Jowitt, 1991). Though some of these studies have claimed to represent “educated usage”, a considerable part of the syntactic data presented to us represents the features of uneducated Nigerian English and not those of Standard Nigerian English (SNE) as it has been widely acknowledged that the syntax of SNE hardly differs from that of standard English anywhere in the world (see Banjo, 1971; Adesanoye, 1973; Adetugbo, 1979b; Adekunle, 1979; Egbe, 1989; Mgbo-Elue, 1989; Bamgbose, 1995; Afolayan, 1995; Adejare, 1995; Dadzie, 2004c and Okoro, 2004b). This probably explains why the data on Nigerian English syntax have been presented as errors arising from classification, inflexion, selection, copying, ordering, restriction etc. (see Jowitt, 1991:111-124 and Banjo, 1995:218-219). There are, however, strong indications that some of the syntactic deviations in Nigerian English have the potential of being considered as variants since the syntax of Nigerian English is bound to show permissible local variation in use (see Adekunle, 1979:32-33 and Okoro, 2004a: 178).

Much work has been done on the lexico-semantic features of Nigerian English. Bamgbose (1971), Kujore (1985), Adegbija (1989), (2003), Jowitt (1991), Bamiro (1994), (2006b) and Daramola (2004) have all acknowledged the fact that Nigerian English has developed some lexico-semantic features that have distinguished it from all other varieties of English in the world. These lexico-semantic features have been widely presented under transfer (e.g. “bush meat”, “branch”, “bride price”, “husband”, “sorry”, “take in”), analogy

(e.g. “decampee”, “arrange”, “standee”, “supervisee”, “invitee”), acronyms (e.g. “SAP”, “MAMSER”, “WAI”) and coinages or neologisms (e.g. “chewing stick”, “bottom-power”, “cash madam”, “go-slow”, “co-wife”, “senior brother”, “owner’s corner”) (see Adegbija, 1989, 2004 and Bamiro, 2006b). Unlike syntax, many of the lexico-semantic changes manifested in Nigerian English have been considered as legitimate variants because of their effectiveness in reflecting the Nigerian socio-cultural experience and, thus, underlying their appropriateness within the Nigerian socio-cultural context.

3.6 CULTURE AND APPROPRIATENESS IN LANGUAGE USE

It is an indisputable fact that there is a strong connection between language and culture and that appropriate language use is culture-dependent (see Hymes, 1971; Fishman, 1979; Adekunle, 1979; Adetugbo, 1979a and b; Bryan, 1988; Adegbija, 1989, 2003; Saville-Troike, 1989; Bamiro, 1994, 2006b; Malcolm, 2001 and Sharifian, 2003, 2005, 2006). According to Saville-Troike (1989), there is a correlation between the form and content of a language and the beliefs, values and needs present in the culture of its speakers and, therefore, knowing the meaning of a speech act requires knowing the culture in which it is embedded. This corroborates Adetugbo’s position that the social and cultural milieu in which a speech act takes place gives the speech act its total meaning and that, for any participant to understand the meaning of the speech act, he/she must, as a necessary condition, have the knowledge of the culture in which it is embedded (see Adetugbo, 1979a: 139 and 1979b:176). Like all other languages in the world, English, as a world language used across various native and non-native cultures, is no exception to this claim. It is, therefore, not surprising that Nigerians have imaginatively domesticated the English language to blend with the Nigerian languages and the Nigerian culture so as to appropriately reflect the Nigerian socio-cultural experience. Since there is no way appropriate English usage in the Nigerian socio-cultural environment can be completely divorced from the Nigerian culture, Nigerians have

manipulated the language to reflect and accommodate the various cultural contexts that the Nigerian culture has given to the English words and expressions that are used within the Nigerian socio-cultural milieu. Many English words and expressions have, because of the quest for communicate appropriateness, been forced to undergo changes in the Nigerian environment so as to appropriately reflect and express the Nigerian situation. This fact has been amply demonstrated in Bamgbose (1971), Adekunle (1974), Adetugbo (1979b), Kujore (1985), Jowitt (1991), Adegbija (2004) and Bamiro (2006b) where such English words and expressions as “fellow”, “branch”, “okay”, “go-slow”, “long-leg”, “co-wife”, “sorry”, “well-done”, “to be on seat”, “to take in”, “to put in the family way”, “to put to bed” and many others have been convincingly linked to the demands of the Nigerian socio-cultural setting. Thus, English usage in Nigeria is largely culture-dependent and, as such, the culturally-motivated departures manifested in the English of Nigerians should be seen as appropriate within the Nigerian socio-cultural context because they are strongly founded on the Nigerian culture. Thus, it is imperative for anyone who wants to use English appropriately in the Nigerian socio-cultural setting to, first of all, understand the Nigerian culture which provides the cultural context within which the language is used and understood.

3.8 CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed in this chapter shows clearly that English, Nigeria’s official language, has, because of its contact with the Nigerian languages and culture, been given a distinctive Nigerian flavour. The review shows that Nigerians have succeeded in marvelously taming and brilliantly manipulating the English language to wear a new cap in the Nigerian socio-cultural environment. This new cap is the local Nigerian cap embellished with the touches of the local Nigerian environment, the local Nigerian languages, the local Nigerian ideas and the local Nigerian attitudes to life. Thus, it is now a Nigerian English domesticated

to accommodate and reflect the Nigerian socio-cultural experience. It should, therefore, be accepted and treated as a legitimate variety of English at par with other world Englishes.

ENDNOTES

1. Though the 15th century marked the period when the European nations, propelled by the quest for a trading depot outside Europe, came to the coastal areas of Nigeria and other parts of Africa, English was not prominently used as a trade language until the 16th century.
2. The interview King Pepple of Bonny granted Dr. W. B. Baikie during his exile at Fernando Po in 1884 quoted in Dike (1956:145) and the speech of King Opubu quoted in Mafeni (1971:97) are examples of Nigerian Pidgin in the pre-colonial days.
3. Ajayi (1965) and Ayandele (1966) report that, as far back as 1767, some kings in the Calabar region, especially King Eyamba V of Duke Town and King Eyo Honesty II of Creek Town, employed Europeans who assisted them to keep records of the events in their kingdoms in good English and, thus, in the process exposed the kings and the members of their courts to the rudiments of English. Similarly, those who had the privilege to serve the English traders as messengers picked up bits of English and were, therefore, used as interpreters (see also Awonusi, 2004a).
4. See Bamgbose (1995:12) for an illustration of “Broken English” with an entry in Antera Duke’s diary quoted in Forde (1956).
5. Among these Africans was Olaudah Equiano, the author of *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* (1789), who was suspected to be of Igbo descent in Eastern Nigeria. For details, see Awonusi (2004a: 50).
6. See Echeruo (1977: 9-10) for illustration.
7. This was cited in Bamgbose (1995: 15).
8. Prominent among these were Rev. Thomas Freeman of the Wesleyan Mission who arrived Badagry in 1842 in the company of Mr. and Mrs. De Graft, Rev. Henry Townsend of the CMS Mission who visited Badagry in 1842 and settled in Abeokuta on January 4, 1843, and Rev. Annear of the Methodist Mission who arrived Abeokuta in 1844 (see Awonusi, 2004a: 53).
9. This was inevitable because the teachers who taught in these schools were non-Nigerians who knew no indigenous language and, therefore, had to use English as the medium of instruction.
10. Around 1850, Lagos was conquered and Kosoko dethroned. In 1884, King Pepple of Bony was sent on exile to Fernando Po and in 1887; King Jaja of Opubu was captured and deported to Ghana while Chief Nana was exiled in 1894 thereby paving the way for the incursion of British control into the Niger Delta. The Benin Massacre of 1897 also silenced the impenetrable Benin Kingdom and made it open to British incursion.

In the east, the Ekumeku Organisation was dislodged and the Arochukwu Expedition of 1901/1902 completely opened Igboland up for British incursion.

11. In response to local criticisms against the 1882 Ordinance, the 1887 Ordinance allowed the teaching of the vernaculars in schools. As a result of this, Yoruba, Kanuri, Hausa, Efik and Ibo could now be taught with reference to the literatures, grammar, books and dictionaries that had been developed for them in 1852 (Yoruba), 1854 (Kanuri), 1857 (Hausa), 1874 (Efik) and 1882 (Ibo) respectively.
12. It was reported in Awonusi (2004a: 56-57) that the RCM maintained the policy of English education and that attracted grants such that in a single year alone, RCM received a grant of £3,077 which was twice what all the other missions in the Lagos and Western areas received in the same year. Thus, the RCM schools enjoyed a more rapid growth than those of the other missions.
13. This perhaps explains the slow pace of missionary activities in the north. Awonusi (2004a: 58) reports that missionaries established a consulate in Kuka in the Bornu fringes of Lake Chad in 1823 and a model farm at Gbede in 1841, but fifty years later, there was no expansion. Similarly, by 1901, the CMS had schools in their stations at Loko and Lokoja but hardly went beyond that. Even the school established in Bida in 1903 was allowed on the condition that English would be taught only after proficiency in the vernacular had been attained.
14. See Fafunwa (1974) and Adeniran (1978).
15. This was supported in the form of government legislation. The 1945 constitution, for example, recommended the use of English in the West and East, and Hausa in the North as official languages. Government also established model schools, (e.g. Barewa College, Kaduna and King's College, Lagos), and ensured that English was used as the language of instruction and general interactional discourse at the expense of the vernacular. Even in the North where the teaching of the vernacular was earlier favoured, the situation later changed in the 1940s because the Northern Emirs felt that their societal backwardness was caused by the lack of instruction in English and, therefore, recommended the teaching of English from the third year of primary education (see also Adeniran 1978 and Awonusi 2004a).
16. These proposals include, among others, Swahili (Wole Soyinka), Guosa (Igbineweka), Afrike (Ushie), Igala (Sofunke) and, of course, the "big three" - Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (see also Jowitt 1995).
17. Language development, size and politics are some of the reasons (see Jowitt 1995).
18. For the overwhelming dominance of English as the principal medium of instruction and evaluation in Nigeria's educational system in spite of the constitutional provisions made for the Nigerian languages, see Akere (1995), Adekunle (1995) and Awonusi (2004b).
19. Bamgbose (2004: 3-4) explains that, although Nigeria's three major languages (Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo) are mentioned in the constitution as languages of proceedings in the National Assembly in addition to English, they have an inferior

status to English because of non-implementation of this constitutional provision. See also Adekunle (1995), Akere (2004) and Awonusi (2004b) for details on the dominant position of English as the language of government in Nigeria.

20. See Awonusi (2004b) and Owolabi (2007).
21. See Platt, Weber and Ho (1984).
22. At one extreme are those who consider the departures from the model as a bastardization of the standard, and at the other extreme are those who welcome the departures as an enrichment of the model. To the first group, Nigerian English is something inferior. But to the second, Nigerian English, though a departure from the British model is a welcome development. See also Adetugbo (1979b), Jowitt (1991), Adegbija (1989) and Kujore (1995).



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides samples of syntactic and lexico-semantic data organized into numbered texts and then gives a detailed analysis of the statistical data collected for the study using mainly the quantitative technique.

The chapter presents the syntactic influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals and traces them to the syntax of the Izon language. The chapter also traces these syntactic influences to the Izon socio-cultural milieu to ascertain their appropriateness or otherwise within the Izon socio-cultural context and uses this as a basis to determine their temporariness or permanence in the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

The lexico-semantic variations manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals are, in this chapter, presented and traced to the Izon socio-cultural milieu so as to identify the cultural force that provides the context within which these lexico-semantic variations are used and understood in the Izon socio-cultural setting. Based on this, the chapter discusses the appropriateness /inappropriateness and temporariness / permanence of each of the lexico-semantic influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

Finally, this chapter interprets the data analyzed and presents the findings. The chapter also discusses the findings and highlights their implications on English usage especially in the Izon socio-cultural setting.

4.1 PRESENTATION OF SYNTACTIC AND LEXICO-SEMANTIC DATA

Samples of the syntactic and lexico-semantic data presented for analysis in this study include the following, among others:

(a) Syntactic Data

Text 1: Amafoin perform many functions in Arogbo-Izon community.

Text 2: If Dęgbela love his self, he will go.

- Text 3: The dog bite his tail.
- Text 4: At this evil forest, there are several skulls and tooth of dead people who are not clean.
- Text 5: This traditional thing, *isele*, is grinded on wood with sand.
- Text 6: The crown of Agadagba must not fell. If it fells, there will be problem in the community.
- Text 7: That Obasanjo destroyed Odi that year was ridiculous. When did he became the president? Was it not in 1999?
- Text 8: The *kūlikūliweis* have being walking round the town since morning.
- Text 9: The Agadagba which is responsible for administrating the kingdom have chiefs under him.
- Text 10: Munbō is the man whom, they allege, is killing goats during *amafoin*.
- Text 11: There is little water left in the bucket; go and have your bath.
- Text 12: If the oil touches the ground, the Kpokpotin priest has to refill the bottle again.
- Text 13: For a European to come to that our late Agadagba and ask for the secret of this our Egbesu, you know that something has happened somewhere.
- Text 14: That clean pure white cloth is the symbol of Egbesu.
- Text 15: These behaviours are not acceptable among the Izons.
- Text 16: She is hearing you.
- Text 17: I may say that fishing is the major occupation of the Izons because their environment is conducive for fishing activities.
- Text 18: The Agadagba and his chiefs will sit, put their heads together and discuss about the progress of the whole community.
- Text 19: One other point that can be used to buttress what Chief Okpoka has said is that Egbesu is the god of war and peace.

Text 20: Question: Will you attend the meeting?

Response: Yes, I will attend.

Text 21: Tẹmẹaraṣ is what we call God. She is the Creator of the universe.

Text 22: Egbesu is the god of war. It is the god that leads the Izons to attack their enemies.

Text 23: Somebody is calling you. They are calling you, can't you hear?

Text 24: For example, if I like the girl and want to marry her, I and my father will go to her parents and pay the *ikọ*.

Text 25: You are going?

(b) Lexico-Semantic Data

Text 26: *Ikọ* is the amount that the husband pays on the head of his wife as bride price.

Text 27: You don't have to tell anybody to borrow you the items you will use to make sacrifice to Kpokpotin.

Text 28: All the women in our towns and villages have become madams overnight because of these bunkerers.

Text 29: When you go near the shrine, the first thing you will hear is the smell of palmy.

Text 30: We don't have light, road or water. In fact, we are the most neglected people in Ondo State.

Text 31: Our brothers and sisters in Odi were massacred. Our fathers, mothers, wives, sons, daughters—all were callously maimed. This was the reward they had to receive for voting Obasanjo to power.

Text 32: Greeting: How do you do?

Response: Fine.

Text 33: For how else can we explain the shooting, maiming and killing of defenceless youths, singing and dancing in an ogele?

Text 34: The *dùwẹj anumẹ* are songs that escort the dead to the realm of the ancestors.

- Text 35: Odi was destroyed because some greedy Ijaw people sold the town out to the Nigerian State. They sold their essence, their Ijawness, because of the peanuts the Nigerian State offered them.
- Text 36: We usually drink umunu pepper soup with boiled yam and palm oil.
- Text 37: When an old man or woman dies, he/she becomes a duburuku corpse. Until the duburuku rite of passage is performed, there is no way he/she can cross to the other side of the river where the dead live.
- Text 38: During the last Egbesu Day Celebration, it was Robert Ebizimor, the King of Owugiri music, that played on the Kpokpotin arcade.
- Text 39: The second thing the Ijaw Nation demanded for was fresh fish and it was smartly given a snake. But to the amazement of the Nigerian State, the spokesman for the Ijaw Nation accepted the snake and expressed his profound appreciation for 60 minutes without swallowing saliva, and put it into one of the pockets in his resource-control attire without any danger.
- Text 40: Meanwhile, there was no item 7 and the brown envelopes often sardined in Ghana-must-go bags did not change hands. Thus, our brothers who shamelessly attended the Aso Rock meeting came home in disappointment.
- Text 41: Within the Izon culture, when a man marries a new wife, the senior wife is expected to receive the junior wife and treat her as her sister because they share the same husband.
- Text 42: The youths cannot be harmed because they are under the white cloth. It serves as bullet proof for them.
- Text 43: The Okparans cannot disclose the secret of the Egbesu because it is a taboo to split open the crocodile's intestine in public.

- Text 44: The Ijaw Nation will continue to be a mosquito to the ears of Nigeria until our demands are met.
- Text 45: Those we chose to represent us in the past went on a dog's errand. Instead of doing what we sent them to do, they did otherwise.
- Text 46: There is no smoke without fire. They rehearsed the cock's foolishness and this gave the government an edge over the Ibe.
- Text 47: He who closes the door does not close the ears.
- Text 48: It is just like a go-slow transaction. You either gain or lose.
- Text 49: We don't have to give a fire-brigade approach to things. If we want to celebrate Egbesu Day next year, it must be planned adequately.
- Text 50: Bunkerers are very rich people because they truck a lot. They are as rich as the yahoo boys: the latest group of four-one-niners.
- Text 51: The youths and the security operatives in the Niger Delta understand themselves. They dine and wine and do the oil business together. Even when the youths are arrested, they are given VIP treatment.

These syntactic and lexico-semantic data are analyzed in detail, among several others, under "Analysis of Syntactic Influences" and "Analysis of Lexico-semantic Influences".

4.3 ANALYSIS OF SYNTACTIC INFLUENCES

In this section, we present the syntactic influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals and trace them to the syntax of the Izon language. We also trace these syntactic influences to the Izon socio-cultural milieu to ascertain their appropriateness or otherwise within the Izon socio-cultural context.

4.2.1 Izon Syntax and its Manifestations in the English of Izon Speakers

The syntactic influences, which Izon has on the syntax of English in Nigeria and their manifestations in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, are presented under the following headings:

- (i) Agreement
- (ii) Word Order
- (iii) Number
- (iv) Pluralization of Certain Non-Count Nouns
- (v) Tense and Aspect
- (vi) Stative Verbs
- (vii) Relative Pronouns
- (viii) Use of Prepositions
- (ix) The Indefinite Article
- (x) Avoidance of Tag Questions
- (xi) Response to Polar Questions
- (xii) Copying

4.2.1.1 Agreement

The syntax of the English of Izon-English bilinguals manifests some interesting Izon influences in terms of agreement especially in the area of subject-verb agreement and pronoun-antecedent agreement.

A. Subject-Verb Agreement

The Izon language does not make singular-plural distinctions in verbs as it is done in English. Thus, whether the subject is singular or plural, the same form of the verb is used. Consider the following Izon sentences for example:

- (i) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *u sẹ* mìnì ye. (*He dance* at all times).

- (ii) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *tọbọu bei sẹi* minì ye. (*The boy dance* at all times).
- (iii) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *a sẹi* minì ye. (*She dance* at all times).
- (iv) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *tọbọu mì sẹi* minì ye. (*The girl dance* at all times).
- (v) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *Layefa sẹi* minì ye. (*Layefa dance* at all times).
- (vi) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *ẹ sẹi* minì ye. (*I dance* at all times).
- (vii) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *wọ sẹi* minì ye. (*We dance* at all times).
- (viii) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *ọnì sẹi* minì ye. (*They dance* at all times).
- (ix) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *i sẹi* minì ye. (*You dance* at all times).
- (x) Kiri ma sẹ kẹ *ọ sẹi* minì ye. (*You dance* at all times).
- (xi) Baì duhin baì duhin kẹ *u fiyai fì* minì ye. (*He eat* food everyday).
- (xii) Baì duhin baì duhin kẹ *obori bei fiyai fì* minì ye. (*The goat eat* food everyday).
- (xiii) Baì duhin baì duhin kẹ *a fiyai fì* minì ye. (*She eat* food everyday).
- (xiv) Baì duhin baì duhin kẹ *ere arau ma fiyai fì* minì ye. (*The woman eat* food everyday).

In sentences (i) – (x), the same form of the verb *sẹi* (dance) is used when the subject is in the first person singular *ẹ* (I), second person singular *i* (you), third person singular *u / a / tọbọu bei / tọbọu mì / Layefa* (he / she / the boy / the girl/ Layefa) , or in the first person plural *wọ* (we), second person plural *ọ* (you) or third person plural *ọnì* (they). Similarly, in sentences (xi) – (xiv), the verb *fì* (eat) does not change even when it co-occurs with the third person singular subjects *u* (he), *a* (she), *obori bei* (the goat) and *ere arau ma* (the woman) respectively. This is, however, not the case in English where the verb has to change its form to agree with its subject (see Akere 2001:88-94).

Owing to the fact that there is no singular-plural distinction in Izon verbs as it is in English verbs, some Izon-English bilinguals, especially those who have low educational background and, therefore, have little or no exposure to good English usage, use the base form of the verb even when the subject is in the third person singular e.g.

- (i.) *As my friend have rightly spoke, the Amananaoweis are the eyes of the Agadagba in the villages. (As my friend has rightly spoken, the Amananaoweis are the eyes of the Agadagba in the villages).*
- (ii.) *She go home. (She goes home).*
- (iii.) *The role Agadagba play in the community is unique. (The role the Agadagba plays in the community is unique).*
- (iv.) *Layefa eat rice everyday. (Layefa eats rice everyday).*
- (v.) *He love Owugiri dance. (He loves Owugiri dance).*
- (vi.) *Tarabiritorū, which responsible for administrating the Arogobo section of the Ibe, have chiefs under him. (The Tarabiritorū, who is responsible for administering the Arogbo section of the Ibe, has chiefs under him).*
- (vii.) *Amafoṣin perform many functions in Arogbo-Izon community. It prevent sickness in the community whereby we don't know how it come about. (Amafoṣin performs many functions in the Arogbo-Izon community. It prevents unexpected sickness from ravaging the community).*
- (viii.) *When the father agree with you, you can elope the girl. (When the father agrees to his daughter marrying you, the girl can elope with you).*
- (ix.) *Now that the former defunct Ilaje/Ese-Odo Local Government have been splitted into two, I am sure that government will be aware of our problems since it is now close to us. (Now that the former Ilaje/Ese-Odo Local Government has been split into two, I am sure that government will be aware of our problems since it is now closer to us).*
- (x.) *If the father like your behaviours, he can call you and give you his daughter to marry. (If the father likes your behaviour, he can call you and give you his daughter to marry).*

B. Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

An interesting aspect of Izon syntax which influences pronoun-antecedent agreement in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is its gender system. Gender in Izon, which involves both animateness and sex, distinguishes animate and inanimate (with animate distinguishing human and non-human) and feminine, masculine and neuter (see Jenewari, 1989:114). Animate nouns refer to human beings, animals and supernatural beings, while inanimate nouns include all other entities. Feminine nouns refer to female human beings e.g.

<i>ere</i> (wife)	<i>iyorọ arau</i> (woman)
<i>yin</i> (mother)	<i>abirau</i> (sister)
<i>iyorọ tọbọu</i> (girl)	<i>yaforo</i> (mother-in-law)
<i>opu yin</i> (grandmother)	<i>zaraui</i> (female friend)
<i>niyainta</i> (daughter-in-law)	

*Tẹmearau*¹ (the woman who created the universe), (that is, God), is also feminine in Izon.

Masculine nouns refer to male human beings and all animals (including the female) e.g.

<i>oweì kịmị</i> (man)	<i>zei</i> (husband)
<i>oweì tọbọu</i> (boy)	<i>abirei</i> (brother)
<i>daui</i> (father)	<i>obori</i> (goat)
<i>ofini</i> (cock/hen)	<i>evin</i> (cow)
<i>idi</i> (fish)	<i>ogumu</i> (frog)
<i>ewere</i> (wildcat)	<i>isono</i> (ant)

Masculine nouns also include such supernatural beings² and planetary bodies³ as:

<i>kųwị</i> (star)	<i>ogonowei</i> (moon)
<i>opu duweì</i> (ancestor)	<i>bẹ̀nmọ̀kiriwei</i> (satan)
<i>owu</i> (masquerade)	

Neuter nouns refer to inanimate entities e.g.

<i>tin</i> (tree)	<i>kasì</i> (chair)
<i>ololo</i> (bottle)	<i>wari</i> (house)
<i>bini</i> (water)	<i>ogonò</i> (sky)
<i>beriba</i> (plantain)	<i>duhin</i> (night)
<i>buru</i> (yam)	<i>bìdẹ</i> (cloth/dress)
<i>pulo</i> (oil)	<i>aga</i> (behaviour)

Parts of the human body (including the male and female reproductive organs) are also classified as neuter nouns:

<i>ton</i> (penis)	<i>bira</i> (hand)
<i>tibi</i> (head)	<i>aka</i> (tooth)
<i>bẹlẹu</i> (tongue)	<i>dumẹ</i> (hair)
<i>nini</i> (nose)	<i>tọrọ</i> (eye)
<i>agba</i> (cheek)	<i>bùwọ</i> (leg)

Inanimate entities or human beings whose sex is unknown or ignored also come under neuter nouns. For example, *onì* (they) is used to refer to a caller whose identity or sex is not known:

Kimibọ i tin minì kẹ kẹ emi. *Onì* i tin minì mì i na ghan?
(It seems as if somebody is calling you. *They* are calling you,
can't you hear?)

Onì (they) is used in this context because the identity or sex of the person calling is not known. Thus, whether the caller is older or younger than the person called, *onì* (they) has to be used since the caller's identity or sex is not known. This is, however, different from the context in which *onì* (they) is used as an honorific pronoun to show respect to an elderly person even when the sex or identity of the person is known e.g.

È dọ i tin minì. *Onì* i tin minì mì i na ghan? (My father is calling you.

They are calling you, can't you hear?)

Sometimes, the neuter gender is used for *kala tɔbɔu* (baby) whether male or female, especially when the speaker does not know the sex of the baby as in:

tɔbɔu bɔ mɪ (the baby)

But where the sex of the baby is known, *tɔbɔu* (baby) may either be masculine or feminine depending on the sex:

(kala) tɔ (bɔu) bei (the baby) - masculine

(kala) tɔ (bɔu) ma (the baby) - feminine

Similarly, the neuter gender is sometimes used for female human beings probably because of the ridiculously low status accorded them in the Izon society. Thus, we have, for example, *ere mɪ* (the wife), *iyorɔ tɔbɔu mɪ* (the girl) and *kala tɔbɔu mɪ* (the female baby) even when the sex is known.

Such Izon deities as *Egbesu*, *Opele*, *Kpokpotin* and *Obororwei* also fall under neuter nouns and are, therefore, used with the definite article *mɪ* because their sex, though known, is ignored:

Egbesu mɪ

Opele mɪ

Kpokpotin mɪ

Obororwei mɪ

Gender distinctions in Izon usually manifest themselves in three major ways: pronominal reference, (definite) article agreement and demonstrative agreement.

1. Pronominal Reference

Femininity in Izon is usually reflected through the following pronouns: *a* (she) – subject, *a* (her) – object and *a/ani* (her (own)) – possessive. This is illustrated in the following Izon sentences:

- (i) *Zarau ma bai gha? A mu tei.*

Where is *the (female) friend*? *She* has gone.

- (ii) Ganmọ *iyọrọ araṣ ma ẹrì gha*. Ẹ kpọ *a ẹrì gha*.

Ganmọ didn't see *the woman*. I didn't see *her* too.

- (iii) U mì *abíraṣ ma ye*. U mì *a yẹn*.

That is *the sister's*. That is *hers (her own)*.

- (iv) Te kẹ *i yin ẹrẹ gha*? Ẹ *anì ẹrẹ nìmi ghan*.

What is the name of *your mother*? I don't know *her* name.

Masculinity is also reflected through pronominal reference: *u* (he) – subject, *u* (him) – object, *u/unì* (his (own)) – possessive e.g.

- (i) *Pẹrẹ tìn ẹ pìrì*. *U fa*. *U mu tẹi*.

Call *Pẹrẹ* for me. *He* is not around. *He* has gone.

- (ii) *Tẹkẹina báj gha*? Ẹ *u ẹrì gha*.

Where is *Tẹkẹina*? I didn't see *him*.

- (iii) U mì *obori bei ye*. U mì *u yẹn*.

That is *the goat's (own)*. That is *his (his own)*.

- (iv) *Dẹgbẹla unì ozu tarì wẹi ẹbẹ*, *u muu timi*.

If *Dẹgbẹla* had loved *his* self, *he* would have gone.

Neuter in Izon can also be reflected through pronominal reference: *anì* (it) – subject, *a* (it) – object and *anì* (its) – possessive e.g.

- (i) *Tìn mì ebi emi*. *Anì ebi emi*.

The tree is good. *It* is good.

- (ii) Ẹ *warì mì ẹrì tẹi*. Ẹ *a ẹrì tẹi*.

I have seen *the house*. I have seen *it*.

- (iii) *Opele kẹ eru mì ẹrẹ*. *Opele kẹ anì⁴ ẹrẹ*.

Opele is the name of *the deity*. *Opele* is *its* name.

- (iv) *Egbesu mì anì ozu pùnmun tẹi*. *Anì anì ozu pùnmun tẹi*.

The Egbesu has sanctified itself. It has sanctified itself.

2. (Definite) Article Agreement

Gender in Izon can also be indicated through (definite) article agreement. Masculine nouns, therefore, co-occur with the definite article *bei* e.g.

<i>daɪ bei</i> (the father)	<i>abirei bei</i> (the brother)
<i>zowei bei</i> (the (male) friend)	<i>kɔwɪ bei</i> (the star)
<i>idi bei</i> (the fish)	<i>bousei bei</i> (the lion)
<i>otungbolo bei</i> (the mosquito)	<i>oɣumɪ bei</i> (the frog)
<i>opu daɪ bei</i> (the grandfather)	<i>zei bei</i> (the husband)
<i>owei tɔbɔɪ bei</i> (the boy)	<i>oɣonɔwei bei</i> (the moon)
<i>tɔ bei</i> (the baby)	<i>isɔnɔ bei</i> (the ant)

Feminine nouns co-occur with the definite article *ma* as in:

<i>yin ma</i> (the mother)	<i>abɪraɪ ma</i> (the sister)
<i>zaraɪ ma</i> (the (female) friend)	<i>opu yin ma</i> (the grandmother)
<i>Tɛmɛaraɪ ma</i> (God)	<i>yaforo ma</i> (the mother-in-law)
<i>iyɔrɔ araɪ ma</i> (the woman)	<i>nɪyaɪnta ma</i> (the daughter-in-law)
<i>tɔ ma</i> (the baby)	<i>iyɔrɔ tɔbɔɪ ma</i> (the girl)

Neuter nouns co-occur with the definite article *mɪ*:

<i>tɪn mɪ</i> (the tree)	<i>tɔbɔɪ bɔ mɪ</i> (the baby)
<i>dumɛ mɪ</i> (the hair)	<i>aga mɪ</i> (the behaviour)
<i>tɔn mɪ</i> (the penis)	<i>idou mɪ</i> (the breast)
<i>erin mɪ</i> (the sun)	<i>bini mɪ</i> (the water)
<i>iyɔrɔ tɔbɔɪ mɪ</i> (the girl)	<i>ere mɪ</i> (the wife)
<i>Egbesu mɪ</i> (the Egbesu)	<i>oɣonɔ mɪ</i> (the sky)

3. Demonstrative Agreement

Various demonstratives are used in Izon to indicate the gender of the nouns which co-occur with them. The demonstratives *bei* (this) and *u bei* (that) are used with singular masculine nouns e.g.

<i>bei obori bei</i> (this goat)	<i>u bei obori bei</i> (that goat)
<i>bei idi bei</i> (this fish)	<i>u bei idi bei</i> (that fish)
<i>bei kịmị bei</i> (this man)	<i>u bei kịmị bei</i> (that man)
<i>bei owei tọbọu bei</i> (this boy)	<i>u bei owei tọbọu bei</i> (that boy)
<i>bei kụwị bei</i> (this star)	<i>u bei kụwị bei</i> (that star)
<i>bei zoweı bei</i> (this friend)	<i>u bei zoweı bei</i> (that friend)
<i>bei owu bei</i> (this masquerade)	<i>u bei owu bei</i> (that masquerade)

The demonstratives *ma* (this) and *u ma* (that) co-occur with singular feminine nouns:

<i>ma iyọrọ araı ma</i> (this woman)	<i>u ma iyọrọ araı ma</i> (that woman).
<i>ma iyọrọ tọbọu ma</i> (this girl)	<i>u ma iyọrọ tọbọu ma</i> (that girl)
<i>ma zaraı ma</i> (this friend)	<i>u ma zaraı ma</i> (that friend)
<i>ma ere ma</i> (this wife)	<i>u ma ere ma</i> (that wife)

Mị (this) and *u mị* (that) are used with singular neuter nouns e.g.

<i>mị ololo mị</i> (this bottle)	<i>u mị ololo mị</i> (that bottle)
<i>mị bịra mị</i> (this hand)	<i>u mị bịra mị</i> (that hand)
<i>mị zuru mị</i> (this room)	<i>u mị zuru mị</i> (that room)
<i>mị kasị mị</i> (this chair)	<i>u mị kasị mị</i> (that chair)
<i>mị eru mị</i> (this deity)	<i>u mị eru mị</i> (that deity)

But where plural nouns are involved, the demonstrative *ma* (these) and *u ma* (those) are used irrespective of the gender of the noun:

<i>ma obori ma</i> (these goats)	<i>u ma obori ma</i> (those goats)
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<i>ma owei ɔwɔu ma</i> (these boys)	<i>u ma owei ɔwɔu ma</i> (those boys)
<i>ma ere abụ ma</i> (these wives)	<i>u ma ere abụ ma</i> (those wives)
<i>ma azuru ma</i> (these rooms)	<i>u ma azuru ma</i> (those rooms)
<i>ma akīmī ma</i> (these men)	<i>u ma akīmī ma</i> (those men)

The gender distinctions made in this section strongly indicate that the gender system of Izon is, in some respects, different from that of English. It is, therefore, not surprising that Izon-English bilinguals manifest fascinating Izon influences in their English usage especially in the area of pronoun-antecedent agreement. For example, in Izon, *Tẹmẹaraṣ* (God) is widely believed to be a woman probably because of her caring nature. Thus, *Tẹmẹaraṣ* (God) is feminine. But, in English, “God” is masculine as reflected in Psalms 91:1-4 (King James Version):

1. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
2. I will say of the LORD, *He* is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in *him* will I trust.
3. Surely *he* shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.
4. *He* shall cover thee with *his* feathers, and under *his* wings shalt thou trust: *his* truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

This is also reflected in the words of President John Adams (1735 – 1826), the second president of the United States of America:

Power always thinks it has great soul and vast views beyond the comprehension of the weak and that it is doing God’s service when it is violating all *His* laws⁵.

Since God (*Tẹmẹaraṣ*) is feminine in Izon, but masculine in English, Izon-English bilinguals usually manifest this femininity through the use of such feminine pronouns as “she” and “her” to refer to God:

- i. *Tẹmẹaraṣ* is what we call God. *She* is the Creator of the universe.
- ii. God is merciful. *She* allows the rain to fall on everybody including those who do not know *her*.

There is also a manifestation of the influence of Izon syntax in terms of pronominal reference to “god” which, in English, is either a feminine or masculine noun. For example, “Cupid” (the Roman god of love) and “Neptune” (the Roman god of the sea) are usually used as masculine nouns, while “Diana”, the goddess of hunting, is feminine. But, in Izon, *eru* (god) is a neuter noun. Thus, “god” (*eru*) is usually replaced with such neuter-reflecting pronouns as “it” / “its” (*ani/a*) in the English of Izon-English bilinguals e.g.

Egbesu mi su eru. Ani ke eru ni Izon abu o beleu kori mu oni ogiren abu gbini mini ye. (Egbesu is the god of war. It is the god that leads the Itons to attack their enemies.)

Since all the gods in the Izon environment, including *Egbesu*, *Opele*, *Kpokpotin*, *Oborowe* and *Egbunu*, are used as neuter nouns, Izon-English bilinguals tend to make pronominal reference to all other gods found elsewhere, whether masculine or feminine, by making use of “it” / “its”:

You mentioned it to us that Cupid is a Roman god. *It* is the god of love.
What of Diana? *It* is a Roman god too?

The occurrence of the reflexive pronoun “his self” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is an interesting departure from the reflexive pronoun “himself” widely used in English. This is traceable to the Izon language where all reflexive pronouns are derived by adding *ozu* (self) to the possessive forms of the pronouns e.g.

<i>eni ozu</i> (my self)	<i>ini ozu</i> (your self)
<i>woni ozu</i> (our self)	<i>oni ozu</i> (their self)
<i>uni ozu</i> (his self)	<i>ani ozu</i> (her self)

Since “him” is an object pronoun, it is incorrect in Izon to say *u ozu* (himself). This is why *uni ozu* (his self) is preferred especially by those whose level of education and exposure to good English usage is low. The preference for “his self”, as a reflexive pronoun, is reflected in the following sentences:

- i. If Dęgbęla love *his self*, he will go.

(Dẹgbẹla *unị ozu* tarị wẹrị sei gha, u muu mịnị.)

- ii. He should respect *his self*.

(U *unị ozu* kọ ọgọ ọ tūwa.)

Another Izon influence manifested in the syntax of the English of Izon-English bilinguals is the treatment of all animals, (including the female), as masculine nouns instead of neuter nouns as it is done in English. This is so because, in Izon, all animals are masculine e.g.

- i. Obiri bei *unị* sẹi pẹlẹ fị.

The dog bite *his* tail.

- ii. U mị obori bei ye. U mị *u* yẹn.

That is the goat's own. That is *his* own.

Thus, “he” / “his”, which are pronouns that indicate masculinity, are used for animals, whether male or female, in such contexts where “it” would have been preferred in native English.

Finally, the use of “they” to refer to a caller whose identity or sex is not known or as an honorific pronoun to show respect to an elderly person is unknown in native English. Thus, the context in which “they” is used in the following sentences is a variation since it reflects what happens in the Izon socio-cultural setting where *onị* (they) is used to refer to a human being whose sex or identity is not known or as a mark of respect for an elderly person even when his or her identity or sex is known:

- (i) Somebody is calling you. *They* are calling you, can't you hear?

- (ii) Daddy is calling you. *They* are calling you, can't you hear?

In sentence (i), “they” is used as a pronominal reference to “Somebody” because the caller's identity or sex is not known. In such a context as this, “Somebody” or “Someone” would have been preferred in native English. In sentence (ii), “they” refers to “Daddy”, (a singular

noun), to indicate that the speaker respects “Daddy” as an elderly person. “He” would have been preferred in this context in native English.

It is, however, necessary to comment on the pronominal reference to the noun “baby” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals. In Izon, *kala tɔbɔu* (baby) may be masculine, feminine or neuter depending on the context in which it occurs. If it occurs where the speaker does not know the sex of the baby, it is the neuter gender that is preferred e.g.

- (i) Tɔbɔu bɔ mɪ di. Anɪ (ubɔ) you mɪnɪ.

Take care of the baby. *It* is crying.

Where the sex is known, “baby” becomes either masculine or feminine e.g.

- (ii) (Kala) tɔ(bɔu) bei di. U you mɪnɪ.

Take care of the baby. *He* is crying.

- (iii) (Kala) tɔ(bɔu) ma di. A you mɪnɪ.

Take care of the baby. *She* is crying.

Thus, Izon-English bilinguals usually use “he”, “she” or “it” for “baby” depending on the context. This, especially the use of “it” for “baby”, is similar to what obtains in native English where *it* is used to refer to a “baby” or a “small child” especially when the sex is unknown or ignored.

4.2.1.2 Word Order

In Izon, there are three major sentence patterns: SOV, OSV and SVO⁶. The SOV word order is usually associated with the serial verb sentence (both interrogative and non-interrogative) (see Jenewari 1989:115 – 116). This pattern is illustrated with the following Izon sentences:

- (i) Ebibɔ/ u / bɪlɔ tɛɪ. (Ebibɔ has duped him.)
S O V

- (ii) Ebibɔ/ u / bɪlɔ tɛɪ? (Ebibɔ has duped him?)
S O V

(iii) E /warị mị/ zẹrị tẹi. (I have sold the house.)
S O V

(iv) U/warị mị/ zẹrị tẹi? (He has sold the house?)
S O V

(v) E yabi/ i/ ẹrị mịnị. (My uncle will see you.)
S O V

(vi) E yabi/ i/ ẹrị mịnị. (My uncle is seeing you.)
S O V

(vii) I yabi / ẹ / ẹrị mịnị? (Your uncle is seeing me?)
S O V

(viii) E / i / na timi. (I was hearing you.)
S O V

(ix) E / i / naa timi. (I would have heard you.)
S O V

(x) I / ẹ / naa timi? (You would have heard me?)
S O V

The OSV and SVO patterns are usually associated with the topic-comment sentence in Izon (see Jenewari 1989:115). The OSV pattern in Izon is illustrated with the following sentences:

(i) Ere mị / u / nanaa mịnị. (The wife, he will marry.)
O S V

(ii) Ere mị / u / nanaa mịnị? (The wife, he will marry?)
O S V

(iii) Warị ma / i / zẹrị mịnị. (The houses, you will sell.)
O S V

(iv) Tọbọu bei / ẹ / ẹrị tẹi. (The boy, I have seen.)
O S V

(v) Tọbọu bei / i / ẹrị tẹi? (The boy, you have seen?)
O S V

(vi) Toi mị / ẹ / dii timi (ye). (The play, I would have watched (it).)
O S V

- (vii) Toi mị / ẹ / di timi (ye). (The play, I was watching (it).)
O S V
- (viii) Zei bei / a / nanaa timi (wei). (The husband, she would have married (him).)
O S V
- (ix) Zei nị / a / nana timi (wei) (bei)? (The husband, she was marrying?)
O S V
- (x) Zei nị / a / nana mịnị (wei) (bei)? (The husband, she is marrying?)
O S V

The following sentences exemplify the SVO pattern in Izon:

- (i) A/ nana tẹi/ azei! Kịn nimi ghan kẹ. (The husbands she has married! They are innumerable.)
S V O
- (ii) U / ba tẹi / akimị! Yun kẹ tọ. (The people he has killed! Just like sand.)
S V O
- (iii) Ẹ/ dii timi/ toi mị! Ah, anị ẹ dọn mo. (The play I would have watched! Ah, it is painful.)
S V O
- (iv) Ẹ daụ bei / nana timi / ere mị? (The wife my father was marrying?)
S V O
- (v) Ẹ / ẹrị mịnị / tọbọu bei? (The boy I am seeing?)
S V O

In terms of the structure of the noun phrase in Izon, the head-word, which is usually a noun or a pronoun, may be pre-modified by adjectives, demonstratives or possessives:

1. Adjectives as pre-modifiers e.g.

- (i) Kẹnị *ebi* iyọrọ tọbọu zuru mị ọ emi.
One *beautiful* girl is in the room.
- (ii) U mị *lẹlẹ* bide mị kọ ẹ yari.

Bring that *dirty* cloth for me.

- (iii) *Ofiri* ago kẹ ẹ mọ bou bi emi.

It is *hot* pepper soup I need to drink.

- (iv) U ma *dahain* atin ma wọ mọ pẹlẹ mìnì.

We will cut those *long* sticks.

- (v) U bei *terenren* tiyẹ kìmì bei kẹ ẹ daụ.

That *slim tall* man is my father.

- (vi) Kẹnì *igiti* *dirimọ* *owe*i obiri warì mị sụwọ tẹì.

One *small black male* dog has entered the house.

- (vii) U ma *damu ebi* *pina* *Izon* iyọrọ araụ ma kẹ ẹnì abịraụ.

That *fat beautiful light-complexioned Izon* woman is my sister.

Note that in Izo, adjectives of colour may occur after adjectives of quality as indicated in sentences (vi) and (vii) above

2. Possessives and Demonstratives as pre-modifiers e.g.

- (i) Ẹ daụ mọ *Korimini* yin mọ warì mu tẹì.

My father and *Korimini's* mother have gone home.

- (ii) U mị ukure mị ọ emi *periperi* warì mị kẹ *ani* warì.

That brown house on the hill is *her* house.

- (iii) U ma sọrọn aduba atin ma nì ẹ *daụ* uga ọ emi yaì ma ẹ yin kẹ gboro yaì.

Those five big trees in *my father's* compound were planted by *my* mother.

- (iv) Mị wowo kasì mị *ini* zuru mị ẹgbẹ ka.

This red chair fits *your* room very well.

- (v) *Ini* bei timimọ wei bei ẹ dīşẹ gha.

I don't like *your this* teacher.

- (vi) *Unì* ma zaraụ ma fun nimi emi.

His this (female) friend is brilliant.

- (vii) *Ma* tara opu aburu ma kọn ta ọ kọ *inị u ma* tara azowei abụ ma pịrị.

Take *these* three big yams and give them to *your those* three friends.

Note that the Izon language permits the co-occurrence of possessives and demonstratives as pre-modifiers in the structure of a noun phrase.

(Definite) articles and relative clauses may function as post-modifiers to the head-word in the structure of a noun phrase in Izon:

3. (Definite) articles as post modifiers: *bei* (masc. /sg.), *ma* (fem. /sg.), *mị* (neuter/sg.) and *ma* (plural masc./fem./neuter) e.g.

- (i) Tọbọu *bei* bo tẹi.

The boy has come.

- (ii) Obori *bei* kọ mị iyọ bo.

Bring *the* goat here.

- (iii) Fẹrẹ *mị* u mọ baa mịn.

He will break *the* plate.

- (iv) Arụ *mị* u mọ bilemọ timi kiri kẹ ẹ iyọ *mị* la ye.

It was when he was sinking *the* canoe that I got to *the* place.

- (v) Iyọrọ arau *ma* a zeì tarị emi.

The woman loves her husband.

- (vi) Yin *ma* kẹ wọ mọ ẹrị bẹ dọu emi.

It is *the* mother we want to see.

- (vii) Obori *ma* kọ mị iyọ bo.

Bring *the* goats here.

- (viii) Fẹrẹ *ma* u mọ baa mịn.

He will break *the* plates.

- (ix) Iyoro abụ *ma* ọni azei abụ tarị emi.

The women love their husbands.

- (x) Owou *ma* bo tẹi.

The children have come.

4. Relative clauses as post-modifiers e.g.

- (i) A nị ozu kpọ nimi ghan arau *ma* kẹ u dişe mịni.

She, who is not even neat, is the one he likes.

- (ii) Anị warị mị u mị ukure mị nị opu tịn mị tunmọ ọ emi ye mị tịbị kẹ anị emi ye.

Her house is on the top of that hill which is behind the big tree.

- (iii) Agadagba bei nị Arogbo pẹrẹ bei kẹ Ibe mị di mịni wei.

The Agadagba, who is the king of Arogbo, is the one overseeing the whole kingdom.

- (iv) Kasị mị nị i yaịnmo ye mị wẹrị bo mọ tẹlẹmọ.

Come and repair the chair which you broke.

- (v) Unị ere *ma* nị fun kpọ nimi ghan arau *ma* kẹ owou *ma* tinimọ bẹ mịni?

His wife who is not brilliant is the one (about) to teach the children?

- (vi) Owei akimị *ma* nị inị zuru ọ emi abụ *ma* nẹmụ mịni.

The men who are in your room are crazy.

- (vii) Iyoro tobou *ma* nị i tịn arau *ma* bo tẹi.

The girl whom you called has come.

- (viii) Tobou bei nị yin *ma* abubai erin fi wei bei you mịni.

The boy whose mother died yesterday is crying.

It is important to comment on the order of the compound subject-NP in Izon especially when it consists of a third and first person. In Izon, when a compound subject-NP consists of a third and first person, the first person usually precedes the third person e.g.

- (i) E mọ ẹ dau mọ epele tin mịni.

I and my father are playing draught.

- (ii) *Wọ mọ wọ dau mọ epele tin mịnị.*

We and our father are playing draught.

- (iii) *Ẹ mọ ẹnị azowei abụ mọ bo mịnị.*

I and my friends are coming.

- (iv) *Wọ mọ wọnị azowei abụ mọ bo mịnị.*

We and our friends are coming.

- (v) *Ẹ mọ ẹnị ere mọ mu tẹi.*

I and my wife have gone.

- (vi) *Wọ mọ wọnị ọwọu mọ mu tẹi.*

We and our children have gone.

It is also important to comment on the positions that tense markers and adverb(ial)s occupy in Izon. In an Izon verb phrase, tense markers⁶ occur in post-verbal positions e.g.

- (i) *Ẹ muu mịnị.*

I will go.

- (ii) *Ẹ muu timi.*

I would have gone.

- (iii) *Ẹ nimi muu mịnị.*

I can go.

- (iv) *Ẹ mu mịnị.*

I am going.

- (v) *Ẹ mu timi.*

I went.

- (vi) *Ẹ mu tẹi.*

I have gone.

In Izon, adverb(ial)s usually precede the verb⁷ (see also Jenewari 1989:117) e.g.

- (i) *Saramo* (adv.) (*fīyaɪ ma*) *fī* (v).
Quickly eat (the food).
- (ii) *I pɛtɛpɛtɛ* (adv.) *a mīyɛn* (v) *bɪ emi*.
You need to *slowly do* it.
- (iii) *Seisei, ikiyoyu kɔ kiri gbolo* (adv.) *o pu* (v).
Please, *carefully write* them.
- (iv) *Izou mo* (adv.) *umɪ iyɔ* (adv.) *o pɛrɛɪ* (v).
Quickly sit there.
- (v) *A dɔɔ* (adv.) *mɪ iyɔ* (adv.) *o pɛrɛɪ* (v) *timi mɪnɪ*.
She will *quietly sit* here.
- (vi) *U gba i diya mɪnɪ bɪra mɪ, gɛrɛnrɛn* (adv.) *a mīyɛn* (v).
What he is telling you is that you should *do* it *well*.
- (vii) *Tɔbɔy bei nɪ yin ma abubai erin* (adv.) *fī* (v) *wei bei you timi*.
The boy whose mother *yesterday died* was crying.
- (viii) *Owoy ma ovorin kubu* (adv.) *o tiyɛ* (v) *emi*.
The children *stand in the sun*.
- (ix) *Basan kpɔ fa* (adv.) *kɛ u moɔ a mīyɛn mɪnɪ* (v).
He *is doing* it *without rest*.
- (x) *Pɛtɔ* (adv.) *a di* (v) *mu dɔnmɔ la*.
Meticulously look (at) it to the end.

Word order in Izon has caused some interesting departures in the syntax of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. One of such departures is the co-occurrence of possessives and demonstratives as pre-modifiers in the structure of a noun phrase. As Quirk and Greenbaum (1978) observe, English does not permit the co-occurrence of demonstratives

and possessives in such a manner that they follow each other in a noun phrase because they belong to the same class of determiners. Thus, as Akere (2001:73) notes, the co-occurrence of demonstratives and possessives in the following noun phrases is ungrammatical in English:

- (i) *This our* lecturer.
- (ii) *That your* friend.
- (iii) *This my* pen.

The correct versions should, according to Akere (2001:73), be:

- (i) This lecturer of ours.
- (ii) That friend of yours.
- (iii) This pen of mine.

But in Izon, the co-occurrence of possessives and demonstratives is allowed and, thus, it is possible to have the following sentences:

- (i) *Inị bei zowei bei ebi emi.*
Your this friend is handsome.
- (ii) *Wọnị u ma abịraụ ma bira gụba emi.*
Our that sister is stingy.
- (iii) *Anị mị kasị mị ẹ dīşẹ emi.*
I like *her that chair*.

It is, therefore, not surprising that Izon-English bilinguals make such sentences in which possessives and demonstratives co-occur as:

- (i) Whenever the father agree with you, you can take *his that daughter* home.
- (ii) The role *our this Agadagba* play is very unique.
- (iii) *These our gods* do not disappoint. Any time we call them, they answer.

- (iv) For a European to come to *that our late Agadagba* and ask for the secret of *this our Egbesu*, you know that something has happened somewhere.

There is also a manifestation of the influence of Izon on the syntax of the English of Izon speakers in terms of the order of the compound subject-NP especially when it comprises a third and first person. In English, the preferred order is that the third person precedes the first person e.g.

- (i) *My father and I* played draught yesterday.
(ii) *My wife and I* have gone.

But in Izon, the first person usually occurs before the third person:

- (i) *E mọ ẹ dau mọ* abubai erin epele tin.
I and my father played draught yesterday.
(ii) *E mọ eni ere mọ* mu tei.
I and my wife have gone.

Thus, Izon-English bilinguals do allow the first person to precede the third person in their English usage as illustrated in the following sentence:

For example, if I like the girl and want to marry her, *I and my father* will go to her parents and pay the *ikọ*. This is an amount that the husband pays on the head of his wife.

The occurrence of adjectives of quality before adjectives of colour in the structure of a noun phrase also reflects the strong influence that Izon has on the syntax of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. According to Huddleston (1984), the preferred order of adjectives in the structure of a noun phrase in English is: adjectives of number preceding all other adjectives, followed by adjectives of colour which, of course, occur before adjectives of quality, and finally modifiers which have been turned from nouns to adjectives through functional shift. Thus, we may have a sentence like this:

One black small dog entered your room last night.

In Izon, however, adjectives of quality may precede adjectives of colour in the structure of a noun phrase. This is illustrated below:

- (i) *Kenì igìtì dirimò obiri mị bọ duhin ọ inì zuru sụwọ.*

One small black dog last night entered your room.

- (ii) *U ma ebi dirimo iyọrọ arau ma kẹ ẹnì abịrau.*

That beautiful black woman is my sister.

This Izon structural pattern usually influences the English of Izon-English bilinguals where adjectives of quality are made to precede those of colour e.g.

- (i) This traditional thing, *isele*, is grinded on wood with sand and it wears *a beautiful red outlook*.

- (ii) *That clean pure white cloth* is the symbol of Egbesu.

4.2.1.3 Number

The way singular-plural distinction is made in Izon nouns is different from the way it is done in English nouns. Singular-plural distinction in Izon nouns is usually made in the following ways:

- (i) **The form of the noun or pronoun itself e.g.**

Singular	Plural
<i>tọbọu</i> (child)	<i>ọwọu</i> (children)
<i>oweì tọbọu</i> (male child/boy)	<i>oweì ọwọu</i> (male children/boys)
<i>iyọrọ tọbọu</i> (female child/girl)	<i>iyọrọ ọwọu</i> (female children/girls)
<i>kịmị bọ</i> ⁸ (person)	<i>kịmị abụ</i> (people)
<i>oweì bọ</i> (man)	<i>oweì abụ</i> (men)
<i>iyọrọ bọ / iyọrọ arau</i> (woman)	<i>iyọrọ abụ</i> (women)
<i>ere bọ / ere arau</i> (wife)	<i>ere abụ</i> (wives)
<i>zei</i> (husband)	<i>zei abụ</i> (husbands)

<i>yabì</i> (uncle)	<i>yabì oni</i> (uncles)
<i>ẹ</i> (I/me) (1st pers.)	<i>wọ</i> (we/us) (3rd pers.)
<i>i</i> (you) (2nd pers.)	<i>ọ</i> (you) (2nd pers.)
<i>u</i> (he/him) (3rd pers./masc.)	<i>ọnì</i> (they/them) (3rd pers.)
<i>a</i> (she/her) (3rd pers./fem.)	<i>ọnì</i> (they/them) (3rd pers.)
<i>anì</i> (it) (3rd pers./neuter)	<i>ọnì</i> (they/them) (3rd pers.)
<i>ẹnì</i> (my) (1st pers./poss.)	<i>wọnì</i> (our) (1st pers./poss.)
<i>inì</i> (your) (2nd pers./poss.)	<i>ọnì</i> ⁹ (your) (2nd pers./poss.)
<i>unì</i> (his) (3rd pers./masc./poss.)	<i>ọnì</i> (their) (3rd pers./poss.)
<i>anì</i> (her) (3rd pers./fem./poss.)	<i>ọnì</i> (their) (3rd pers./poss.)
<i>anì</i> ¹⁰ (its) (3rd pers./neuter/poss.)	<i>ọnì</i> (their) (3rd pers./poss.)

(ii) **Definite articles e.g.**

Singular	Plural
<i>tọbọu bei/ tọbọu ma</i> (the child)	<i>ọwọu ma</i> (the children)
<i>kìmì bei</i> (the man)	<i>kìmì ma</i> (the men)
<i>zei bei</i> (the husband)	<i>zei oni ma/zei abụ ma</i> (the husbands)
<i>kụwì bei</i> (the star)	<i>kụwì ma</i> (the stars)
<i>ọnana bei</i> (the sheep)	<i>ọnana ma</i> (the sheep(s))
<i>isọnọ bei</i> (the ant)	<i>isọnọ ma</i> (the ants)
<i>ere araụ ma</i> (the wife)	<i>ere abụ ma</i> ¹¹ (the wives)
<i>iyọrọ tọbọu ma</i> (the girl)	<i>iyọrọ ọwọu ma</i> (the girls)
<i>yin ma</i> (the mother)	<i>yin abụ ma</i> (the mothers)
<i>yaforo ma</i> (the mother-in-law)	<i>yaforo abụ ma</i> (the mothers-in-law)
<i>abịraụ ma</i> (the sister)	<i>abịraụ oni ma/abịraụ abụ ma</i> (the sisters)

zaraṃ ma (the(female) friend)

fẹrẹ mị (the plate)

ẹrẹ mị (the name)

aga mị (the behaviour)

buru mị (the yam)

kịmị bọ mị (neuter) (the person)

ololo mị (the bottle)

zaraṃ abụ ma (the (female) friends)

fẹrẹ ma (the plates)

ẹrẹ ma (the names)

aga ma (the behaviours)

buru ma (the yams)

kịmị abụ ma (the people)

ololo ma (the bottles)

(iii) **Certain demonstratives** e.g.

Singular

bei kịmị bei (this man)

bei kụwị bei (this star)

bei obori bei (this goat)

bei isọnọ bei (this ant)

ma iyọrọ tọbọu ma (this girl)

ma yin ma (this mother)

ma ere araṃ ma (this wife)

mị fẹrẹ mị (this plate)

mị aga mị (this behaviour)

mị buru mị (this yam)

u bei kịmị bei (that man)

u bei kụwị bei (that star)

u bei obori bei (that goat)

u bei isọnọ bei (that ant)

u ma iyọrọ tọbọu ma (that girl)

u ma yin araṃ ma (that mother)

Plural

ma akịmị ma (these men)

ma akụwị ma (these stars)

ma obori ma (these goats)

ma isọnọ ma (these ants)

ma iyọrọ ọwọu ma (these girls)

ma ayin abụ ma (these mothers)

ma ere abụ ma (these wives)

ma afẹrẹ ma (these plates)

ma aga ma (these behaviours)

ma aburu ma (these yams)

u ma akịmị ma (those men)

u ma akụwị ma (those stars)

u ma obori ma (those goats)

u ma isọnọ ma (those ants)

u ma iyọrọ ọwọu ma (those girls)

u ma ayin abụ ma (those mothers)

u ma ere arau ma (that wife/woman)

u ma ere abu ma (those wives/women)

u mi fere mi (that plate)

u ma afe re ma (those plates)

u mi aga mi (that behaviour)

u ma aga ma (those behaviours)

u mi buru mi (that yam)

u ma aburu ma (those yams)

(iv) **The affix *a* plurality marker:**

In Izon, especially in the Arogbo-Izon dialect, “a” is usually prefixed to a singular consonant-initial noun when it is preceded by the qualifying forms of the numerals two to twenty-nine¹² e.g.

ma akimi (two men)

tara awari (three houses)

nin aburu (four yams)

soron akasi (five chairs)

sidiyo afun (six books)

sonoma adau (seven fathers)

ninin azuru (eight rooms)

isena¹³ fere (nine plates)

oi akuwi (ten stars)

oi ma azei fini (twelve husbands)

oi tara ayabi fini (thirteen uncles)

oi nin atin fini (fourteen sticks/trees)

oi soron azarau fini¹⁴ (fifteen friends)

oi sidiyo abide fini (sixteen cloths/
dresses)

oi sonoma atibi fini (seventeen heads)

oi ninin abuwofini (eighteen legs)

oi isena kurai fini (nineteen years)

si anini (twenty noses)

si ma aduhin fini (twenty-two nights)

si tara abele fini (twenty-three pots)

si nin abousei fini (twenty-four lions)

si soron abai fini (twenty-five days)

si sidiyo adiriaberi fini (twenty-six leaves)

si soron atoru fini (twenty-seven
eyes)

si ninin aduweji fini (twenty-eight corpses)

si isena kiri fini (twenty-nine
times)

Sometimes, a singular vowel-initial noun, which does not begin with the letter “a” may take the “a” plurality marker as a prefix when such a noun is preceded by the qualifying forms of the numerals two to twenty-nine e.g.

<i>sorɔn aidi</i> (five fishes)	<i>sidiyo aidou</i> (six breasts)
<i>oi aobori</i> (ten goats)	<i>oi nin aɔnana fɪnɪ</i> (fourteen sheep(s))
<i>oi sorɔn auku fɪnɪ</i> (fifteen lice)	<i>si aɛkpɔrɔ</i> (twenty shoes)
<i>si sidiyo aebe fɪnɪ</i> (twenty-six pots)	<i>si nininɛn augo fɪnɪ</i> (twenty-eight eagles)

But when a singular vowel-initial noun begins with letter “a”, the “a” plurality marker is usually elided when the noun is preceded by the qualifying forms of the numerals two to twenty-nine e.g.

<i>ma aga</i> (two behaviours)	<i>sorɔn adɪ</i> (five faces)
<i>oi ama</i> (ten towns)	<i>si aru</i> (twenty canoes)
<i>si sorɔn aru fɪnɪ</i> (twenty-five shirts)	<i>si sɔnɔma atuta fɪnɪ</i> (twenty-seven onions)

It should, however, be noted that from *suwei* (thirty) through *suwei isɛn fɪnɪ* (thirty-nine), the “a” plurality marker is usually dropped while the qualifying forms of the numeral occur after the noun¹⁵ which may begin with a consonant or a vowel e.g.

<i>kɪmɪ suwei</i> (thirty men)	<i>aru suwei kɛnɪ fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-one shirts)
<i>zei suwei mamɔn fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-two husbands)	<i>ere suwei taru fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-three wives)
<i>kɔraɪ suwei nin fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-four years)	<i>isɔnɔ suwei sorɔn fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-five ants)
<i>zuru suwei sidiyo fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-six rooms)	<i>ɔgumɔ suwei sɔnɔma fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-seven frogs)
<i>wari suwei nininɛn fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-eight houses)	<i>abirei suwei isɛn fɪnɪ</i> (thirty-nine brothers)

But from *mesi* (forty) upwards, the “a” becomes prefixed to the numeral and both the prefix “a” and the noun, whether consonant-initial or vowel-initial, precede the qualifying forms of the numeral e.g.

kuraj amesi (forty years)

ogigan amesi sɔrɔn fɪnɪ (forty-five doors)

zuru amesi oi fɪnɪ (fifty rooms)

kɪmɪ atara asi (sixty men)

ɔwɔɔ atara asi mamun fɪnɪ (sixty-two children)

kɔwɪ atara asi oi fɪnɪ (seventy stars)

ere anin asi (eighty wives)

bɪra anin asi taru fɪnɪ (eighty-three hands)

kasɪ anin asi oi fɪnɪ (ninety chairs)

ɔtɔlɔ asɔrɔn asi (one hundred flies)

kiri asɔrɔn asi oi fɪnɪ (one hundred and ten times)

obori asidiyo asi (one hundred and twenty goats)

tɪbɪ asonoma asi (one hundred and forty heads)

duhin aninɛn asi (one hundred and sixty nights)

zei aoi asi (two hundred husbands)

fun ama ɔdɛ (eight hundred books)

aru atara ɔdɛ (one thousand and two hundred canoes)

buru asɔrɔn ɔdɛ (two thousand yams)

ololo aoi ɔdɛ (four thousand bottles)

oko aoi sɔrɔn ɔdɛ fɪnɪ (six thousand cups)

bɛlɛ asi ɔdɛ (eight thousand pots)

zaraɔ asi nin ɔdɛ fɪnɪ (nine thousand and six hundred friends)

ẹkpuru asi sọron ọdẹ ffini (ten thousand shoes)

yabi asuwei ma ọdẹ ffini (twelve thousand and eight hundred uncles)

ẹrẹ asuwei nininẹn ọdẹ ffini (fifteen thousand and two hundred names)

However, when the qualifying forms of the numeral begin with *ọdẹ*, (that is, multiples of four hundred), the “a” plurality marker may be prefixed to the second element of the qualifying numeral e.g.

wari ọdẹ amesi (sixteen thousand houses)

ẹkpuru ọdẹ amesi taru ffini (seventeen thousand and two hundred shoes)

kasị ọdẹ amesi sọron ffini (eighteen thousand chairs)

iye ọdẹ amesi oi ffini (twenty thousand things)

aru ọdẹ amesi oi mamun ffini (twenty thousand and eight hundred canoes)

aru ọdẹ atara si (twenty four thousand shirts)

duhin ọdẹ atara si oi sọron ffini (thirty thousand nights)

pouye ọdẹ anin asi (thirty-two thousand stones/rocks)

ofoni ọdẹ anin asi isen ffini (thirty-five thousand and six hundred hens/ cocks)

oporopo ọdẹ asọron asi (forty thousand pigs)

ere ọdẹ asọron asi oi kenị ffini (forty-four thousand and eight hundred wives)

ẹrẹ ọdẹ asidiyo asi (forty-eight thousand names)

kana ọdẹ asidiyo asi sọron ffini (fifty thousand cages)

Note also:

kenị buru igbedi (one million yams)

ma azuru igbedi (two million rooms)

tara awari igbedi (three million houses)

sidiyo akasị igbedi (six million chairs)

oi akuwị igbedi (ten million stars)

si adiriaberi igbedi (twenty million leaves)

kẹnị duhin opu igbedi (one billion nights)

ma aduhin opu igbedi (two billion nights)

nin atin opu igbedi (four billion sticks/trees)

sonoma abide opu igbedi (seven billion cloths/dresses)

oi afun opu igbedi (ten billion books)

si azei opu igbedi (twenty billion husbands)

The “a” plurality marker may also be prefixed to a singular noun, whether consonant-initial or vowel-initial, co-occurring with a prenominal qualifier which may be a quantifier, a demonstrative, a possessive or an adjective¹⁶ e.g.

(a) Quantifiers

zuwa awari (some houses)

zuwa aekpuru (some shoes)

zuwa afun (some books)

zuwa aobori (some goats)

buhin akimi (many men)

buhin aidi (many fishes)

buhin akasi (many chairs)

buhin aidou (many breasts)

tara azei (three husbands)

nin aisono (four ants)

soron ayabi (five uncles)

oi aotolo (ten flies)

(b) Demonstratives

ma aburu ma (three yams)

u ma aburu ma (these yams)

ma aidi ma (these fishes)

u ma aidi ma (those fishes)

ma abira ma (these hands)

u ma abira ma (those hands)

ma atoru ma (these eyes)

u ma atoru ma (those eyes)

ma aekpuru ma (these shoes)

u ma aekpuru ma (those shoes)

(c) Possessives

eni awari (my houses)

eni aidou (my breasts)

<i>inị azuru</i> (your rooms)	<i>inị aobori</i> (your goats)
<i>unị akasị</i> (his chairs)	<i>unị aogigan</i> (his doors)
<i>anị abịra</i> (her hands)	<i>anị aofini</i> (her fowls)
<i>wonị abịde</i> (our cloths/dresses)	<i>wonị aonana</i> (our sheeps)
<i>onị</i> ¹⁷ <i>akurai</i> (your years)	<i>onị aidi</i> (your fishes)
<i>onị afun</i> (the books)	<i>onị aukụ</i> (their private parts)

(d) Adjectives

<i>uku atin</i> (heavy sticks)	<i>lẹlụ aukụ</i> (dirty private parts)
<i>dubulu akimị</i> (plump men)	<i>pinyon pinyon aidou</i> (pointed breasts)
<i>ikị abịde</i> (stained cloths/dresses)	<i>ebi aidi</i> (good fishes)
<i>dahain azei</i> (tall husbands)	<i>sei aere</i> (bad wives)
<i>buru aburu</i> (rotten yams)	<i>bira suwo aebe</i> (cheap pots)
<i>pina akasị</i> (white chairs)	<i>wowo adiriaberi</i> (red leaves)

The “a” plurality marker may also be prefixed to a consonant-initial plural noun co-occurring with a prenominal qualifier e.g.

<i>buhin adaụ abụ</i> (many fathers)	<i>zuwa azowei abụ</i> (some friends)
<i>ma akimị abụ ma</i> (these people)	<i>u ma atinimọ abụ ma</i> (those teachers)
<i>enị adaụ abụ</i> (my fathers)	<i>wonị ayin abụ</i> (our mothers)
<i>ebi azei abụ</i> (good husbands)	<i>sei abuna abụ</i> (bad relations)

But when the plural noun co-occurring with the prenominal qualifier is vowel-initial, the “a” plurality marker becomes elided e.g.

<i>sei ere abụ</i> (bad wives)	<i>ebi iyoro abụ</i> (good women)
<i>buhin owou</i> (many children)	<i>zuwa owei abụ</i> (some men)
<i>wonị ere abụ</i> (our wives)	<i>dahain owei owou</i> (tall boys)

Thus, singular-plural distinction processes in Izon are different from those in English where, apart from the “-s” suffix which most English nouns employ to indicate plurality, some other singular-plural distinction techniques are employed.¹⁸ Since the plural formation processes in Izon are different from those in English, and since many Izon-English bilinguals are aware of the fact that most English nouns show plurality through the “-s” suffix, some Izon-English bilinguals¹⁹ have developed the habit of pluralizing all English nouns, (including those that do not indicate plurality through the “-s” suffix), by adding “-s” to the singular form of the noun e.g.

Singular	Plural
foot	foots
tooth	tooths
sheep	sheeps
leaf	leafs
behaviour	behaviours
dress	dresses
information	informations

This is reflected in the following sentences:

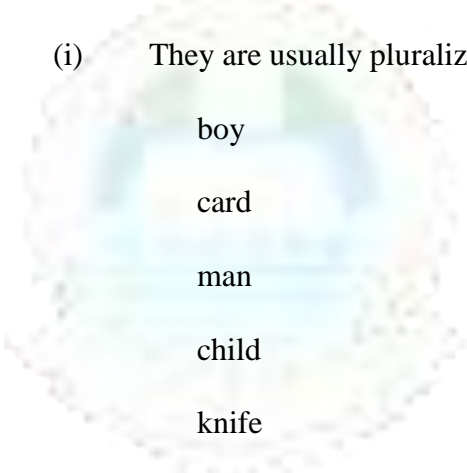
- (i) The *foots* of the dead person are rubbed with this ise.
- (ii) At this evil forest, there are several skulls and *tooths* of dead people who are not clean.
- (iii) We don't kill *sheeps* during amofoin. We only kill dogs and fowls.
- (iv) Some *behaviours* are not acceptable among the IZONS. For instant, it is wrong for married women to have affairs with other men.
- (v) Not everybody know the secret of Egbesu. Only few people, the nine Okparans, know the secret of Egbesu. They have all the *informations* about Egbesu.

- (vi) They usually pluck seven *leafs* from each one of the seven trees and they should not allow the *leafs* to touch ground if they want the medicine to be effective.
- (vii) The IZONS have many types of *dressses* for both men and women: amayanabọ, sutu, bẹde egburu and many others.

4.2.1.4 Pluralization of Certain Non-count Nouns

Nouns in English may be classified as “count nouns” or “non-count nouns” on the basis of whether they make a distinction between singular and plural or not. The nouns which show this distinction are called “count nouns”, while those that are unable to do this are called “non-count nouns”. Count nouns are, according to Huddleston (1984), usually distinguished from non-count nouns through the following syntactic features:

- (i) They are usually pluralized e.g.



boy	boys
card	cards
man	men
child	children
knife	knives
orange	oranges

- (ii) They are preceded in the singular by the indefinite article *a/ an* e.g.

<i>a</i> boy	<i>a</i> card
<i>a</i> man	<i>a</i> child
<i>a</i> knife	<i>an</i> orange

- (iii) They may be preceded in the singular by the quantifier *another* e.g.

<i>another</i> boy	<i>another</i> card
<i>another</i> man	<i>another</i> child
<i>another</i> knife	<i>another</i> orange

Despite these distinctive features exhibited by count nouns, many Izon-English bilinguals²⁰ do use such non-count nouns as “behavior”, “information”, “hair”²¹ and “dress”²² in the same way they use count nouns e.g.

- (i) These *behaviours* are not acceptable among the Izons.
- (ii) Only few people, the nine Okparans, know the secret of Egbesu. They have all the *informations* about Egbesu.
- (iii) As a form of punishment, the *kulikuliweis* are not allowed to comb their *hairs*.
- (iv) The Izons have many types of *dresses* for both men and women: *amayanabo*, *sutu*, *bide egburu* and many others.

The treatment of such non-count nouns as “behavior”, “information”, “hair” and “dress” as count nouns in the English of Izon-English bilinguals can be traced to the Izon language which permits the pluralization of these nouns e.g.

- (i) Ma *aga* ma Izon abu kon ghan mini ya. (These *behaviours* are not acceptable among the Izons.)
- (ii) Gosi akimi ni isena okparan abu ma bubou ke Egbesu mi o tu nimi weri mini. Oni ke a o *egberi*²³ ma se nana weri mini. (Only few people, the nine Okparans, know the secret of Egbesu. They have all the *informations* about Egbesu).
- (iii) Ko o pasumo zu duwo ni, kulikuliwei oni ma o mo pebi oni *adume* ma kpo zala gha. (As a form of punishment, the *kulikuliweis* are not allowed to comb their *hairs*.)
- (iv) Buhin *abide* akuna ke Izon abu nana ko owei abu mo iyoro abu mo se piri weri mini ye: *amayanabo*, *sutu*, *bide egburu* bai okibe ya kpo du fa ke emi. (The Izons have many types of *dresses* for both men and women: *amayanabo*, *sutu*, *bide egburu* and many others.)

In sentence (i), the pluralization of *aga* (behaviour) has been indicated through demonstrative agreement where the plural demonstrative *ma* (these) is used with *aga* (behaviours) thereby giving it a sense of plurality. In sentence (ii), there is (definite) article agreement in *egberi ma se* (all the informations) where the plural form of the definite article *ma* (the) is used instead of the singular form *mi*. In sentences (iii) and (iv), the pluralization of *dume* (hair) and *bide* (dress) is reflected through the prefixation of the *a* plurality marker thereby creating the plural forms *adume* (hairs) and *abide* (dresses) respectively.

Thus, the pluralization of such non-count English nouns as “behaviour”, “information”, “hair” and “dress” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is traceable to the influence of the Izon language where these nouns are actually classified and treated as count nouns.

4.2.1.5 Tense and Aspect

In Izon, the indication of tense and aspect is a function of the verb and certain tense markers which usually occur in post-verbal positions in the structure of an Izon verb phrase. Through the co-occurrence of the verb with the tense markers, distinctions involving tense and aspect in Izon are made to show whether the time of the action (or state) expressed by the verb is present (present tense) or past (past tense) or whether the action (or state) is continuing (progressive aspect) or completed (perfective aspect). These tense markers, which combine with the verb to reflect tense and aspect especially in the Arogbo-Izon dialect, include *miji*, *tei*, *teke* and *timi*.

(a) **Miji**

Miji usually combines with the verb to indicate that the action expressed by the verb, which is often in the present, is still continuing (present progressive) e.g.

- (i) *E mu miji.* (I am going.)
- (ii) *U bunu miji.* (He is sleeping.)

- (iii) Ọnị sẹị mịnị. (They are dancing.)
- (iv) Wọ fị mịnị. (We are eating.)
- (v) Ọ toi mịnị. (You are playing.)
- (vi) I dẹrị mịnị. (You are laughing.)
- (vii) A desi mịnị. (She is jumping.)

However, *mịnị* may also be used to express futurity when the verb with which it co-occurs undergoes changes in terms of tone and vowel length e.g.

- (i) Ẹ muu mịnị. (I will go.)
- (ii) U bụnụu mịnị. (He will sleep.)
- (iii) Ọnị sẹịị mịnị. (They will dance.)
- (iv) Wọ fịị mịnị. (We will eat.)
- (v) Ọ toiị mịnị. (You will play.)
- (vi) I dẹrịị mịnị. (You will laugh.)
- (vii) A desii mịnị. (She will jump.)

In sentences (i) – (vii) above, each of the verbs *muu*, *bụnụu*, *sẹịị*, *fịị*, *toiị*, *dẹrịị* and *desii* co-occurring with *mịnị* takes the high tone and lengthens the final vowel so as to indicate futurity.

(b) Tẹị

Tẹị combines with the verb to express the fact that the action expressed by the verb, which is usually in the present, is completed (present perfective) e.g.

- (i) Ẹ mu tẹị. (I have gone.)
- (ii) U bụnụ tẹị. (He has slept.)
- (iii) Ọnị sẹị tẹị. (They have danced.)
- (iv) Wọ fị tẹị. (We have eaten.)
- (v) Ọ toi tẹị. (You have played.)

(vi) I *dẹrị tẹj*. (You have laughed.)

(vii) A *desi tẹj*. (She has jumped.)

Tẹj may also combine with the verb to express a wish especially when the vowel in the verb is lengthened and the high tone used e.g.

(i) E *muu tẹj*. (I want to go.)

(ii) U *bunuu tẹj*. (He wants to sleep.)

(iii) Oni *sẹjị tẹj*. (They want to dance.)

(iv) Wọ *fịj tẹj*. (We want to eat.)

(v) O *toii tẹj*. (You want to play.)

(vi) I *dẹrịj tẹj*. (You want to laugh.)

(vii) A *desii tẹj*. (She wants to jump.)

(c) **Tẹkẹ**

Tẹkẹ often combines with the verb to indicate that the action expressed by the verb had been completed before the occurrence of another (past perfective) e.g.

(i) E *mu tẹkẹ i ẹ tịn*. (I had gone before you called me.)

(ii) U *bunụ tẹkẹ ẹ bo*. (He had slept before I came.)

(iii) Oni *sou tẹkẹ u bo sẹj*. (They had left before he came to dance.)

(iv) Wọ *fịyai fị tẹkẹ a raịsị ma kọ bo*. (We had eaten food before she brought the rice.)

(v) Oni *toi tẹkẹ ẹ mu iyọ mị la*. (They had played before I got to the place.)

(vi) I *dẹrị sin tẹkẹ i pa mịnị iye nimi*. (You had already laughed before you knew what was happening.)

(vii) A ma akiri *desi tẹkẹ a koro*. (She had jumped twice before she fell.)

Tẹkẹ may also combine with the verb to express futurity (future perfect) e.g.

(i) E *mu tẹkẹ i boo mịnị*. (I will have gone before you (will) come.)

(d) Timi

Timi usually combines with the verb to indicate that the actions expressed by the verb happened in the past. Thus, the action may be in the simple past e.g.

- (i) Ẹ toì mị *mu timi*. (I went to the occasion.)
- (ii) U bọlụ *lẹ timi*. (He played football.)
- (iii) A *dọn timi*. (She was ill.)

It may also be in the past progressive e.g.

- (i) U bọlụ *lẹ timi* kiri kẹ ẹ bo ye. (He was playing football when I came.)
- (ii) Wọ fíyáí *fí timi* kiri kẹ osuwo bei koro ye. (We were eating food when it rained.)
- (iii) Ẹ *mu kẹ mu timi* nị i ẹ tịn. (I was going when you called me.)

Timi may also combine with *tẹkẹ* to reflect past perfective progressive action e.g.

- (i) U bọlụ *lẹ timi tẹkẹ* ọnị i zi. (He had been playing football before you were born.)
- (ii) Tọbọy bei kịmị abụ *ba timi tẹkẹ* epele abụ bo. (The boy had been killing people before the police came.)

Note also the use of *timi* in the following sentences:

- (i) Wọ obori bei *baa timi* i bo gha ẹbẹ. (We would have killed the goat if you had not come.)
- (ii) Ẹ *muu timi*. (I would have gone.)

The verb in Izon may, in some cases, function alone, (without *timi*), to indicate pastness e.g.

- (i) Ẹ *mu*. (I went.)
- (ii) U *bunụ*. (He slept.)
- (iii) Ọnị *sẹj*. (They danced.)

- (iv) Wọ *fī*. (We ate.)
- (v) Ọ *toi*. (You played.)
- (vi) I *dẹrị*. (You laughed.)
- (vii) A *desi*. (She jumped.)

Similarly, the verb may indicate present action, (which often expresses a wish), without co-occurring with *tẹi*. This is usually done through vowel lengthening and the use of the high tone in the verb e.g.

- (i) Ẹ *muu*. (I want to go.)
- (ii) U *bunuu*. (He wants to sleep.)
- (iii) Wọ ọbọu *nanaa*. (We want to marry the girl.)
- (iv) A fiyai *fii*. (She wants to eat food.)
- (v) Ọni *sẹii*. (They want to dance.)

Note also the following sentences where the verb is in the simple present:

- (i) Ẹ *bo* emi. (I come.)
- (ii) Anị *la* emi. (It is enough.)
- (iii) Wọ a *tari* emi. (We love her.)

It is also necessary to state that some Izon verbs can make a distinction between simple present and simple past through tone variations. Thus, the low tone is usually used when such verbs as *bunu* ("sex" meaning "to have sexual intercourse"), *tịn* (call), *fị* (eat), *sẹlẹi* (select), *lẹ* (beat) and *dẹrị* (laugh) are used to reflect the simple past e.g.

- (i) Ẹ a *bunu*. (I *sexed* her, meaning *I had sexual intercourse with her*.)
- (ii) Ẹ u *tịn*. (I called him.)
- (iii) A *fị*. (She ate.)
- (iv) Wọ ọ *sẹlẹi*. (We selected them.)
- (v) Ọni a *lẹ*. (They beat her.)

- (vi) Ẹ *dẹrì*. (I laughed.)

But in the following sentences (commands), the verbs are uttered with a high tone to indicate that they are in the simple present:

- (i) Ẹ *bunú*. (Sex me, meaning “Have sexual intercourse with me.”)
(ii) Ẹ *tín*. (Call me.)
(iii) A *fì*. (Eat it.)
(iv) Ọ *sẹlẹjì*. (Select them.)
(v) A *lẹ*. (Beat her.)
(vi) U *dẹrì*. (Laugh (at) him.)

From the analysis made above, it is clear that Izon relies largely on tone, vowel lengthening and certain tense markers to reflect distinctions in tense and aspect. This is clearly different from what obtains in English where certain entirely different techniques are employed to reflect the distinctions occurring between present tense and past tense and between the progressive and perfective aspects.²⁴ This therefore causes some departures in the way Izon-English bilinguals use tense and aspect in their English.

One interesting tense/aspect-induced departure in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is the formation of the past forms of irregular verbs through the addition of the “-ed” past tense morpheme. There is, in this case, the faulty over-generalization of the “-ed” past tense formation rule, which is applicable to only regular verbs, to cover all English verbs including the irregular verbs. This is reflected in the inflection of “split” and “grind” in the following sentences:

- i. Now that the former defunct Ilaje/Ese-Odo Local Government have been *split* into two, I am sure that government will be aware of our problems since it is now close to us. (Now that the former Ilaje/Ese-Odo Local

Government has been *split* into two, I am sure that government will be aware of our problems since it is now closer to us.)

- ii. This traditional thing, *isele*, is *grinded* on wood with sand. (This traditional thing, *isele*, is *ground* on wood with sand.)

More interesting is the treatment of “fell” (the past tense of “fall”) as the base form of the verb e.g.

- i. The crown of Agadagba must not *fell*. If it *fells*, there will be problem in the community. (The crown of the Agadagba must not *fall*. If it *falls*, there will be problem in the community.)

This is, perhaps, caused by the currency of the expression “to fell trees”, which is often used among timber dealers to mean “to cut down trees” where “fell” is treated as the base form of the verb.

Another departure arising from the differences between Izon and English in terms of tense and aspect is the double marking of tense (past) for both the auxiliary verb and the main verb especially in wh-questions e.g.

- i. That Obasanjo destroyed Odi that year was ridiculous. When *did* he *became* the president? Was it not in 1999? (That Obasanjo destroyed Odi that year was ridiculous. When *did* he *become* the president? Was it not in 1999?)
- ii. How *did* the Tarabiritoru *got* the appointment? (How *did* the Tarabiritoru *get* the appointment?)

Some departures have also been noticed in the English of Izon-English bilinguals especially in sentences involving both the perfective aspect and the progressive aspect e.g.

- i. The *kūlīkūlī*weis *have being walking* round the town since morning. (The *kūlīkūlī*weis *have been walking* round the town since morning.)

This sentence has violated an important PS rule (phrase structure rule). Ordinarily, the perfective aspect ought to have been re-written as “have-en”. But, it has been wrongly re-written in this sentence as “have-ing” probably because of the occurrence of “walking” in the verb phrase. This is, therefore, an error.

4.2.1.6 Stative Verbs

English verbs may be classified on the basis of whether they denote action (dynamic verbs) or mark a state (stative verbs). The difference between these classes of verbs is that, while dynamic verbs can occur in the “-ing” form, stative verbs cannot²⁵ e.g.

- (i) Nimi is singing (dynamic).
- (ii) Mebi and Pọwẹi are dancing (dynamic).
- (iii) I am running (dynamic).
- (iv) I can see you (stative).
- (v) She can hear you (stative).

Thus, according to Akere (2001:79), it is wrong to say:

- (i) I am seeing you.
- (ii) We are not hearing you.

This is because “see” and “hear” are stative verbs which should not, therefore, occur in the “-ing” form.

However, many Izon-English bilinguals, including university graduates, do use such stative verbs as “see” and “hear” with “-ing” because these stative English verbs are dynamic in Izon since they can occur with *mịnị*, which is the Izon equivalent of the English “-ing”:

- (i) E i ẹrị mịnị. (I am seeing you.)
- (ii) A i na mịnị. (She is hearing you.)
- (iii) Qnị a ẹrị mịnị. (They are seeing her.)
- (iv) Wọ a na mịnị. (We are hearing her.)

In Izon, there is a difference between *E i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I am seeing you) and *E nìmi i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I can see you). While *E nìmi i ẹrẹ mìnì* implies that “I am not blind and can, therefore, see you”, *E i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I am seeing you) means “I am seeing (looking at) you at the moment.” Thus, *E i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I am seeing you) is not synonymous with *E nìmi i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I can see you) because they do not express the same meaning in Izon. The same is applicable to *E i na mìnì* (I am hearing you) meaning “I am hearing what you are saying at the moment” and *E nìmi i na mìnì* (I can hear you) meaning “I am not deaf and can, therefore, hear what you are saying.”

It is, therefore, inappropriate for an Izon speaker to say *E nìmi i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I can see you) or *E nìmi i na mìnì* (I can hear you) when he/she actually means to say *E i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I am seeing you) or *E i na mìnì* (I am hearing you). Thus, despite the fact that “see” and “hear” are stative verbs in English, Izon-English bilinguals use them as dynamic verbs because their use as stative verbs in English cannot reflect the meaning they are capable of expressing as dynamic verbs in Izon. This is what has been reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

4.2.1.7 Relative Pronouns

In Izon, there is no distinction between the uses of “who” and “which” as it is in English. While English uses “who” for humans and “which” for non-humans, Izon has only one relative pronoun *nì* and this is used for all purposes whether human or non-human e.g.

- (i) Iyọrọ araṣ ma *nì* ẹ gba timi araṣ ma bo tẹi. (The woman whom I was talking about has come.)
- (ii) Agadagba bei *nì* Arogbo pẹrẹ bei kẹ Ibe sẹ di mìnì wei. (The Agadagba, who is the king of Arogbo, is the one overseeing the whole kingdom.)
- (iii) Bo kasì mị *nì* i sei mọ ye mị gbẹ. (Come and pay (for) the chair which you spoilt.)

- (iv) Qnana bei *nī* agbogbo mī sūwọ wei bei wọ mọ kaka tẹj. (We have tied the sheep which entered the garden.)

The relative pronoun *nī* has been used for *iyorọ arau ma* (the woman) and *Agadagba bei* (the Agadagba) who are human beings, and for *kasī mī* (the chair) and *qnana bei* (the sheep) which are non-human.

The non-distinction of the uses of “who” and “which” in Izon has resulted in the following Izon-induced departures in the English of Izon-English bilinguals:

- (a) Some Izon-English bilinguals, especially those with little or no exposure to good English usage, use “which” where “who” would have been preferred in native English e.g.

- (i) The Agadagba *which* is responsible for administrating the kingdom have chiefs under him. (The Agadagba, *who* is responsible for administering the kingdom, has chiefs under him.)

- (ii) The girl *which* I was talking about have come. (The girl *whom* I was talking about has come.)

- (b) Even among the educated Izon-English bilinguals who, perhaps because of their level of education and exposure, are able to distinguish between “who” and “which” in English, there is confusion when they are told to choose between “who” and “whom” as relative pronouns. This confusion arises from their inability to master one basic rule in English: the case of the relative pronoun depends on its function in the clause in which it occurs. Thus, “who” is used when it functions as the subject of the clause, while “whom” occurs when it functions as the object. Since many Izon-English bilinguals are unaware of this rule, they make such sentences as:

- (i) This is the boy *who* you are calling.
- (ii) The girl *who* I was talking about has come.
- (iii) Munbọ is the man *whom*, they allege, is killing goats during amafọin.

However, the following versions of the sentences may be preferred in native English:

- (i) This is the boy *whom* you are calling.
- (ii) The girl *whom* I was talking about has come.
- (iii) Munbọ is the man *who*, they allege, is killing goats during amafoin.

This is so because in (i), “whom” functions as the object of the verb “are calling” while it functions as the object of the verb “was talking” in (ii). In (iii), “who” functions as the subject of the verb “is killing”.

4.2.1.8 Use of Prepositions

Izon-English bilinguals do manifest some Izon influences in their use of prepositions in English. One of these Izon influences has to do with their preference for certain prepositions in some syntactic environments where, in British English, for example, some other prepositions are preferred. This is reflected in the following sentences where such verbs as “conductive”, “congratulate” and “result” occur:

- (i). I may say that fishing is the major occupation of the Izons because their environment is *conductive for* fishing activities. (I may say that fishing is the major occupation of the Izons because their environment is *conductive to* fishing activities.)
- (ii) I think the whole community has to *congratulate* the Head of State *for* the creation of Ese-Odo Local Government Area. (I think the whole community has to *congratulate* the Head of State *on* the creation of Ese-Odo Local Government Area.)
- (iii) Failure to do what Kpokpotin command will *result to* calamity. (Failure to do what Kpokpotin commands will *result in* calamity.)

The influences manifested in sentences (i) – (iii) above are traceable to the fact that these verbs (or their equivalents) in Izon usually co-occur with the prepositions which the

Izon-English bilinguals use along with them in their English. “Conducive”, for example, is equivalent to *ebi* (good) in Izon. Since *ebi* usually takes the preposition *piri* (for) in Izon, it is reasonable for Izon-English bilinguals to reflect the Izon collocation *ebi piri* (good for) which is interpreted as the equivalent of “conducive for”.

Similarly, “congratulate” is equivalent to *kule* (greet) or *sin* (praise) in Izon. Thus, the most appropriate preposition that goes with “congratulate” in this Izon context of *kule* or *sin* is *piri* (for). This perhaps explains why we have “congratulate for” and not “congratulate on” in sentence (ii) above.

In sentence (iii), there is the co-occurrence of “result” with “to” instead of “in”. This reflects the preference for “to” to “in” in similar contexts in the Izon language e.g.

- (i) Anị pamọọ minị iye wọ mọ nimi wẹrị minị. (We know what it will result to.)
- (ii) Anị ipamọọ minị iyọ bei wọ nimi wẹrị minị ye. (Where it will lead to, we know.)

Apart from the substitution of certain prepositions for others, there is also the treatment of some non-prepositional verbs as prepositional verbs in the English of Izon-English bilinguals e.g.

- (i) The Agadagba and his chiefs will sit, put their heads together and *discuss about* the progress of the whole community. (The Agadagba and his chiefs will sit, put their heads together and *discuss* the progress of the whole community.)
- (ii) One have to *emphasize on* the fact that these songs, *dụwẹi anume*, are not ordinarily singed in the community. (One has to *emphasize* the fact that these songs, *dụwẹi anume*, are not ordinarily sung in the community).
- (iii) The point I am *stressing on* is that PDP will win the chairmanship seat in Ese-Odo. (The point I am *stressing* is that PDP will win the chairmanship seat in Ese-Odo.)

These verbs are treated as prepositional verbs in the English of Izon-English bilinguals probably because of the fact that they occur with prepositions in the Izon language. “Discuss”, for example, usually takes the preposition “about” / “on” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals perhaps because its equivalent in the Izon language, *fīye* (interpreted in this context as “discuss”), takes the preposition *lei mọ* (on/about). Thus, “discuss on/about” may be a reflection of the Izon prepositional verb *fīye lei mọ* in the English of Izon-English bilinguals. Similarly, “emphasize” or “stress”, often used as a prepositional verb in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, perhaps reflects the Izon verb *palimọ* (meaning, “emphasize” or “stress”) which usually takes the preposition *lei mọ* which, in this context, is equivalent to “on”. This perhaps explains why “emphasize” and “stress” usually take the preposition “on” thereby making them prepositional verbs in the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

Finally, there are some prepositional verbs in English which are non-prepositional in Izon. Such verbs as *di* (look), *taɪngbị* (dispose) and *ikimu tɔwa* (buttress) are, for example, non-prepositional in Izon and, thus, they are often used as non-prepositional verbs in the English of Izon-English bilinguals. This is reflected in the following sentences:

- (i) In the Izon tradition, not everybody that dies is buried in our soil. If the person did evil, his/her body is *disposed* in the evil forest called *sei bou* in our language. (In the Izon tradition, not everybody that dies is buried in our soil. If the person did evil, his/her body is *disposed of* in the evil forest called *sei bou* in our language.)
- (ii) It is a taboo for the Agadagba to *look* the inside of the crown. (It is a taboo for the Agadagba to *look at* the inside of the crown.)
- (iii) One other point that can be used to *buttress* what Chief Okpoka has said is that Egbesu is the god of war and peace. (One other point that can be used to

buttress up what Chief Okpoka has said is that Egbesu is the god of war and peace.)

4.2.1.9 The Indefinite Article

The Izon language, unlike English, does not have an indefinite article. The only determiner in Izon which is close to the English indefinite article “a/an” in terms of function is the numeral *kẹnị* (one) as in:

- (i) *Kẹnị* ẹgẹ ẹ mọ fị tẹi. (I have eaten *one* egg.)
- (ii) *Ẹ kẹnị* obiri ẹrị mịnị. (I am seeing *one* dog.)
- (iii) *Mị* were ẹ *kẹnị* obori ẹrị timi kẹ ẹ mọ tọn kẹ. (I thought I was seeing *one* goat just now.)
- (iv) *U* zaraụ nị Eko ọ emi araụ ma abụbaị erin ọ *kẹnị* ebi arụ fẹ wẹrị mịnị. (His (female) friend, who lives in Lagos, bought *one* beautiful car yesterday.)

However, there are up to four determiners in Izon which correspond to the definite article (the) in English: *bei* (masc./sg.), *ma* (fem./sg.), *mị* (neuter/sg.) and *ma* (masc./fem./neuter/pl.) e.g.

Singular	Plural
(i) <i>tọbọu bei</i> (the (male) child)	<i>ọwọu ma</i> (the children)
(ii) <i>kịmị bei</i> (the man)	<i>kịmị ma</i> (the men)
(iii) <i>zei bei</i> (the husband)	<i>zei abụ/oni ma</i> (the husbands)
(iv) <i>obori bei</i> (the goat)	<i>obori ma</i> (the goats)
(v) <i>iyọrọ tọbọu ma</i> (the girl)	<i>iyọrọ ọwọu ma</i> (the girls)
(vi) <i>iyọrọ araụ ma</i> (the woman)	<i>iyọrọ abụ ma</i> (the women)
(vii) <i>zaraụ ma</i> (the (female) friend)	<i>zaraụ abụ ma</i> (the (female) friends)
(viii) <i>ere ma</i> (the wife)	<i>ere abụ ma</i> (the wives)
(ix) <i>fẹrẹ mị</i> (the plate)	<i>fẹrẹ ma</i> (the plates)

- (x) *kaɕi mɪ* (the chair) *kaɕi ma* (the chairs)

Since there is no indefinite article in Izon as it is in English, some Izon-English bilinguals drop the indefinite article before such determiners as “little” and “few” especially when they mean to say “a little” or “a few” e.g.

- (i) I have *few oranges*; you can have some.
 (ii) There is *little water* left in the bucket; go and have your bath.

The implication of sentence (i) is that “there are enough oranges and so you can take some of them.” Similarly, what sentence (ii) implies is that “the water in the bucket is enough for you to have your bath.” To reflect these senses, especially in native English, the sentences should be restructured thus:

- (i) I have *a few oranges*; you can have some.
 (ii) There is *a little water* left in the bucket; go and have your bath.

Perhaps, Izon-English bilinguals do drop the indefinite article in the sentences cited above because of the fact that the noun phrases “few oranges” (*igiti ɔgɔn eri*) and “little water” (*kala bini zu*) do not take the indefinite article in Izon obviously because it is non-existent in Izon. This is perhaps what is reflected in their English:

- (i) Kala ɔgɔn eri ɛ mɔ nana emi; i nimi ɔ zuwa kɔn mini. (I have few oranges; you can have some.)
 (ii) Kala bini zu bini zu iye ɔ kɔ emi; wɛɾi mu biri. (There is little water left in the bucket; go and have your bath.)

4.2.1.10 Avoidance of Tag Questions

Izon-English bilinguals tend to have a preference for such questions as “You are going?” and “The wives my father is marrying are not good?”, which are usually derived from statements through tone variations, to such tag-questions as “You are going, aren’t you?” and “The wives my father is marrying are not good, are they?” This preference is,

perhaps, induced by the structure of interrogatives generally in the Izon language. As we have observed in section 4.2.1.2 of this study, statements and interrogatives in Izon often have the same structural pattern: SOV, OSV or SVO. This is illustrated in following sentences:

(a) SOV

- (i) Ebibọ/ u / bụlọ tẹi. (Ebibọ has duped him.)
S O V
- (ii) Ebibọ/ u / bụlọ tẹi? (Ebibọ has duped him?)
S O V
- (iii) E yabi / i / ẹri mịni. (My uncle is seeing you.)
S O V
- (iv) E yabi / i / ẹri mịni? (My uncle is seeing you?)
S O V

(b) OSV

- (i) Ere mị / u / nanaa mịni. (The wife, he will marry)
O S V
- (ii) Ere mị / u / nanaa mịni? (The wife, he will marry?)
O S V
- (iii) Zei bei / a / nanaa timi (wei). (The husband, she would have married (him).)
O S V
- (iv) Zei bei / a / nanaa timi (wei)? (The husband, she would have married (him)?)
O S V

(c) SVO

- (i) E dau/nana mịni/ere ma (ebi gha). (The wives my father is marrying (are not good).)
S V O
- (ii) E dau/nana mịni/ere ma (ebi gha)? (The wives my father is marrying (are not good)?)
S V O
- (iii) E/ di mịni / tọbọu bei. (The boy I am looking (at).)
S V O
- (iv) E/ di mịni / tọbọu bei? (The boy I am looking (at)?)
S V O

Perhaps, this is what is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals where there is a preference for interrogatives derived from statements through tone variations.²⁶ Since this is the predominant structure of interrogatives in Izon, Izon-English bilinguals appear to find it more comfortable to reflect this structure in their English than using the “statement + tag question” structure which, though often employed in English, is non-existent in Izon. This is reflected in the following sentences taken from the English of Izon-English bilinguals:

- (i) You want to know if the current Amananaowei of Ajapa, Chief Iginabou, is still alive?
- (ii) He will soon go mad? Because he saw the white cloth in the Egbesu shrine?
- (iii) The wives my father is marrying are not good? They are too many?
- (iv) You are going?

4.2.1.11 Response to Polar Questions

In English, the response to polar questions usually involves the repetition of the auxiliary verb occurring at the beginning of the question e.g.

- (i) Question: Do you know that there is a meeting today?

Response: Yes, I do. / No, I don't.

- (ii) Question: Will you attend it?

Response: Yes, I will / No, I won't.

However, in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, it is the main verb, and not the auxiliary verb co-occurring with it, that is usually repeated. Even where the auxiliary verb is needed in the structure of the response to indicate futurity, ability or negation, for example, it usually co-occurs with the main verb e.g.

- (i) Question: Do you know that there is a meeting today?

Response: Yes, I know. / No, I don't know.

- (ii) Question: Will you attend it?

Response: Yes, I will attend. / No, I won't attend.

This is, perhaps, a reflection of what happens in the Izon language where the verb and the tense marker(s) co-occurring with it are often repeated in response to questions generally e.g.

- (i) Question: I nimi wẹ̀rì? (You knew?)

Response: E, ẹ̀ nimi wẹ̀rì. (Yes, I knew.)

Ari ye, ẹ̀ nimi wẹ̀rì gha. (No, I didn't know.)

- (ii) Question: Ọ̀nì muu mìnì? (They will go?)

Response: E, ọ̀nì muu mìnì. (Yes, they will go.)

Ari ye, ọ̀nì mu ghan fa. (No, they won't go.)

- (iii) Question: A ẹ̀ tarì emi? (She loves me?)

Response: E, a i tarì emi. (Yes, she loves (you).)

Ari ye, a i tarì gha. (No, she doesn't love (you).)

- (iv) Question: Kùlìkùlìwei bei bụnụ tẹ̀? (The kùlìkùlìwei has slept?)

Response: E, u bụnụ tẹ̀. (Yes, he has slept.)

Ari ye, u sa bụnụ ghan. (No, he hasn't slept.)

- (v) Question: I nimi e naa mìnì? (You can hear me?)

Response: E, ẹ̀ nimi i naa mìnì. (Yes, I can hear you.)

Ari ye, ẹ̀ nimi i na ghan. (No, I can't hear you.)

Thus, it is what occurs in the Izon language that has been reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals where the auxiliary co-occurs with the main verb in response to polar questions. This is, therefore, a variation from what obtains in (native) English where it is preferred that only the auxiliary occurs.

4.2.1.12 Copying

Izon-English bilinguals also manifest Izon influences in the way they use such words as “refill”, “repeat” and “return” with “again” in the following sentences:

- (i) *Repeat* that question *again*.
- (ii) If the oil touches the ground, the Kpokpotin priest has to *refill* the bottle *again*.
- (iii) After doing that, the *kulikuliwei* will then *return* the cutlass *back* to its original position *again*.

This happens, perhaps, because of the occurrence of similar structures in the Izon language. For example, it is possible in Izon to duplicate a word for the purpose of emphasis e.g.

- (i) *Saramo saramo* bo. (Quickly (quickly) come).
- (ii) *Pelụ pelụ* a miyen. (Meticulously (meticulously) do it.)
- (iii) *Pete Pete* fiyai ma fi. (Slowly (slowly) eat the food.)
- (iv) *Izoumo izoumo* umi iyo o pere. (Quickly (quickly) sit there.)

In sentences (i) – (iv) above, *saramo* (quickly), *pelụ* (meticulously), *pete* (slowly) and *izoumo* (quickly) have been duplicated for the purpose of emphasis.

Similarly, it is possible for a word to co-occur with another word that expresses the same (or similar) meaning for the purpose of emphasis e.g.

- (i) Bai *fiyou* umi bi bi mi *beli* bi. (*Repeat* that question *again*.)
- (ii) Pulo mi kiri gbolo sei gha, Kpokpotin kariwei bei *fiyou* a *beli* doimo ololo mi o tupa binmo min. (If the oil touches the ground, the Kpokpotin priest has to *refill* the bottle *again*.)
- (iii) U were bira miyen sin tei be, *kulikuliwei* bei *fiyou* opiya mi *belimo* mu a timi iyo o koromo min. (After doing that, the *kulikuliwei* will then *return* the cutlass *back* to its original position *again*.)

Though *fiyou* (again) and *bẹlì* (“re-” as in “repeat”, “refill” and “return”) appear to be similar in terms of meaning, they co-occur in sentences (i) – (iii) above for the purpose of emphasis.

This is, perhaps, what has been reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals where a word (or a morpheme) is made to co-occur with another performing the same syntactic function, or expressing the same meaning, in the same environment. For example, in the English sentences cited above, there is the co-occurrence of “re-” and “again” despite the fact that they perform the same function and express almost the same meaning in the context in which they are used in those sentences. This is, however, a departure from (native) English usage where there is a preference for the use of either “re-” or “again” since they are seen as similar in terms of function and meaning e.g.

- a. (i) *Repeat* that question.
- (ii) *Ask* that question *again*.
- b. (i) If the oil touches the ground, the Kpokpotin priest has to *refill* the bottle.
- (ii) If the oil touches the ground, the Kpokpotin priest has to *fill* the bottle *again*.
- c. (i) After doing that, the *kùlìkùlìwei* will then *return* the cutlass to its original position.
- (ii) After doing that, the *kùlìkùlìwei* will then *take* the cutlass *back* to its original position.

4.2.2 Tracing Syntactic Influences to the Izon Culture

In this section, the syntactic influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals are traced to the Izon culture so as to determine their appropriateness within the Izon socio-cultural context. For this reason, the syntactic influences presented in section 4.1 and analyzed in section 4.2.1. of this study are grouped as follows:

GROUP A

1. Using the base form of the verb even when the subject is in the third person singular e.g.

Text 1: Amafoin *perform* many functions in Arogbo-Izon community.

2. The occurrence of the reflexive pronoun “his self” instead of “himself” e.g.

Text 2: If Dęgbęla love *his self*, he will go.

3. The use of such masculine pronouns as “he”, “him” and “his” for animals including the female e.g.

Text 3: The dog bite *his* tail.

4. The pluralization of all nouns, including the irregular nouns, through the addition of “-s” to the singular form e.g.

Text 4: At this evil forest, there are several skulls and *tooths* of dead people who are not clean.

5. The formation of the past or past participle forms of irregular verbs through the addition of the “-ed” past tense morpheme e.g.

Text 5: This traditional thing, *isele*, is *grinded* on wood with sand.

6. The treatment of “fell” (the past tense of “fall”) as the base form of the verb e.g.

Text 6: The crown of Agadagba must not *fell*. If it *fells*, there will be problem in the community.

7. The double-making of tense (past) for both the auxiliary verb and the main verb especially in wh-questions e.g.

Text 7: That Obasanjo destroyed Odi that year was ridiculous. When *did* he *became* the president? Was it not in 1999?

8. The use of aspect especially in sentences involving both the perfective aspect and the progressive aspect e.g.

Text 8: The *kūlikūliweis* *have being walking* round the town since morning.

9. The use of “which” in contexts where “who” would have been preferred e.g.

Text 9: The Agadagba *which* is responsible for administrating the kingdom
have chiefs under him.

10. The use of “who” in contexts where “whom” would have been preferred and vice versa e.g.

Text 10: Munbọ is the man *whom*, they allege, is killing goats during amafoin.

11. Dropping the indefinite article before such determiners as “little” and “few” especially when they are used to mean “a little” and “a few” e.g.

Text 11: There is *little* water left in the bucket; go and have your bath.

12. The co-occurrence of such words as “refill”, “repeat” and “return” with “again” e.g.

Text 12: If the oil touches the ground, the kpokpotin priest has to *refill* the
bottle *again*.

GROUP B

1. The co-occurrence of possessives and demonstratives as pre-modifiers in the structure of a noun phrase e.g.

Text 13: For a European to come to *that our* late Agadagba and ask for the
secret of *this our* Egbesu, you know that something has happened
somewhere.

2. The occurrence of adjectives of quality before adjectives of colour in the structure of a noun phrase e.g.

Text 14: That *clean pure white* cloth is the symbol of Egbesu.

3. The pluralization of certain non-count nouns e.g.

Text 15: These *behaviours* are not acceptable among the Izons.

4. The use of such stative verbs as “see” and “hear” with the “-ing” morpheme e.g.

Text 16: She *is hearing* you.

5. The substitution of certain prepositions for others e.g.

Text 17: I may say that fishing is the major occupation of the Izons because their environment is *conducive for* fishing activities.

6. The treatment of some non-prepositional verbs as prepositional verbs e.g.

Text 18: The Agadagba and his chiefs will sit, put their heads together and *discuss about* the progress of the whole community.

7. Using some prepositional verbs as non-prepositional verbs e.g.

Text 19: One other point that can be used to *buttress* what Chief Okpoka has said is that Egbesu is the god of war and peace.

8. Showing a preference for the co-occurrence of the auxiliary verb and the main verb in response to polar questions e.g.

Text 20: Question: Will you attend the meeting?

Response: Yes, I will attend.

GROUP C

1. The use of feminine pronouns to reflect the femininity of God (the Woman who created the universe) e.g.

Text 21: Tẹmẹaraṣi is what we call God.

She is the Creator of the universe.

2. The use of neuter-reflecting pronouns such as “it” and “its” for “god” e.g.

Text 22: Egbesu is the god of war. *It* is the god that leads the Izons to attack their enemies.

3. The use of “they” to refer to a caller whose identity or sex is unknown or as an honorific pronoun to show respect to an elderly person e.g.

Text 23: Somebody is calling you. *They* are calling you, can’t you hear?

4. The occurrence of the first person before the third person in the structure of a compound subject-NP e.g.

Text 24: For example, if I like the girl and want to marry her, *I and my father* will go to her parents and pay the *ikọ*.

5. The avoidance of tag questions e.g.

Text 25: You are going?

The syntactic influences presented in Group C are found to be deeply rooted in the Izon culture and are, therefore, seen as appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context. The use of feminine pronouns to refer to “God” (the Woman who created the universe), as exemplified in text 21, is, for example, traceable to the Izon belief in the femininity of God. It is believed within the Izon culture that God is a woman. This belief is often reflected by the occurrence of *araṣi* (woman) in the names the Izens give to God: *Tẹmẹaraṣi*, *Ayubaaraṣi*, *Oginearaṣi* etc. Apart from that, God is often described within the Izon cultural milieu as “a loving, caring woman who uses a breast to feed thirty children at once.” All these feminine attributes therefore attest to the belief in the femininity of God within the Izon cultural setting. Thus, the use of such feminine pronouns as “she” and “her” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is a reflection of the general belief in the Izon cultural setting that God is a woman.

Similarly, the use of such neuter pronouns as “it” and “its” for “god”, as reflected in text 22, has a deep cultural root. It is believed within the Izon culture that the femininity or masculinity of a god or deity does not have anything to do with the strength or ability of such a god or deity to save the people in the community where it is worshipped. Thus, the sex of the gods or deities in Izonland is often ignored even when it is known. This explains why the use of neuter pronouns is preferred in the English of Izon-English bilinguals when referring to a god or deity within the Izon cultural context.

There is also the use of “they” as an honorific pronoun in line with the demands of the Izon culture. This is demonstrated in text 23. “They” may be used within the Izon cultural context as a form of respect for a caller whose identity is not known or for an elderly person even when his/her identity is known. Within the Izon culture, it is demanded that the caller whose identity is unknown be respected. This is so because the caller may be an ancestor or a spirit sent by the gods to protect or save the person being called. If such a person is disrespectful, the caller (ancestor/spirit) might be restrained from assisting him or her. One of the ways of showing respect to such an unknown caller is by using “they”. Similarly, it is demanded by the Izon culture that elders be respected. Thus, it is rude to call an elderly person by name or to use the third person singular pronouns like “he” / “she” or “him” / “her” etc. for such an elderly person. Thus, to show respect to an elderly person, “they” is often used even when the identity of such a person is known. Apart from using “they” as an honorific pronoun, it is also used as a guard against the uncertainties surrounding the sex of an unknown caller. If, for example, a caller, who is a woman, is addressed as “he”, she may feel embarrassed. To avoid this, therefore, “they” is preferred within the Izon cultural context especially when the sex of the caller is unknown. This is what is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

In text 24, there is the occurrence of the first person before the third person in the structure of a compound subject-NP. This is traceable to the belief in the Izon cultural setting that one must first save oneself before one will be able to save other people. This belief is situated within an Izon folktale in which a man who was in the dilemma of crossing a wide, deep river with a lion, a goat and a yam, in a small canoe, had to determine the fate of the others. The canoe was so small that only the man, with the lion, the goat or the yam, could cross the river at once. If the man took the lion and left the goat and the yam behind, the goat would eat the yam. On the other hand, if he took the yam and left the goat and the lion

behind, the lion would devour the goat. It was even riskier for him to cross the river with more than one of these co-travellers because, if he did, the boat would capsize and he would die. However, he had to be alive before he could assist the others since the fate of the others depended on him alone. Thus, the man had to save himself first before he could save the others. The occurrence of the first person before the third person in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, as reflected in text 24, is, therefore, a reflection of this Izon folktale.

Finally, the avoidance of tag questions in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is traceable to the *igbadagha* which, in the Izon cultural setting, is a medium of communication between the living and the dead. It is believed within the Izon culture that the dead can talk directly to the living, and this is done chiefly through the *igbadagha* because it operates in consonance with the spirit of the dead person. Thus, the dead can, through the *igbadagha*, tell the living the cause of his/her death. It is relevant to mention that the *igbadagha* can only give a satisfactory answer to any question asked by the living when the question is not contradictory. If the question is contradictory in the sense that it is both positive and negative at the same time, the *igbadagha* becomes confused and will, therefore, refuse to give any answer. Thus, it is important for the *igbadaghabiwei* (the man who consults the *igbadagha*) to ask only one question, either positive or negative, at a time e.g.

You can tell us the cause of your death?

and not

You can tell us the cause of your death, can't you?

This, therefore, forms the cultural basis for the avoidance of tag questions in the English of Izon-English bilinguals as reflected in text 25.

The syntactic influences in Group C are, therefore, directly traceable to the Izon culture since each of them is rooted in one cultural belief or the other within the Izon cultural

setting. They should, therefore, be accepted as permissible local variations whose appropriateness within the Izon socio-cultural context lies on the culture of the Izon people.

The syntactic influences in Group B, unlike those in Group C, are not directly traceable to the Izon culture but they reflect the preferences that Izon-English bilinguals have for similar structures in the Izon language. They should, however, be considered acceptable within the Izon context for the following reasons:

(i) They are not ungrammatical because they do not violate any “serious” syntactic rule in English but merely reflect a departure from the preferences that native English speakers, especially British English speakers, have for some structures in English. The Izon influence reflected in text 14, for example, which involves the ordering of adjectives in the structure of the noun phrase in English, is merely a matter of preference. As Huddleston (1984) asserts, the “preferred order”, especially in native English contexts, is usually “adjectives of number preceding all other adjectives, followed by adjectives of colour which, of course, occur before adjectives of quality, and finally modifiers which have been turned from nouns to adjectives through functional shift.” Thus, if this preferred order in native English contexts is not preferred by the Izon-English bilingual who uses the English language within the Izon linguistic and cultural setting, the resultant departure should not be seen as an error but as a mere shift from the preferred order in native English contexts. What is reflected in text 14, where adjectives of quality precede adjectives of colour in the structure of a noun phrase in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, is, therefore, acceptable because it reflects the preferred order in the Izon language. Similarly, what is involved in text 16 is just a mere instance of category shift from the sub-class of stative verbs, preferred especially in British English, to that of dynamic verbs in the Izon context where such verbs as “see” and “hear” are used preferably as dynamic verbs not only because they are dynamic in Izon but also because their use as stative verbs in English cannot reflect the full range of meanings they are

capable of expressing as dynamic verbs in the Izon context. In fact, the range of meanings which the use of “see” or “hear” can express as a stative verb in the Izon context is limited. In Izon, there is a difference between *E i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I am seeing you) and *E nìmi i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I can see you). While *E nìmi i ẹrẹ mìnì* implies that “I am not blind and can, therefore, see you”, *E i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I am seeing you) means “I am seeing (looking at) you at the moment.” Thus, *E i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I am seeing you) is not synonymous with *E nìmi i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I can see you) because they do not express the same meaning in Izon. The same is applicable to *E i na mìnì* (I am hearing you) meaning “I am hearing what you are saying at the moment” and *E nìmi i na mìnì* (I can hear you) meaning “I am not deaf and can, therefore, hear what you are saying.” It is, therefore, inappropriate for an Izon speaker to say *E nìmi i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I can see you) or *E nìmi i na mìnì* (I can hear you) when he/she actually means to say *E i ẹrẹ mìnì* (I am seeing you) or *E i na mìnì* (I am hearing you). Thus, despite the fact that *see* and *hear* are stative verbs in English, Izon-English bilinguals use them as dynamic verbs because their use as stative verbs in English cannot reflect the meanings they are capable of expressing as dynamic verbs on Izon. This explains why Izon speakers have to use the verbs (*see* and *hear*) both in the stative and dynamic senses so as to differentiate the two shades of meaning they are capable of expressing in the Izon context. Thus, what is manifested in text 16 is by no means ungrammatical but merely reflects a departure from what is preferred especially in the British English context so as to satisfy the burning thirst of Izon speakers for communicative appropriateness within the Izon context. Besides, what text 20 reflects is the preferred structure in the Izon language where the verb and the tense marker(s) occurring with it are often repeated in response to questions generally. The preference for the co-occurrence of the auxiliary verb and the main verb in response to polar questions as reflected in text 20 is, therefore, perfectly grammatical since no known rule of syntax in English is violated. It is, therefore, a mere departure from the favoured form in native-English contexts where the

auxiliary alone is repeated. It should not, therefore, be condemned as an error merely because it does not conform to what obtains in native-English contexts.

(ii) Some of the Izon influences in Group B are similar to those that occur in American English which are acceptable both within and outside the American setting.²⁷ For example, in American English, there are instances of prepositional substitution which deviate from what obtains in British English e.g.

aim at (doing something)	-	British English
aim to (do something)	-	American English
fill in (an application form)	-	British English
fill out (an application form)	-	American English

Thus, what occurs in text 17 is similar to what happens in American English where similar structures have been accepted as appropriate.

Similarly, there are some instances in American English where some prepositional verbs in British English are used as non-prepositional verbs e.g.

to protest at/over/against	–	British English
to protest	–	American English
Man U plays on Sunday	–	British English
Man U plays Sunday	–	American English

This is, therefore, similar to what occurs in text 19 where a prepositional verb in British English is used in a non-prepositional context in the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

There are also some contexts in British English where certain verbs do not take a preposition, but in American English, such verbs often co-occur with a preposition in such contexts e.g.

to visit	-	British English
to visit with	-	American English

Thus, this is similar to what is reflected in text 18 where “discuss” takes the preposition “about”.

Finally, there is the pluralization of certain non-count nouns in American English (e.g. accommodation). This is similar to what is reflected in text 15.

If the departures in Group B are similar to those that occur in American English, then, they should be considered acceptable since similar structures are considered appropriate and acceptable in the American context.

(iii) The departures in Group B occur even in the English of educated Izon-English bilinguals.

For these reasons, the Izon influences reflected in the texts in Group B should, therefore, be considered acceptable especially within the Izon context.

Finally, the syntactic influences presented in Group A, (that is, those reflected in texts 1-12), are not traceable to the Izon culture but they reflect the structural patterns of the Izon language. However, they should be seen as errors that must be corrected because of their gross violation of the rules of Standard English syntax. The influences in Group A are, therefore, inappropriate and unacceptable even within the Izon socio-cultural context.

The syntax of the English of Izon-English bilinguals is a reflection of the structural patterns of Izon. Thus, the syntax of Izon has tremendous influence on the syntax of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. This syntactic influence is usually manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals through departures involving the use of agreement, tense, aspect, non-count nouns, stative verbs, prepositions, relative pronouns and the indefinite article, among others. However, while some of the resultant structures are seen as appropriate and acceptable within the Izon context and are, therefore, considered as permissible local variations, some are seen as errors that must be corrected. The syntactic influences in Group C, for example, are found to be deeply rooted in the Izon culture. Thus, they are seen as

appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context and should, therefore, be accepted as permissible local variations. Those in Group B, though not directly traceable to the Izon culture, reflect the preferences that Izon-English bilinguals have for similar structures in the Izon language. Since they do not violate any serious syntactic rule in English but merely reflect a departure from the preferences shown by some native English speakers, especially British English speakers, they, just like those in Group C, should be considered acceptable especially within the Izon context. Finally, those in Group A, despite the fact that they reflect the structural patterns of the Izon language, are seen as errors even within the Izon socio-cultural setting because of their gross violation of the rules of Standard English syntax. For example, such structures as “Amafojin perform many functions in Arogbo-Izon community”, “When did he became the president”, “The kulikuliweis have being walking round the town since morning” and “The Agadagba which is responsible for administrating the kingdom have chiefs under him” are unacceptable and, should, therefore, be considered as errors that must be corrected.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF LEXICO-SEMANTIC INFLUENCES

Indisputably, there is a strong connection between language and culture: appropriate language use is culture-dependent. Thus, it is not surprising that Izon-English bilinguals have imaginatively manipulated the English language to blend with the Izon language and culture so as to appropriately reflect the Izon socio-cultural experience. Since there is no way appropriate English usage in the Izon socio-cultural environment can be completely divorced from the Izon culture, Izon-English bilinguals have domesticated the language to reflect and accommodate the various cultural contexts that the Izon culture has given to the English words and expressions that are used for communication and interaction within the Izon socio-cultural milieu. Though this cultural influence has resulted in departures especially from native English usage and may, therefore, not be seen as appropriate to the native speakers of

English, these culturally-motivated departures in the English of Izon-English bilinguals should be seen as legitimate variants whose appropriateness is strongly founded on the fact that they are expressive of the cultural patterns of the Isons and are, therefore, in conformity with their worldview.

The lexico-semantic influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, which are analyzed in this section with reference to the influence of the Izon language and culture, are presented under the following headings:

- (i) Semantic Shift / Extension.
- (ii) Loan Words.
- (iii) Coinages.
- (iv) Idiomatic Expressions.
- (v) Proverbs.

4.3.1 Semantic Shift / Extension

One of the manifestations of the influence of the Izon language and culture in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is the restriction or extension of the meanings of some English words and expressions so as to accommodate the contexts which the Izon culture gives to them in the Izon socio-cultural environment. Thus, the meanings of various English words and expressions have, because of the need for communicative appropriateness within the Izon socio-cultural context, been forced to undergo semantic changes so as to reflect the Izon socio-cultural experience. In this section, we shall examine the cultural meanings that have been given to some English words and expressions within the Izon socio-cultural context under the following sub-headings:

- (i) Kinship Terms.
- (ii) Greetings.
- (iii) Other English Words and Expressions.

4.3.1.1 Kinship Terms

The meanings of some kinship terms have, within the Izon socio-cultural setting, been domesticated to reflect and accommodate the new contexts that the Izon culture has provided for them especially through the general brotherly feeling of Ijawness prevalent among the Izens (regardless of the state of origin), age considerations and the extended family structure within the Izon culture. These new cultural contexts created for kinship terms within the Izon socio-cultural setting are presented and analyzed as follows:

Brother.

Within the English culture, “brother” means “son of the same parents as another person.” However, the extended family structure within the Izon culture has made it possible for the meaning of “brother” (*abirei*) to be extended to cover “the son of the same parents, grandparents or great grandparents as another person.” Thus, within the Izon cultural context, “brother” may be used to refer to one’s parent’s son or to one’s male first cousin or second cousin.

Similarly, “brother” may be used within the Izon socio-cultural context to refer to “a man from one’s village, community or ethnic group especially when he is within one’s age grade.” This is the context in which “brothers” is used in text 31:

Our brothers and sisters in Odi were massacred. Our fathers, mothers, wives, sons, daughters — all were callously maimed. This was the reward they had to receive for voting Obasanjo to power.

Thus, it is appropriate for an Arogbo-Izon man in Ondo State to use the term “brother” within the Izon cultural context to refer to an Izon man in Bayelsa State even when he is not his blood relation. This is because of the general feeling of Ijawness which binds all Izens/Ijaws together and, thus, demands that every Izon/Ijaw man, regardless of his state of origin, be considered and treated as a “brother”.

Also, “brother” may, in some cases, be used within the Izon socio-cultural context to

refer to “the brother of one’s father or mother especially when he is far younger than one that the age difference does not permit one to call him ‘father’ or ‘uncle.’”

Sister.

“Sister”, within the English culture, means “daughter of the same parents as another person.” But within the Izon culture, the meaning of “sister” (*abirau*) has been extended to cover “the daughter of the same parents, grandparents or great grandparents as another person.” Thus, it is appropriate for an Izon-English bilingual to refer to his/her first or second cousin as his/her “sister” within this cultural context.

“Sister” may also be used within the Izon context to refer to “a woman of one’s age grade who comes from one’s village, community or ethnic group.” This reflects the context in which “sisters” is used in text 31 above.

Another context in which the meaning of “sister” has been extended within the Izon socio-cultural setting is when it is used to refer to “the sister of one’s father or mother especially when one is far older than such a person and cannot, therefore, refer to her as one’s ‘mother.’”

Father.

Within the English cultural context, “father” may be used to refer to “a male parent.” Though this meaning of “father” is also applicable to the Izon situation, the Izon culture has extended the meaning of “father” (*dau*) to accommodate three additional contexts. In the first place, “father” may mean “the brother of one’s father or the husband of the sister of one’s father or mother especially when the plays the role of a father in one’s life.”

Secondly, “father” may be used for “any elderly man who is as old as, or older than, one’s father.” This is the context in which “fathers” is used in text 31.

Thirdly, the eldest man in the family may, in some cases, be addressed as “father” by all in the family, including his younger brothers and sisters especially when the age difference

between them is much.

Mother.

“Mother”, within the English culture, means “female parent or woman who has adopted a child.” Within the Izon culture, “mother” (*yin*), in addition to the contexts identified above, refers to “the sister of one’s father or mother, or the wife of one’s father or uncle who plays a motherly role in one’s life.”

“Mother” may also be used within the Izon socio-cultural context to refer to “any elderly woman who is of one’s mother’s age or older than one’s mother.” This is similar to the context in which “mothers” is used in text 31.

Uncle.

“Uncle”, within the English culture, means “brother of one’s father or mother, or husband of one’s aunt.” But within the Izon culture, “uncle” (*yabi*) means “the brother of one’s mother.” Thus, the Izon concept of *yabi* excludes the English cultural contexts of being “the brother of one’s father or the husband of one’s aunt.” This is so because the brother of one’s father is, within the Izon cultural context, considered as one’s father (*dau*) and not one’s uncle (*yabi*). Thus, it is more appropriate for one to refer to one’s father’s brother as “father” especially when he is older than one. Similarly, it is more appropriate to refer to the husband of one’s aunt as “father” than referring to him as “uncle”. This is because one’s aunt is normally seen within the Izon cultural context as one’s mother because she is the sister of one’s father or mother. Thus, it is appropriate for an Izon man to refer to the husband of his aunt (his mother) as his “father” especially when the aunt’s husband plays the role of a “father” in his life.

“Uncle” may also be used within the Izon cultural context to refer to “any elderly man who could not, because of his age, be called by name.” He is, therefore, generally called “uncle” despite the fact that he is not one’s blood relation and, thus, he becomes a “general

yabi.”

Husband.

Within the English cultural context, “husband” means “a man to whom a woman is married.” Though this basic meaning of “husband” is also applicable to the Izon socio-cultural setting, the Izon culture has extended the meaning of “husband” (*zei*) to cover what we can call “cultural husbands”, and this has three major cultural contexts. One, the brothers or sisters of a woman’s husband may be regarded as her cultural husbands within the Izon cultural context. This is in consonance with the Izon culture which demands that the brothers and sisters of a woman’s husband be regarded and treated as her husbands. The reason behind this is that, whenever a woman’s “real husband” is not around, it is his brothers and sisters that can represent him and take care of her. It is they that can protect her whenever she has any problem with her husband or any other person within or outside her matrimonial home. For this reason, they are regarded as her husbands.

Two, the townsmen of a woman’s husband may also be seen and regarded as her cultural husbands especially when they live together outside their village, town or community and they care for her whenever the husband is not around.

Three, any child that was born long before the arrival of a woman into her husband’s family may also be regarded as her cultural husband. As a young member of the family, such a child owes the woman a cultural responsibility—the responsibility of being a “little husband” who has to assist her in splitting the firewood, mending the leaking thatched roof etc. Thus, whenever the need arises, the child performs this responsibility with delight, no matter how small it may be.

Wife.

The meaning of “wife” (*ere*) has been widened within the Izon cultural setting to accommodate two additional contexts. One, “wife” covers not only one’s personal wife as it

is within the English cultural context, but also the wife or wives of one's brothers. By extension, the brothers and sisters of a woman's husband can, therefore, refer to their brother's wife or wives as their "wife" / "wives" within the Izon cultural context.

Secondly, the wife or wives of one's townsmen may be referred to as one's "wife" or "wives" especially when living together outside the village, town or community. This is made appropriate by the general brotherly feeling prevalent among the Itons which demands that every Iton man be treated as a "brother". This is why one can refer to the wife of a fellow Iton man as one's "wife". This is what is reflected in text 31.

Son.

"Son" may be used within the English culture to mean "male child of a parent." But within the Iton culture, the meaning of "son" (*oweì tòbòu*) has been extended to accommodate two additional contexts. In the first place, "son" may be used within the Iton cultural context to refer to "the son of one's brother, first cousin or second cousin." This is made appropriate by the extended family structure within the Iton culture.

Secondly, "son" may be used to refer to "any boy or man in the community that is within one's son's age grade." This is the context in which "sons" has been used in text 31.

Daughter.

"Daughter" (*iyorò tòbòu*) has been given two additional contexts within the Iton cultural setting. Besides its basic meaning as "the female child of a parent, daughter" may, because of the Iton extended family structure, be used to refer to "the daughter of one's brother (one's father's son) or the daughter of one's first cousin or second cousin."

"Daughter" may also be used to refer to "any girl or woman in the community that is within one's daughter's age grade." This is what is reflected in text 31 where an Arogbo-Iton man in Ondo State refers to the daughters of other Iton people in Bayelsa State as "our daughters."

Grandfather.

Within the Izon cultural context, “grandfather” (*opu dau*) may mean “the brother of one’s grandfather or grandmother.” Thus, it is appropriate for one to address the first cousin or second cousin of one’s grandfather or grandmother, (who is a male), as “grandfather”.

“Grandfather” may also be used for “any elderly man of one’s grandfather’s age.” If an elderly man in the Izon community is as old as, or older than, one’s grandfather, then, it is appropriate for one to address such an elderly man as “grandfather”.

Thirdly, “grandfather” may be used to refer to “the eldest man in the family” especially when one’s father (his brother) calls him “grandfather” because of the wide age difference between them.

These three additional contexts derived from the basic meaning of “grandfather” as “the father of one’s father or mother” are appropriate within the Izon cultural context because they reflect and accommodate the cultural meanings that the Izon culture gives to the word “grandfather”.

Grandmother.

Just like that of “grandfather”, the basic meaning of “grandfather” (*opu yin*), as “the mother of one’s father or mother”, has been extended within the Izon cultural setting to accommodate three additional contexts. One, “the sister of one’s grandfather”; two, “any elderly woman of one’s grandmother’s age; and three, the eldest woman in the family” especially when one’s father (her brother) or one’s mother (her sister) calls her “(old) mother” (*nene*) because of the age difference between them.

Grandson/granddaughter.

The meaning of “grandson” (*owei tau tobou*) or “granddaughter” (*iyoro tau tobou*) has, besides being “the son or daughter of one’s child”, been extended within the Izon cultural setting to accommodate two additional contexts. One, “grandson” or “granddaughter”

may refer to “the son or daughter of one’s brother’s or sister’s son or daughter.” Within this context, the grandson or granddaughter of one’s first or second cousin may as well be addressed as one’s “grandson” or “granddaughter”.

Two, “grandson” or “granddaughter” may be used to refer to “any boy or girl of one’s grandson’s or granddaughter’s age grade.”

In-law.

This is a term coined to incorporate the various meanings created by the Izon extended family structure for the various relationships contracted through marriage. Thus, “son-in-law” (*kala foi*) may, apart from being “the husband of one’s daughter”, be extended to cover “the husband of one’s brother’s or sister’s daughter.” This context also accommodates “the husband of the daughter of one’s first or second cousin.” “Son-in-law” may also be used within the Izon context to refer to “the husband of one’s townsman’s daughter” especially when they live together peacefully outside their village, town or community.

Similarly, the meaning of “daughter-in-law” (*niyaɪnta*) has, like that of “son-in-law”, been extended to cover not only “the wife of one’s son”, but also “the wife of the son of one’s brother or sister or of one’s first or second cousin.” It may also refer to “the wife of one’s townsman’s son” especially when they (one and one’s townsman) live together outside their village, town or community.

Sometimes, one’s son-in-law or daughter-in-law may be addressed as one’s “son” or “daughter” especially when one’s relationship within him or her is cordial. Thus, it is also appropriate for the son-in-law or daughter-in-law to refer to his or her “father-in-law” (*opu foi*) or “mother-in-law” (*yaforo*) as “father” or “mother” respectively.

4.3.1.2 Greetings

In the Izon socio-cultural setting where English is used as a second language in line with the demands of the Izon culture, some greetings in English have been domesticated to

accommodate the contexts which the Izon culture provides for them within the Izon socio-cultural environment. These are presented as follows:

How are you? /How do you do?

Within the English culture, “How are you?” or “How do you do?” may be used by any one regardless of his/her age. Thus, it is appropriate for a ten-year old boy to say “How are you?” or “How do you do?” to his father within the English cultural context. But within the Izon culture, the use of “How are you?” (*tebira ke i mo emi ghan?*) or “How do you do?” (*tebira ke i mo miyen emi ghan?*)²⁸ is usually restricted by age considerations. “How are you?” or “How do you do?” can only be used when the person being addressed is younger than, or is within the same age grade as, the speaker. Thus, it is inappropriate within the Izon culture to use “How are you?” or “How do you do?” if the person being addressed is older than the speaker. This is seriously frowned at in the Izon socio-cultural setting because it connotes rudeness and, thus, falls short of the demands of the Izon culture which requires that elders be respected. This restrictive use of “How are you?” or “How do you do?” within the Izon cultural context is, therefore, a departure from the way it is used within the English culture where no provision is made for age considerations.

Similarly, the response to “How are you?” or “How do you do?” has been modified within the Izon cultural context to satisfy the demands of the Izon culture as reflected in text 32:

Greeting: How do you do?

Response: Fine.

Within the Izon culture, *tebira?*, (the shortened form of “How are you?” or “How do you do?”), uttered especially by an elderly person normally elicits the response, *iyọ fa* or *ebi emi* (fine). This is so because the response, “fine”, connotes politeness within the Izon socio-cultural context, while the repetition of *tebira?* in response suggests rudeness. Thus, even if

an Izon-English bilingual knows that the response to “How do you do?” within the English culture is “How do you do?”, he/she has to say “fine” within the Izon culture to satisfy the demands that the culture imposes on him/her. This is the cultural force that lies behind the appropriateness of “fine” as a response to “How do you do?” within the Izon socio-cultural setting. The appropriateness of “fine” as a response to “How do you do?” is, therefore, strongly founded on the Izon culture.

Good morning/afternoon/evening.

Within the English culture, “good morning/afternoon/evening” usually elicits the same as response e.g.

Greeting: Good morning.
Response: Good morning.

But within the Izon socio-cultural setting, the response to “good morning/afternoon/evening” has been modified to reflect the nuances of the Izon culture where the person being greeted must, as a necessary pre-condition, respond by first acknowledging (answering) the greeting before uttering the usual response “good morning/afternoon/evening” e.g.

(i) Greeting: Good morning, Mebi.

Response: Yes sir, good morning sir.

(ii) Greeting: Good afternoon sir.

Response: Ah, good afternoon.

This is appropriate within the Izon cultural context and should, therefore, be treated as a permissible local variation because it reflects the general pattern of greetings in the Izon socio-cultural setting. Among the IZONS, it is a taboo for one to greet somebody and the person being greeted does not respond. It is also forbidden for one to greet somebody back without first acknowledging the greeting. This is situated within the belief that when one greets and the greeting is acknowledged before one is greeted back, whatever the people involved do that day will be successful. This is so because the occurrence, it is believed,

reflects peaceful co-existence between the two people involved and, thus, the gods and the ancestors, whose utmost desire is for the living to be in peace and harmony, will become happy and will, therefore, open their lips to bless the two people involved. However, if the person being greeted does not acknowledge the greeting before greeting back, or if he/she does not respond at all, the gods and the ancestors become saddened because the action implies that the people involved are not in good terms. Thus, the good things that ought to have come the way of both parties will be blocked because the lips of the gods and the ancestors have been sealed by the failure of the person being greeted to respond appropriately as required by the Izon culture. This is why an Izon-English bilingual must, as a precondition, acknowledge the greeting “good morning/afternoon/evening” before responding by greeting back even when he/she knows that the response is usually “good morning/afternoon/evening”.

Sorry.

“Sorry” has, within the Izon socio-cultural context, been given a cultural coloration. The word is generally used within the Izon context not only for apologizing for a wrong done as it is in native contexts but, more importantly, as a form of greeting to console or sympathize with someone who has suffered misfortune or harm. It is used to greet someone who is bereaved, or someone involved in an accident, or even someone who sneezes, trips etc., even when the speaker is not responsible for what happened. This domesticated sense of “sorry” within the Izon socio-cultural setting has been created, sustained and made meaningful by the Izon culture which demands that we show sympathy to our neighbours and console them in times of distress so as to lessen their burden. These additional contexts which “sorry” has been domesticated to accommodate within the Izon socio-cultural setting have been made appropriate by two major factors: the degree of the seriousness of the occurrence and the age/social status of the individual involved. This explains why such expressions as

“watch it” (*bira di* or *ozu di*), “be careful” (*di miyen*) and “take care” (*fou fou*), which should have been preferred in similar contexts in native English, are inappropriate in this context and cannot, therefore, serve as synonyms for “sorry”. This is so because the IZONS say *bira di* (watch it), *di miyen* (be careful) or *fou fou* (take care) when the occurrence is not serious and does not, therefore, cause any harm to the individual. If, for example, a young boy of ten trips and falls, an older person present there can caution him by saying *fou fou o* (take care o) especially when the boy does not sustain any injury in the process. But if the boy sustains an injury, then, the occurrence has gone beyond caution because the harm has already been done. Thus, he has to be consoled; and the best way to console and sympathize with him is to say “sorry”. In this context, “take care” is inappropriate because it lacks the sympathetic touch that the boy needs to cushion the effect of the pain and agony he is suffering at the moment. Thus, “sorry” is more appropriate in this context since it expresses the consolation and sympathy that the boy requires to lessen his burden and pain.

Similarly, if someone sneezes in such a violent manner that it causes discomfort to the person, “sorry” can be used to greet or sympathize with the person on account of the discomfort he or she suffers.

Finally, if an elderly man, who is respected in society, trips and falls in public, he has to be consoled especially because of his age and social status. In such a situation, “take care” or “be careful” will not be appropriate because the harm has already been done: his age and social status have been put to shame. The best way through which his burden and shame can be lessened is to console, and sympathize with, him through the use of “sorry”.

Well done.

This is usually used within native English contexts to praise someone for the work or feat he or she has already accomplished. Though this is also applicable to the IZON situation as reflected in the IZON expression *i miyen di ka* (well done or you have done well), *well done*

is also used as a form of greeting to someone working. Thus, it is used for greeting someone engaged in any form of work or activity. In this context, it can be used for greeting people playing draughts, washing clothes etc.

“Well done” may also be used as a form of casual greeting for somebody who is not even working at all. If, for example, a man passes by and sees two or three people sitting outside, he may wave them and say “well done” as a way of greeting them casually.

Similarly, “well done” may be used within the Izon context to caution or warn somebody for doing something bad. For example, if a child is doing something that is bad or wrong, an elderly person can caution or warn him or her by saying “well done o” meaning “I saw what you did; so, stop it if you don’t want me to flog you.” Thus, while “well done” can be used to praise somebody, it may also be used to caution or warn or to greet casually.

Go well/stay well.

“Go well” (*di mu*) and “stay well” (*di timi*) are used, within the Izon socio-cultural setting, as forms of greeting especially when people are about to part ways. “Go well”, which is equivalent to the Nigerian English expression “safe journey”, is often used when it is the addressee that is leaving. Thus, it may be used when the individual being addressed is about to set out on a journey, or even when he or she is leaving for his or her house or any other place within the town or village. “Stay well”, on the other hand, is often used when it is the addresser that is leaving.

The two forms of parting greetings, (“go well” and “stay well”), are situated within the Izon cultural milieu where it is required that people pray for those travelling and those staying at home so that no evil or harm may befall them. Thus, they are appropriate within the Izon context because they reflect the beliefs of the Izon people.

4.3.1.3 Other English Words and Expressions

The meanings of some English words and expressions have been domesticated in the

Izon socio-cultural setting to reflect the meanings that their equivalents in the Izon language express in the Izon socio-cultural context. These English words and expressions whose meanings have either been extended or restricted to reflect what obtains in the Izon linguistic and cultural setting are presented as follows:

Borrow.

The meaning of “borrow” has, within the Izon context, been extended to cover the meaning of “lend” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals as reflected in text 27:

You don’t have to tell anybody to *borrow* you the items you will use to make sacrifice to kpokpotin.

This is traceable to the fact that the Izon language, unlike English, does not distinguish between “borrow” (get something from somebody on the understanding that it is to be returned) and “lend” (give something to somebody on the understanding that it will be returned). Thus, the Izon word *bọlọj*, which is equivalent to “borrow” both in terms of “getting something from somebody for a period of time on the understanding that it will be returned or giving something to somebody for a period of time on the understanding that it will be returned”, is used in such a way that it is interpreted to mean either “borrow” or “lend” depending on the context in which it is used. If you, for example, are the one giving out, you are “borrowing” (lending) the person that is receiving from you. But if you are the one receiving, you are “borrowing” from the person that is giving out e.g.

(i) Ẹ zụwa ọkụba kọ u *bọlọj* tẹi.

I have *borrowed* him some money.

(ii) Ẹ u ọ zụwa ọkụba *bọlọj* tẹi.

I have *borrowed* some money from him.

In sentence (i), *bọlọj* has the meaning of “lend” because it is the speaker that is giving out. However, in sentence (ii), *bọlọj* is used in the sense of “borrow” since it is the speaker that is receiving from another person. It is this semantics of *bọlọj* in Izon that has been reflected in

the English of Izon-English bilinguals where *bọlọi* is used when somebody gives out or receives from another person.

Though this semantics of *bọlọi* in Izon, which is manifested in the meaning of “borrow” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals as reflected in text 27, may not make much sense in native English contexts, it does within the Izon socio-cultural context where it is used and understood. Thus, it is acceptable within the Izon socio-cultural context.

Drink (pepper soup).

The basic meaning of “drink” in English is “to take liquid into the mouth and swallow.” However, this basic meaning of “drink” has, within the Izon socio-cultural context, been domesticated to appropriately reflect the culture of the Izon people as it relates especially to their manner of eating. In the Izon socio-cultural setting, the drinking of pepper soup is a process which involves several other processes: taking the liquid (*ago bini*) into the mouth with *kuyere* (spoon), swallowing it and chewing the fish, yam or plantain with which it is cooked. Thus, in the Izon expression *ago bou* (drink pepper soup), the process of drinking the pepper soup covers not only the drinking of the liquid (*ago bini*) but also the chewing of the fish, yam or plantain used to prepare the pepper soup. The meaning of “drink” (*bou*) in the Izon context, especially in terms of “drinking pepper soup”, is, therefore, extended to cover the entire process of “drinking the pepper soup” which involves taking the liquid into the mouth and swallowing it and also chewing the fish, yam or plantain. Thus, the drinking of the liquid (*ago bini*) and the chewing of the fish, yam or plantain are all covered by the process: drink (*bou*). This domesticated sense of “drink” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is reflected in text 36:

We usually *drink umunu pepper soup* with boiled yam and palm oil.

This is appropriate within the Izon cultural context because it is process-specific and, thus, reflects the culture of the Izon people especially in terms of the process involved in the eating

of specific meals.

Escort.

“Escort” often denotes security or protection especially in native English contexts. Though this is also applicable to the Izon situation, Izon-English bilinguals have extended the meaning of “escort” to cover that of “seeing somebody off” or “accompanying somebody to a particular place” as illustrated in sentences (i) and (ii) below:

- (i) He only *escorted* her to the door and went back to sleep.
- (ii) I *escorted* my friend, Būna, to his father’s house.

The meaning of “escort” has also been extended in the English of Izon-English bilinguals to cover that of “ushering somebody into a place” as reflected in text 34:

The *dūweḽ anume* are songs that *escort* the dead to the realm of the ancestors.

The extension of the meaning of “escort” to cover such contexts as “seeing somebody off or accompanying somebody to a particular place”, which do not require protection or security, is traceable to the faulty interpretation of the Izon expression *bọọ mọ* which may be interpreted to mean “escort”, “see off”, “accompany” or “usher in” depending on the context. Specifically, *bọọ mọ* may be interpreted to mean “escort” if the intention is to protect the person or to provide security for him or her e.g.

Sụ dọu ọwọu ma pẹrẹ *bọọ mọ* kọ Opu Akpata Kubu mu tẹi.
(The freedom fighters have escorted the king to Opu Akpata Kubu.)

If the intention is just to go some distance with somebody before turning back, *bọọ mọ* is often interpreted to mean “see off” e.g.

U pake a *bọọ mọ* bo warị bụboghọ la nị u bẹlị mu bụnụ. (He only *saw* her *off* to the door and went back to sleep.)

Similarly, if the intention is to go with somebody to a particular place and come back with the person, *bọọ mọ* is then equivalent to “accompany” e.g.

Ẹ Bùna nì ẹ zowei kẹ *bọọ mọ* u daṣ wari mu timi. (I *accompanied* Bùna, my friend, to his father's house.)

Finally, if the intention is to lead somebody into a place, *bọọ mọ* may be interpreted to mean “usher in” especially in a guarded or protected manner. In this sense, it is equivalent to “escort” as reflected in text 34 e.g.

Dùwẹì anumẹ ma numẹ nì fì tẹì bọ *bọọ mọ* opu adùwẹì kubu o tųwa minì anumẹ. (The *dùwẹì anumẹ* are songs that *escort* the dead to the realm of the ancestors.)

Going by the senses of *bọọ mọ* presented above, it is clear that “escort” as used in sentences (i) and (ii) above is inappropriate since “seeing somebody off or accompanying somebody to a particular place” does not require any security or protection and, thus, such expressions as “see off” or “accompany” are preferred in such contexts. However, “escort” as it is used in text 34 in the sense of “usher in especially in a guarded or protected manner”, is appropriate because it is believed within the Izon socio-cultural setting that the *dùwẹì anumẹ* serve as a guard to the dead person as they usher him or her into the realm of the ancestors. Thus, if the *dùwẹì anumẹ* are not sung when an elderly person who is an adherent of the Izon traditional religion dies, there is no way the dead person can get to the realm of the ancestors because the songs constitute an essential part of the “duburuku rite of passage” that must be performed for the dead. They, therefore, serve as escorts that guard and usher the dead into the appropriate final resting place: the abode of the ancestors.

Hear.

“Hear” means “to perceive sound with the ear.” Thus, “hear” has to do with the sense of hearing. However, “hear” has been extended in the English of Izon-English bilinguals to cover the sense of smell as reflected in text 29:

When you go near the shrine, the first thing you will *hear* is the smell of palmy.

This may be traced to the faulty interpretation of the meaning of the Izon word *na* which can be used in various contexts to mean “hear”, “smell” or “feel” depending on the particular sense in the human body that is involved e.g.

- (i) E i fiye zụ mị *na* tẹi.

I have *heard* what you said.

- (ii) E bụrụ oke fụrụ *na* mịnị.

I am *perceiving* the odour of a rotten rat.

- (iii) E ẹnị tịbị kẹ ọ dọn mị *na* mịnị.

I am *feeling* the pain in my head.

Thus, it is inappropriate to interpret *na* as “hear” alone when it also has such other contexts as “smell” and “feel” associated with it in the Izon language. It is this inappropriate restriction of the interpretation of *na* to mean “hear” alone that misleads some Izon-English bilinguals, especially those whose level of education and exposure to good English is low, to make such unacceptable sentences as “I am hearing the odour of a rotten rat” and “I am hearing the pain in my head.” Thus, the extension of the meaning of “hear” to cover the sense of smell as reflected in text 29 above is inappropriate in the Izon context because it does not accurately reflect what happens in the Izon language and culture.

Lick (an orange).

The expression, “lick an orange”, is derived from the Izon expression *ogun taba* and it is used by Izon-English bilinguals as a variant of the British “eat an orange” within the Izon socio-cultural setting as reflected in the following text:

Licking an orange before a meal is strange within the Izon socio-cultural setting; we don’t even drink wine before eating.

“Lick an orange” is appropriate in this context because it captures what actually happens in the Izon socio-cultural setting where oranges are “peeled” and cut into two halves before their

juice is licked and sucked. This process is different from what happens in the English culture where oranges are cut and eaten. Thus, within the English culture, it is appropriate for one to “eat” an orange. But within the Izon culture, it is inappropriate because oranges are never eaten; they are licked and sucked. This is the cultural background that makes “lick an orange” appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context. It is, therefore, not surprising that many educated Izon-English bilinguals say “I want to lick an orange”, rather than saying “I want to eat an orange”, within the Izon socio-cultural context.

Madam.

“Madam” is often used within the English culture as a respectful form of address to a woman. Though this is also applicable to the Izon setting where “ma”, the shortened form of “madam”, is often used by a younger person to show respect to a woman who is older, “madam” is often used in a derogatory sense to refer to “a married woman who engages in love affairs with other men for financial gains.” This is reflected in text 28:

All the women in our towns and villages have become *madams* overnight because of these bunkerers.

Within the Izon culture, it is a taboo for a married woman to have extra-marital relations. Thus, any married woman who engages in such forbidden acts is often mercilessly punished by the ancestors either by prolonging her labour during childbirth or by making the child she loves dearly to become sick. This is to ensure that she confesses the abominable crime (adultery) she has committed against her husband. However, if the woman refuses to confess the evil she has done, it may lead to her death in the process of childbirth or to the death of her sick child. The involvement of married women in extra-marital affairs is, therefore, seriously frowned at in the Izon socio-cultural setting. However, some married women in the Izon socio-cultural setting, perhaps because of their high level of exposure or because of their insatiable quest for money, disregard the stiff penalties associated with the involvement of married women in extra-marital relations and continue to have love affairs with other men.

Such women are, therefore, appropriately labelled as “madams” within the Izon socio-cultural context.

Share (a husband).

Within the English culture where monogamy demands that a man marries only one wife, each woman has her husband to herself. It is, therefore, impossible for a woman to share her husband with another woman because of the monogamous nature of the English society. Thus, any man that allows another woman to share him with his wife is, within the English culture, guilty of bigamy and will, therefore, have to face serious sanctions. The expression, “to share a husband”, is, therefore, inappropriate within the English culture.

But within the Izon socio-cultural setting where a man can, because of the polygamous nature of the Izon society, have more than one wife, it is permitted for two or more women to marry one husband. Thus, “to share a husband”, which is a translation of the Izon expression *zei diye nana*, is appropriate within this context because the women share the same husband in the sense that he marries all of them. In the Arogbo-Izon Ibe, for example, there is a man who marries sixty-eight wives and he “services” each of them on a weekly basis. Thus, when he spends a week with one woman, he will spend the following week with another, and this continues until he goes round all the sixty-eight wives. The week in which the man stays with one of the sixty-eight wives is, therefore, automatically labelled as the “week” of that particular woman and, thus, no other wife is allowed to sleep with him. Thus, if it is the week of “wife number one”, for example, it is forbidden for the other wives, (numbers 2 – 68), to come to him. For his reason, it is the woman that owns the week that sleeps with him, cooks for him and takes care of all his needs for the week. If the woman who owns the week offends the husband during the week, he can punish her by cancelling her week. This is also applicable to all his remaining wives. Thus, the women share their husband among themselves. “To share a husband” is, therefore, appropriate in this context because it

reflects the polygamous nature of the Izon society where one husband can be shared by two or more women whom he marries as his wives. This is what is reflected in text 41:

Within the Izon culture, when a man marries a new wife, the senior wife is expected to receive the junior wife and treat her as her sister because they *share the same husband*.

Sweet.

In English, “sweet” usually describes “edible things whose taste is sugary”, while “delicious” describes “edible things whose taste is non-sugary but agreeable.” This distinction also exists in the Izon language where *nene* (sweet) and *imele* (delicious) are used to draw a line between edible things that are sugary (sweet) and those that are non-sugary but have an agreeable taste (delicious). However, some Izon-English bilinguals, especially those whose level of education and exposure to good English is low, describe edible things generally as “sweet” whether they are sugary or non-sugary. This is reflected in the following text where “sweet” is used to describe the taste of “dog” which should be “delicious”:

Dog is the *sweetest* animal in the world.

This is wrong and unacceptable because the taste of *dog* is agreeable but non-sugary and should, therefore, be described as “delicious” (*imele*) and not as “sweet” (*nene*).

Village.

The meaning of “village”, as “a place smaller than a town, where there are houses and shops, and usually a church and school”, has been domesticated within the Izon socio-cultural context to reflect the administrative structure of the Ibese in Izonland where each Ibe has a chief town (*ama*), which serves as the administrative headquarters, and several villages (*gbini*) under it. Because of this structure, some settlements in the Ibe, which ought to have been called “towns”, are referred to as “villages” under the chief town in the Ibe. Similarly, some settlements, which ought to have been referred to as “hamlets” (group of houses in the country; small village, especially without a church), are called “villages”.

In the Arogbo-Izon Ibe of Ondo State, for example, such settlements as Ajapa, Akpata, Opuba, Bọlọwọghu, Bìagbìṇì, Adoloseimọ and Awodikurọ, which ought to have been called “towns”, are referred to as “villages” under Arogbo - the chief town and the administrative headquarters of the Ibe. However, these settlements, which are referred to as “villages” under this traditional administrative set up, are qualified, in all respects, to be called towns. Ajapa, for example, has a population of over 10,000 people. It has two primary schools, one secondary school, one Health Centre and seven churches. Besides, it has two villages under it and the people of those villages are responsible to the Amananaowei of Ajapa, High Chief Igìṇabou – a high chief appointed by the Agadagba of Arogbo-Izonland to oversee the administration of Ajapa. Thus, Ajapa is, by all standards, qualified to be called a town because it is obviously bigger than a village. Despite that, Ajapa is still called a village because it is under Arogbo - the chief town in the Ibe..

Similarly, such settlements as Karagbìṇì (Kara Village) and Zebegbìṇì (Zebe Village), which ought to have been referred to as “hamlets”, are called “villages” in the Izon context. These are very small settlements within the Arogbo-Izon Ibe and should, therefore, be referred to as hamlets in the real sense of the word. Karagbìṇì, for example, has only fifteen houses while Zebegbìṇì has only seven houses with a total population of less than twenty people. Neither of these settlements has a school or a church. Yet, they are referred to as “villages” in the Izon context partly because of the administrative structure in the Ibe and partly because of the fact that the Izon language only draws a distinction between a town (*ama*) and a village (*gbìṇì*) and, thus, makes no provision for the distinction between a village and a hamlet. Thus, hamlets are also treated as villages in the Izon socio-cultural context.

It is, therefore, appropriate to refer to Ajapa, Karagbìṇì and Zebegbìṇì, which are all settlements within the Ibe, as villages because the administrative structure in the Ibe

recognizes only one town, Arogbo - the administrative headquarters, while all other settlements in the Ibe, whether big or small, are referred to as villages²⁹.

Light, road, water.

In the Nigerian setting, the meaning of “light”, “road”, or “water” has been restricted as reflected in text 30:

We don't have *light*, *road* or *water*. In fact, we are the most neglected people in Ondo State.

“Light”, as it is used in text 30, appears to be synonymous with electricity especially when it is provided by government. Thus, despite the fact that the people have other sources of light which they utilize, they still complain that they have no “light” because there is no electricity in the community. “Light” in this context therefore means electricity alone and not just anything that gives light.

Similarly, “road”, as it is used in the text, is equivalent to a “motor-way” provided especially by government. Thus, the people say that they don't have “road” despite the fact that there are a number of “roads” in the community on which the people move.

The same is applicable to the context in which “water” is used in the text to mean pipe-borne water. The Izon setting is predominantly riverine in nature and, thus, the people have water everywhere. Yet, they complain that they have no “water” because the government fails to provide pipe-borne water for them.

4.3.2 Loan Words

The English of Izon-English bilinguals has, within the Izon socio-cultural setting, witnessed an influx of Izon loan-words which reflect various aspects of the socio-cultural life of the Izon people. These loan-words are presented and analyzed as follows:

Agadagba.

Agadagba is the title of the traditional ruler (king) of the Arogbo-Izon kingdom in Ondo State. It is also the title of the *pẹrẹs* (kings) of the Ibes in Izonland where the Egbesu is

linked to kingship. Thus, there is the *Agadagba of Arogbo* in Ondo State, the *Agadagba of Egbema* in Edo State, the *Agadagba of Gbaramatu* in Delta State and the *Agadagba of Gbaraun* in Bayelsa State.

Agadagba is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals in texts 6, 9, 13 and 18.

Agwọ.

This is the title of the high chief (*pẹrẹatoru*) responsible for the administration of “Agwọbiri Quarters” in Arogbo town. *Agwọbiri* is one of the three “Quarters” of which Arogbo town is composed³⁰. The *Agwọ*, as the head of the *Agwọbiri* Quarters, has other chiefs, in charge of each street within the Quarters, who assist him in the day-to-day administration of *Agwọbiri*. These chiefs³¹ include the *Atila*, the *Dighipele*, the *Nanaghan* and the *Okpoka*. The current *Agwọ of Agwọbiri* is High Chief Goodluck Sobijoh.

Amafọin.

Amafọin is a ritual of purification performed to cleanse the town of Arogbo, (where the Egbesu resides), and the entire Ibe of any form of impurity arising from the following forbidden acts, among others:

- (i) Killing somebody physically within the town of Arogbo by using a gun, machet, stick etc.
- (ii) Burying the corpse of someone who died in a “violent manner”, either by accident, gunshot, machet-cut or by drowning etc., in the town.
- (iii) Burying the corpse of a woman who died in the process of childbirth in the town.
- (iv) Burying the corpse of a pregnant woman in the town without removing the baby in her womb.

- (v) Burying, in the town, the corpse of an evil-doer who confessed the evil done before he or she died or whose evil nature was revealed through the *Igbadagha* after his or her death.
- (vi) Burying a man or woman, who died with a big wound in his or her body, in the town.
- (vii) Burying the corpse of a bearded woman in the town.

Within the Izon cultural setting, the corpses of the people who fall into the categories listed above are never buried in the town because it is believed that their spirits will not, because of the nature of their death, be accepted or accommodated by the gods and the ancestors. The spirits of such dead people will, therefore, have no rest because their corpses have been sent to the place which does not belong to them. This explains why their corpses are usually taken to the *sei bou* (the evil forest) for burial. Thus, if anyone buries such people in the town, the town becomes contaminated, and this brings terrible calamities on the people of the Ibe. To prevent this situation, the town has to be purified, and one of the ways by which this can be done is through *amafọin*.

Amafọin involves, among other things, the killing of dogs and fowls found in the town during the period of the ritual. These dogs and fowls are then used to prepare what is called *gudugudubẹlẹ* (a special pot of *ọfulọ* (porridge) cooked during *amafọin*). The *gudugudubẹlẹ* is usually cooked in front of the Egbesu shrine. The meal, which can only be eaten by the circumcised males in the Ibe, symbolizes a communion between the gods/ancestors and the people of the Ibe. Thus, as the meal is being eaten, prayers are also offered for the appeasement of the gods and the ancestors as well as for the cleansing of the town and the entire Ibe.

Amafọin occurs in the English of Izon-English bilinguals as illustrated in texts 1 and 10.

Amananaowei.

This is the title given to a high chief or chief appointed by the Agadagba to oversee the administration of the towns and villages in the Ibe. Each town or village in the Ibe is headed by an *Amananaowei*. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the *Amananaowei* and his Council of Elders to ensure that there is peace in the town or village they head. Thus, whenever there is a disagreement between two people in a town or village in the Ibe, it is handled by the *Amananaowei* and his Council of Elders. However, where the disagreement cannot be settled amicably by the *Amananaowei* and his Council of Elders, it is referred to the Agadagba for adjudication. Some renowned *Amananaowei*s in the Arogbo-Izon kingdom of Ondo State include the *Ninabiritorū of Opuba*, the *Egbenē of Akpata*, the *Iḡinabou of Ajapa*, the *Amaatōrū of Ogidigba Tōrū*, the *Amananaowei of Awodikurō* and the *Amananaowei of Ukpē*.

Apata.

Apata is one of the deities worshipped in Izonland. It protects the people of the Ibe against snake-bite.

Atētē

This, like *Apata*, is widely worshipped in Izonland. It is the deity that protects the Ibe from being plagued by disease.

Ayoro.

Ayoro is the name given to a newly-married wife in the Izon socio-cultural setting. She is addressed as *ayoro*³² because she is “precious” and must, therefore, be catered for. Thus, for the first few days she spends in her husband’s house, she is not allowed to do anything. Some young girls (*ayorogbaljabu*) are, therefore, charged with the responsibility of taking care of her and keeping her company. *Ayoro* is illustrated in the following text:

Ibōlō is a special kind of bead worn by the *ayoro* immediately when she enters her husband’s house. This is what differentiates the

ayoro from all other married women in the community.

Beki.

The *Beki of Agwobiri* is one of the two high chiefs constituting the Traditional Council of King-makers in the Ibe. This council, which is responsible for the installation of the Agadagba, has only two members: The *Beki of Agwobiri* and the *Ibagbunu of Egbesubiri* representing “Agwobiri Quarters” and “Egbesubiri Quarters” respectively³³. The *Beki*, as the *tori puwei* of the Ibe, performs the traditional function of “marking” the head of the Agadagba with *tori* (traditional white-chalk) after he had been presented to the Ibe by the *Ibagbunu*.

Duweṣi anumẹ.

Duweṣi anumẹ (the songs for the dead) are the seven traditional songs which are sung when the “duburuku rites” are performed to usher the dead into the realm of the ancestors. The *duburuku* is a traditional burial rite which is usually performed when an elderly person, who is an adherent of the Izon traditional religion, dies. Thus, the *duweṣi anumẹ*, as an essential part of the *duburuku*, are not sung ordinarily in the Ibe since they are used for the “duburuku rites” alone. It is strongly believed that if someone sings the *duweṣi anumẹ* when there is no *duburuku*, the person will die because the songs do invite the ancestors to take the dead from the land of the living to *duweṣi ama* (the dwelling-place of the dead).

Thus, if the ancestors get to the scene where the songs are sung and they do not find the “duburuku corpse” for which the rites are performed, they, as it is strongly believed, will be compelled to take the singer away. This explains why it is forbidden for someone to sing the *duweṣi anumẹ* on ordinary occasions.

The occurrence of *duweṣi anumẹ* in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is illustrated in text 34 already cited under “escort”.

Egbesuwei.

Egbesuwei is the title of the high chief in charge of the administration of the Egbesubiri Quarters of Arogbo. The *Egbesuwei of Egbesubiri* is usually assisted in the administration of Egbesubiri by such chiefs as the *Eppin̄i*, the *Eppu*, the *Ofiniēgē* and the *Pawai*³⁵ who are the heads of their respective streets in the Quarters. The current *Egbesuwei of Egbesubiri* is High Chief Semes Tayakimi.

Eruwei.

This is the title of the high chief responsible for administering the Erubiri Quarters of Arogbo. In his capacity as the head of the Quarters, the *Eruwei of Erubiri* is assisted in the administration of Erubiri by such chiefs as the *Bēn̄tēi*, the *Bōl̄ikōt̄i*, the *Ikeli* and the *Miyēnbai*³⁸ who are the heads of the streets in the Quarters. The current *Eruwei of Erubiri* is High Chief Patan Ziga.

Ibagbunu.

Ibagbunu is the title of the high chief representing the Egbesubiri Quarters of Arogbo in the Traditional Council of King-makers. The *Ibagbunu of Egbesubiri* and the *Beki of Agwōbiri*, therefore, constitute the council of king-makers in the Ibe. As a member of the council, the *Ibagbunu* performs two major functions. The first is to present the Agadagba to the people of the Ibe before the *Beki* marks his head with *tori*, while the second is to put the crown³⁶ on the head of the Agadagba. The *Ibagbunu* therefore functions both as the *p̄rē k̄or̄i ama d̄īya wei* and the *tun k̄o p̄rē teri wei* of the Ibe.

Igbadagha.

This is an Izon oracle, which is carried by four men, consulted within the Izon cultural setting to discover the cause(s) of the death of a person in the community. The *igbadagha* is, therefore, a link between the living and the dead since the living can commune with the dead

through it and seek their guidance and assistance whenever there is a mysterious occurrence in the Ibe.

Ikọ.

Ikọ refers to the money the husband (bridegroom) pays on the newly-taken *ayoro* (bride). This sense of *ikọ* is reflected in text 26:

Ikọ is the amount that the husband pays on the head of his wife as bride price.

Ikọ may also be used to refer to the delegation of men sent by the husband's family to the bride's family so as to make arrangements for the marriage ceremony between the *ayoro* and the husband. This delegation (*ikọwọniabụ*) is usually led by an *ikọtịbiwei* (the head of the *ikọ* delegation).

Isele.

This is a type of wood in the Izon setting which is ground and used to paint the feet of the dead before the commencement of the "duburuku rites". It is believed within the Izon socio-cultural setting that the *isele*, with which the feet of the dead are painted, prepares the spirit of the dead for the homeward journey in the company of the ancestors who, it is believed, usually come during the "duburuku rites" to take the dead home.

The occurrence of *isele* in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is reflected in text 5.

Kulikuliwei.

Kulikuliwei (the black man) describes a man deeply coated with charcoal who, as a form of punishment for the evil that he (the *kulikuliwei*) or the person on whose behalf he performs the duty has done, moves round the streets of Arogbo during the day and the night for three days. The *kulikuliwei*, who is half-naked except for the *ikin* (sack) he ties round his waist which covers the parts between the waist and the knee, usually holds a matchet in his right hand and a calabash cup (*paghan*) in his left. As he moves round the town, the *kulikuliwei* stops at some specified points, raises the matchet in his right hand and shouts *Owei o e ...* thrice. This is a way of acknowledging the evil that the *kulikuliwei*, (or the person

on whose behalf he performs the duty), has done and, thus, serving as an appeal to the Egbesu to forgive him.

Within the Izon setting, it is forbidden for someone to physically kill somebody with a gun, machet, stick etc. either secretly or openly. Similarly, it is abominable and, therefore, forbidden for any man to “suck” the private part of a woman or to “suck” her breasts and swallow the breast-milk. It is also forbidden, within the Izon setting, for someone to kill a lion or to “see” or “touch” a dead lion because it is believed that the lion is an “Egbesu animal” (*Egbesu nama*). Thus, if any of these happens either intentionally or accidentally, the person involved must “make a *kulikuliwei*” in the Egbesu shrine for the crime committed. If this is not done, the person, it is strongly believed, will either become mad or dead. To prevent this calamity, the person who committed the crime, or a member of his family or an outsider paid to perform the duty, has to become a *kulikuliwei* so as to atone for the crime committed. Thus, during the three days the *kulikuliwei* has to move round the town, he must, as a form of punishment, stay in the Egbesu shrine without going home, and he must not sleep because, if he does, he will die. Similarly, he must neither take his bath nor wash his anus when he defecates. Even when eating, the *kulikuliwei* must not wash his hands, and the food must be served with half-broken plates. In addition, as the *kulikuliwei* moves round the town, the people of the Ibe greet him with a stream of abuse because of the evil he has done.

The *kulikuliwei* has to undergo this “torture experience” so as to seek the mercy and forgiveness of the Egbesu which has become contaminated because of the evil that the *kulikuliwei*, (or the person he represents), has done in the Ibe. It is believed in the Izon socio-cultural setting that it is only when this is done that the gods can forgive the *kulikuliwei*, (or the person he represents), the offence that was committed.

The occurrence of *kulikuliwei* in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is illustrated in texts 8 and 20.

Ogele.

This refers to a procession of people who sing and dance as they move round the town. Within the Izon socio-cultural setting, there can be a procession of men (*oweì abù ogele*), a procession of women (*iyorò abù ogele*) or a procession of children (*kala ọwọy ogele*) etc. Depending on its nature and the kind of people involved in it, an *ogele* may be used for various purposes within the Izon socio-cultural setting: war, spiritual cleansing, burial etc. Thus, the *ogele* is an essential part of the socio-cultural life of the Izon people.

The occurrence of *ogele* in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is reflected in text 33:

For how else can we explain the shooting, maiming and killing
of defenceless youths, singing and dancing in an *ogele*?

Ọkparan.

Ọkparan refers to the members of a powerful group within the Egbesu who are initiated and specially trained to handle specific aspects of the Egbesu. Since each of the *Ọkparans* is trained for a specific aspect of the Egbesu, he is the only one who knows that aspect and, thus, he is put under a vow to always keep the secret to himself.

The traditional function of the *Ọkparans*, who are headed by the *Ọkparantìbìwei*, is to guide the Agadagba, and moderate his activities, on issues concerning the Egbesu. Thus, they act as a check on the powers of the Agadagba in the sense that they can, if the Agadagba misbehaves, ban him from entering the Egbesu shrine thereby forcing him to lose contact with the Egbesu: the sole source of the Agadagba's power and authority.

Ọkparan is reflected in text 43:

The *Ọkparans* cannot disclose the secret of the Egbesu because
it is a taboo to split open the crocodile's intestine in public.

Paghan.

This is the calabash cup that the *kulikuliwei* holds in his left hand. It is this calabash cup (*paghan*) that he uses for drinking palm-wine or water throughout the three days he stays in the shrine of Egbesu.

Pẹrẹ ọkpọ.

Pẹrẹ ọkpọ refers to the special staff of the Agadagba which is used for summoning any erring member of the Ibe to the Agadagba's court. The *pẹrẹ ọkpọ* therefore represents the authority of the Agadagba and, thus, it is honoured in all the towns and villages in the Ibe where the Agadagba reigns.

Pẹrẹwaritibiwei.

This is the head of the royal family whose responsibility is to oversee the appointment of the Agadagba from among the members of the royal family who aspire to become the Agadagba. It is the *pẹrẹwaritibiwei* that usually presents the Agadagba-elect to the *Ibagbunu* who, in turn, presents him to the people of the Ibe.

Sei bou.

This refers to "the evil forest" where the corpses of evil-doers or of those who died in a violent or "unclean" manner and could, therefore, not be buried in the town, are taken to for burial.

Tarabiritọrọ.

The *Tarabiritọrọ* of *Arogbo-Izon Ibe* is the highest chief in the Ibe. He is the *second-in-command* to the Agadagba. Thus, all the other chiefs and high chiefs in the Ibe, such as the *Agwọ*, the *Eruwei* and the *Egbesuwei* who are in charge of the three Quarters in Arogbo, as well as the *Amananaoweis* in the various towns and villages in the Ibe, are under him. As the highest chief in the Ibe, when the Agadagba dies, the *Tarabiritọrọ* acts as the Agadagba until a new Agadagba is installed.

The appointment of the *Tarabiritorū* follows an electoral process where the members of a twelve-member Council of Chiefs responsible for the election of the *Tarabiritorū*, vote to elect him. These twelve chiefs, who are the representatives of the three Quarters in Arogbo, include *Atila*, *Dighipele*, *Nanaghan* and *Okpoka* (for Agwobiri Quarters); *Benitej*, *Bolikoti*, *Ikeli* and *Miyenbai* (for Erubiri Quarters) and; *Eppini*, *Eppu*, *Ofinigeg* and *Pawei* (for Egbesubiri Quarters).

The current *Tarabiritorū* of *Arogbo-Izon Ibe* is His Highness Ogbamini Amos Sofiyegha.

Ukpasū.

Ukpasū is a locally-carved stick, designed with a long handle and a hollow part on the other end, used for stirring up soup.

Uweme.

This is a kind of soup prepared with fresh or dried fish and palm oil (*pulo*) or the oil derived from raw palm fruits (*lu*).

Zereye.

This is a locally-carved stick used for stirring up *ikpurukpuru* especially when it is on fire.

4.3.3 Coinages

Izon-English bilinguals have, because of the contact between English and the Izon language and culture in the Izon socio-cultural setting, manifested some interesting lexicosemantic variations in their English usage in terms of the coinage of words and expressions that reflect the Izon socio-cultural experience. These coinages manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, which are examined in this section to ascertain their appropriateness within the Izon socio-cultural context, are presented under the following headings:

- (i) Existing Lexical Stock in English.

- (ii) A Hybrid of Lexical Stock in Izon and English.
- (iii) Other Coinages from the Nigerian Socio-cultural Environment.

4.3.3.1 Existing Lexical Stock in English

Izon-English bilinguals have, because of the quest for communicative appropriateness in English within the Izon socio-cultural context, coined new items from the existing lexical stock in English to appropriately reflect the Izon linguistic and socio-cultural situation. These coinages are presented and analyzed as follows:

Administrate.

“Administrate”, which is coined from “administration” presumably by false analogy with “frustrate: frustration”, “demonstrate: demonstration”, “calculate: calculation”, “recapitulate: recapitulation” etc., is often used in the Izon setting as a synonym for “administer”. This is reflected in text 9:

The Agadagba which is responsible for *administering* the kingdom have chiefs under him.

“Administrate”, which usually occurs in the English of Izon-English bilinguals whose level of education and exposure to good English is low, should be treated as an error arising from false analogy. It should, therefore, be seen as inappropriate and unacceptable even within the Izon socio-cultural setting.

August break.

“August break” is coined to describe the period during the rainy season when the rain stops temporarily, (perhaps for a month), before falling again. This period of break (*fəun tiye*), which usually comes between early August and early September, is often characterized by a drizzly weather accompanied by heavy winds which dry the water up. The end of the “august break” (*fəun vuin*) is usually signalled by thunderblasts either by 12 noon or by 12 midnight, and these are often almost immediately followed by a heavy downpour. The coinage (august break), therefore, reflects what happens in the riverine Izon setting. The

occurrence of “august break” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is illustrated in the following text:

During the *august break*, the water in the bush dries up, and this causes untold hardship for fishermen, palmwine tappers and timber dealers especially in the year when the break is prolonged.

Big-eyed.

“Big-eyed”, which is a translation of the Izon expression *tọrẹ opu ba* (eyes that always look for big things), is coined by Izon-English bilinguals to describe the person that is greedy and is, therefore, not contented with what he or she has. Thus, a “big-eyed person” is the one who always looks for “big things” and, thus, does not feel satisfied with what he or she has. “Big-eyed” is illustrated in the following text:

Many of the girls and women in the community are *big-eyed* and that is why they have become bunkerers.

Big madam.

“Big madam” is coined from the Izon expression *opu ama ta* which means “big wife of the town” where *opu* means “big” while *ama ta* means “wife of the town.” Thus, while “madam” refers to “a married woman who engages in love affairs with other men for financial gains”, “big madam” describes “a woman who was married but left her husband to engage openly in full-time love affairs with several men and collect money from them.” These “big madams” usually have their own private apartments where they invite men to sleep with them in turns. Since these “big madams” are no longer with their husbands, they are outside the reach of the stiff penalties that are associated with married women engaging in extra-marital relations. They are, therefore, described as “big madams” because they, unlike the ordinary “madams” who are still in their husbands’ houses, are licensed to operate freely without any fear of being punished by the ancestors.

Bigmanism.

“Bigmanism” is coined from “big man” which is a translation of the Izon expression *opu kīmī* where *opu* means “big” while *kīmī* means “man”. “Big man”, therefore, refers to “any wealthy and influential man in the village, town or community.” “Bigmanism” is, therefore, coined from “big man” to describe the “peculiar arrogant behaviour of big men” in the Izon socio-cultural setting.

Bottom power.

“Bottom power” (*tubībī kūrō*) is coined by Izon-English bilinguals to describe the “influence which girls and women exert on men.” This influence is usually made stronger through sexual intercourse. It is, therefore, referred to as “bottom power”.

Brother/sister (senior/junior brother or sister).

“Brother” (*abirei*) or “sister” (*abīraū*) refers to “the son or daughter of the same parents, grandparents or great grandparents as another person or a man or woman who comes from the same village, town or community as another person especially when they meet, or live together, outside their village, town or community.” “Senior” (as in “senior brother” or “senior sister”) and “junior” (as in “junior brother” or “junior sister”) are used to reflect the age and numerical position of each brother or sister in the family. Thus, “senior” (*okosu*) in this context describes one’s brother or sister who is “higher” than one in terms of age and numerical position in the family, while “junior” (*tunhan*) describes one’s brother or sister who is “lower” than one in terms of age and numerical position.

“Senior brother” (*abirei okosuwei*) or “senior sister” (*abīraū okosuaraū*), therefore, means “one’s brother or sister that is older than one.” Thus, “senior brother” is a variant of “elder brother”, while “senior sister” is equivalent to “elder sister”.

“Junior brother” (*abirei tunhan oweī*) or “junior sister” (*abīraū tunhan araū*), on the other hand, refers to “one’s brother or sister whose age or position in the family is below

one's age or position." Thus, "junior brother" and "junior sister" are variants of "younger brother" and "younger sister" respectively.

These Izon contexts within which "senior brother", "senior sister", "junior brother" and "junior sister" are used and understood in the Izon socio-cultural setting are created and made appropriate by the Izon culture and, thus, they occur in the English of Izon-English bilinguals as reflected in the following text:

He is my *senior brother's son*; so, he cannot call me uncle. It is only the son or daughter of my *senior sister* or *junior sister* that can call me uncle.

Bullet proof.

In the Izon context, "bullet proof" (*tin a sūwọ gha*) refers to a piece of white cloth which the Izon youths and other warriors in the Ibe usually tie round the head during a war so as to prevent bullets from touching or entering the body. It is specially prepared in the Egbesu shrine either by the Agadagba (the king) or the Ọkparans as a sure protection against gunshots. "Bullet proof" is used in this sense in text 42:

The youths cannot be harmed because they are under the white cloth. It serves as *bullet proof* for them.

Bunkerers.

This is coined from "bunkering": an illegal oil deal especially in the Niger Delta which involves loading barges or locally-made boats with crude oil. Those that are involved in this illegal oil deal are referred to as "bunkerers". This is reflected in text 50:

Bunkerers are very rich people because they truck a lot. They are as rich as the yahoo boys: the latest group of four-one-niners.

However, "bunkerers" has also been extended within the Izon setting to include "the girls or women that have love affairs with bunkerers." This is reflected in the following text:

Many of the girls and women in the community are big-eyed and that is why they have become *bunkerers*.

Thus, both the men who are engaged in the business and the girls, madams and big madams who, through the love affairs they have with such men, have a share of the money derived from the illegal deal are all referred to as “bunkerers”.

Evil month.

“Evil month” is a translation of the Izon expression *sei ọgọnọwei* which is coined to describe November as the month for the celebration of the festival of the spirits in the bush. It is believed in the Izon socio-cultural setting that it is on the third day of the moon (in November) that the spirits in the bush celebrate their *bou abu erin* (the day of the spirits in the bush). It is, therefore, forbidden for the Itons to go into the bush on the third day of the moon (in November). This is to prevent human beings from seeing the secrets of the *bou abu* (the spirits in the bush) as they celebrate their festival. It is strongly believed that anyone who proves stubborn and goes into the bush on that day will be harmed by the spirits. This belief is reinforced by an Izon folktale where Gbaosei, a stubborn Izon woman who went into the bush with her daughter (Ebiri) on the day of the celebration, was killed by the spirits, while the daughter was made deaf and dumb. Thus, even in these modern days, no Izon man or woman goes into the bush on the third day of the moon of November because it is forbidden for anyone to do so. Because of the belief that evil will befall anyone that goes into the bush on the third day of the moon in November, the month of November is labelled as the “evil month” (*sei ọgọnọwei*). This is what is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals as illustrated in the following text:

People usually cut the fire-wood they will use in the dry season before the beginning of the *evil month* when the water in the bush begins to dry up.

House (big house).

In the Izon socio-cultural setting, people, especially those that are married, usually build two houses. The first is what is called *opu warị* (the big house) where the members of

the family sleep. The second is *kala warị* (the small house) which is a hut that serves as kitchen for the wife. This is so because, in the Izon setting, the houses where people live and sleep are separated from those where they cook. Thus, where a man has only one wife, he has to build one *opu warị* for the family and a separate *kala warị* (kitchen) for his wife. Similarly, if he has three wives, it is demanded by the Izon culture that he builds three separate “small houses” (kitchens) for the three wives. It is this Izon concept of *opu warị* (“big house” where people sleep) and *kala warị* (“small house” where the wife or wives cook)³⁷ that is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals:

The *big house* is where all the members of the family sleep. It is called the *big house* because of its capacity to accommodate all in the family and this distinguishes it from the *small house* which serves as kitchen for the wife.

Little husband.

“Little husband” (*kala zei*) refers to any child, male or female, who was born into the husband’s family long before the arrival of a woman into her husband’s home. Such a child is, within the Izon socio-cultural context, referred to as a “little husband” because, despite the child’s tender age, he or she still owes the woman a cultural responsibility - the responsibility of standing in for the husband to assist the woman in performing such duties as fetching water from the stream, splitting the firewood and mending the leaking thatched roof. Thus, he or she is, indeed, a “little husband” to the woman.

Resource control.

This refers to the traditional Izon shirt called *amayanabo* which is designed in such a manner that a golden chain links the neck of the shirt to its breast pocket. The chain has a golden botton inserted into the bottom hole on the neck of the shirt while the rest of the chain flows downwards into the breast pocket of the shirt in a “controlled manner.” This shirt, which is now worn generally by the people of the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria, is often labelled as “resource control” because of the leading role that the Ijaws and other Niger

Deltans play in the resource control struggle where the Federal Government of Nigeria is, because of its criminal neglect of the region, told to allow the people of the Niger Delta to control their resources. The occurrence of “resource control” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is reflected in text 39:

The second thing the Ijaw Nation demanded for was fresh fish and it was smartly given a snake. But to the amazement of the Nigerian State, the spokesman for the Ijaw Nation accepted the snake and expressed his profound appreciation for 60 minutes without swallowing saliva, and put it into one of the pockets in his *resource-control attire* without any danger.

Siever.

“Siever” is coined and used as a synonym for “sieve” in the Izon socio-cultural setting. “Siever”, in the Izon context, refers to “a locally-made sieve” (*kpukpuye*) which is used for sieving *ikpurukpuru* (“cassava ball”) before it is cooked as a special cassava meal. Though “siever” is a product of faulty analogy especially with “cooker” as in “gas-cooker” (apparatus, stove, for cooking food), “dryer” as in “hair-dryer” (instrument for drying hair), “heater” as in “gas-heater” (device for supplying warmth to a room, or for boiling water) etc., “siever” should be considered as an acceptable variant of “sieve”, especially within the Izon context, for two major reasons. The first is that “siever” reflects the meaning of its Izon source, *kpukpuye*, which is an instrument used for sieving *ikpurukpuru* (“cassava balls”). Secondly, the coinage of “siever” is in line with the morphological process that produces such widely accepted words as “cooker”, “dryer” and “heater” which, just like “siever”, are instruments for cooking, drying and heating respectively. “Siever”, as an instrument for sieving *ikpurukpuru*, should, therefore, be considered as appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context.

Stirrer.

This refers to “a specially-carved, locally-made stick” (*upkasu* or *zereye*) that is used for stirring up *uweme*, *ago* or *ikpurukpuru*³⁸ especially when it is on fire. “Stirrer”, like

“siever”³⁹, should be considered as appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context because it reflects what happens in the Izon socio-cultural setting.

Truck.

“Truck” is an expression coined in the Izon socio-cultural setting and other similar Niger Delta communities, where bunkering is prevalent, to describe “the act of engaging in illegal bunkering by loading barges and locally-made boats with crude oil.” Thus, “to truck” means “to load such boats with crude oil” and move them to various locations, both within and outside the Niger Delta, where the crude is sold to customers. This is the context in which “truck” is used in text 50 already cited under “bunkerers”.

Walking stick.

“Walking stick” (*okpo*) refers to the “stick” which an old man or woman holds so as to aid him or her in walking. Thus, “walking stick” is equivalent to “staff” in this context. However, the “walking stick” has become an essential part of the Izon culture concerning mode of dressing. It is required by the Izon culture that when men wear the *amayanabo* and the “feathered hat”, they should also hold the “walking stick”. If any of these is absent, the attire is seen as incomplete. Thus, the *amayanabo*, the “feathered hat” and the “walking stick” go together as a mode of dressing for men in the Izon socio-cultural setting.

“Walking stick” should be considered as appropriate within the Izon context because it reflects the function that the “stick” performs in the Izon socio-cultural setting. If a “walking stick” is a “stick” that is held while walking, then, it should be more practical and, thus, more appropriate to describe it as a “walking stick” than to describe it as a “staff” which does not show the relationship between the stick and its function especially in the Izon setting. “Walking stick” as a variant of “staff” is, therefore, appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context.

Wife (senior/junior/small/little wife).

To reflect the polygamous nature of the Izon society and its extended family structure, various words and expressions have been coined to describe the relationships existing among the wives in an Izon family. Thus, “senior wife” (*okosu ere*) and “junior wife” (*tunhan ere*) are coined to distinguish the first wife, in a two-wife family, from the second wife. “Senior wife”, therefore, refers to the first of the two wives, while “junior wife” refers to the second. This is what is reflected in text 41 already quoted under “share a husband”.

However, where there are more than two wives, “small wife” (*kala ere*) is used to distinguish the “most junior wife” from the remaining “senior co-wives” (the wives the most junior wife met in the husband’s house).

Similarly, a distinction can also be drawn between the “senior wife” (the most senior wife in the family where the husband has more than two wives) and her “junior co-wives” (*yanfanran atunhan abu*). The “senior wife” can refer to all the remaining wives of the husband as her “junior co-wives” because they all met her in the husband’s house.

There is also what is called “head co-wife” (*zi okosu ere*) which is coined to describe “the most senior of all the women married to men of the same extended family.”

Finally, “little wife” (*igiti ere*) is coined and used in two contexts in the Izon socio-cultural setting. One, it is coined to describe “the wife of one’s brother or of one’s townsman who is far younger than one.” Two, it may refer to “a little girl of between seven and twelve who is given to a man for a wife but cannot marry him at the moment because of her age.” Such a girl is, therefore, preserved for the man; so, no other man is permitted to come close to her.

All these coinages, (“senior wife”, “junior wife”, “small wife”, “little wife”, “senior co-wives”, “junior co-wives” and “head co-wife”), are appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context because they reflect what actually happens in the Izon socio-cultural setting.

4.3.3.2 A Hybrid of Lexical Stock in Izon and English

The English of Izon-English bilinguals also manifests the occurrence of some items which are coined through the mixture of existing lexical stock in Izon and English. These hybridized lexical items are presented as follows:

Agadagba-elect.

Agadagba is the title of the king of Arogbo-Izon Ibe and other similar kingdoms as Egbema, Gbaramatu and Gbaraun where kingship is linked to the Egbesu. “Agadagba-elect” is coined, through the combination of *Agadagba* (an Izon item) and “elect” (an English word), to describe “a person who has already been chosen, from among other contestants, by the members of the royal family (*pẹrẹwariabu*) but has not fully become the Agadagba because the rites have not been fully performed.” Thus, though he has been chosen or elected, he is not yet in office because he has not gone through the rites that the Agadagba is required by the Izon culture to perform and, thus, he is only an “Agadagba-elect” and not the real Agadagba. “Agadagba-elect” therefore follows the English word-formation process where “elect” is added to such words as “bishop”, “governor”, “president” etc. to form “bishop-elect”, “governor-elect”, “president-elect” etc. to express the sense that though the person has been chosen or elected, he or she is not yet in office. This sense of “Agadagba-elect” is reflected in the following text:

There are some rites the *Agadagba-elect* has to perform before he finally becomes the king.

Agadagbanship tussle.

“Agadagbanship” is formed by adding the English suffix “-ship” to the Izon item, *Agadagba*, thereby reflecting what happens in such English words as “kingship” and “leadership” which describe “the state of being a king or the official position of a king” and “the state, position or qualities of being a leader” respectively. “Agadagbanship” therefore describes “the position of an Agadagba or anything that has to do with it.” Thus,

“Agadagbanship tussle” is coined by Izon-English bilinguals to describe “the struggle among the contestants who aspire to occupy the position of the Agadagba as the king of the Ibe.”

Duburuku corpse.

Duburuku refers to a traditional burial rite performed when an elderly person, who is an adherent of the Izon traditional religion, dies. “Duburuku corpse” is, therefore, coined by Izon-English bilinguals to describe the corpse of such a “traditional believer” because it has to, as a necessary cultural condition, pass through the “duburuku rites” before it can be allowed to enter the abode of the ancestors. This is reflected in text 37:

When an old man or woman dies, he/she becomes a *duburuku corpse*. Until the duburuku rite of passage is performed, there is no way he/she can cross to the other side of the river where the dead live.

Duburuku rite of passage.

This describes the rite that a “duburuku corpse” must undergo before it is allowed passage to the realm of the ancestors. If this “rite of passage” is not performed for the corpse, it is believed within the Izon cultural setting that the spirit of the dead person will find it difficult to cross the wide, deep river, which separates the dead from the living, to get to the other side (*dūweji ama*) where the ancestors and other dead people live. It is, therefore, believed that the spirit of such a dead person will roam the bank of the river separating the living and the dead without any peace or rest because it is not allowed to get to the place meant for it.

The “duburuku rite of passage” is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals in text 37 already cited under “duburuku corpse” above.

Egbesu Day.

This refers to the 28th of September when the culture of the Izon people is celebrated yearly in Arogbo: the seat of the Egbesu. It is the day when the Egbesu and other aspects of the Izon culture are celebrated. The “Egbesu Day” is celebrated to ensure that no aspect of

the rich culture of the Izon people is lost to modernization. Thus, it is a festival of cultural revivalism.

The occurrence of “Egbesu Day” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is reflected in text 49:

We don’t have to give a fire-brigade approach to things. If we want to celebrate *Egbesu Day* next year, it must be planned adequately.

Gudugudubele show.

Gudugudubele (the big, deep pot) is the pot of *ofulo* that is cooked with yam or plantain and the dogs and fowls killed during *amafon*. It is usually cooked outside the Egbesu shrine, and every circumcised male in the Ibe can eat of the meal. “Gudugudubele show” is, therefore, coined from *gudugudubele* to describe any occasion where people eat “free food”

Ijawness.

“Ijawness”, coined from the combination of *Ijaw* and the English suffix “-ness”, describes the Ijo (Ijaw) blood that flows in the veins of every Ijaw man or woman which propels him/her to behave in line with the demands of the Ijo (Ijaw) culture. It is this Ijaw blood that makes every Ijaw man or woman to protect the Ijaw interest and, thus, cater for his/her fellow Ijaw men and women.

This sense of “Ijawness” is reflected in text 35:

Odi was destroyed because some greedy Ijaw people sold the town out to the Nigerian State. They sold their essence, their *Ijawness*, because of the peanuts the Nigerian State offered them.

Kpokpotin arcade.

Kpokpotin is the Izon god of fertility which, as it is believed in the Izon socio-cultural setting, gives children to women. Every year, the women who have been blessed with children by *Kpokpotin* do come to the “Kpokpotin shrine” in the company of their husbands

to offer sacrifices. This occasion is usually made more colourful by the appearance of the *Kpokpotin owu* (“Kpokpotin masquerades”) which come to the *Kpokpotin orede* to dance so as to entertain the worshippers and their spectators. *Kpokpotin orede* (“Kpokpotin playground”) is the open space behind the “General Wharf” in Erubiri Quarters, Arogbo where the “Kpokpotin masquerades” dance every year. It is this “open space” that some Izon-English bilinguals have referred to as “Kpokpotin arcade” as reflected in text 38:

During the last Egbesu Day Celebration, it was Robert Ebizimor, the King of Owugiri music, that played on the *Kpokpotin arcade*.

The use of “arcade” for this “open space” appears to be inappropriate because the Izon word *orede* (playground) does not imply an “arcade” which is usually “covered with a roof.”

Ofulo meal.

Ofulo is a kind of “porridge” prepared with fish and sliced plantain. *Ikinhun* (lime) is usually added to it to make it thicker and more delicious. It is often eaten with palm oil. “Ofulo meal” therefore describes the “porridge” that is prepared in this manner.

Okpolotan blood.

Okpolotan is a tree in the Izon setting which, when it is cut, brings out a “thick blood-like fluid”. “Okpolotan blood” is, therefore, a direct translation of *okpolotan isonmoun* (the thick blood-like fluid found in the “okpolotan tree”). Thus, “okpolotan blood” is coined by Izon-English bilinguals to describe a person who has no shame because the blood in his/her body has become so “thick” that he/she no longer has any feelings. This is reflected in the following text:

Many Izon women appear to have lost their shame. Because they have developed the *okpolotan blood* in their veins, they do many abominable things with these bunkerers.

Opu duweji house.

Opu duweji refers to an ancestor that is worshipped as a spirit or god. It is believed within the Izon socio-cultural setting that the ancestors, though dead, live and, thus, they

protect the living and intervene in their lives whenever there is a problem. For this reason, the ancestors are worshipped. Every year, the descendants of each ancestor go to the tomb where he is buried, pour *ogogoro* (local gin) on it and make special prayers to the ancestor. To ensure that women who are “unclean”⁴⁰ are prevented from getting to the tomb and contaminating the purity of the ancestor, a house is usually built over the tomb. This is what is called *opu dūweṣi warị*.

Opu dūweṣi warị is significant within the Izon socio-cultural setting in two respects. One, it is the holy place where the ancestors are worshipped. Two, it serves as a court where the descendants settle disputes. In this court, no one is expected to tell lies because it is believed that the ancestors are there to intervene in the matter and, thus, if anyone tells lies, the person will face the wrath of the ancestors. Thus, the *opu dūweṣi warị* (the house of the ancestor) serves as a place of worship as well as a court where disputes are settled. It is this concept of *opu dūweṣi warị* in Izon that is, therefore, reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals as “*opu dūweṣi house*” (the house of the ancestor) in the following text:

On the third day, the *kūlīkūlīweṣi* usually visits designated *opu dūweṣi houses* in the town so as to greet them and seek their forgiveness.

Owugiri music.

Owugiri is an Izon cultural dance in which the dancer violently shakes every part of the body. “Owugiri music” therefore refers to the music that is played for the people engaged in this traditional dance. The music was popularized by King Robert Ebizimor in the early 1980s.

“Owugiri music” is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals in text 38 already cited under “Kpokpotin arcade”.

Umụnụ pepper soup.

“Pepper soup” is derived from the translation of the Izon *ago* which is a kind of pepperish soup prepared in the Izon setting with fish alone or with fish and yam or plantain. Depending on what is used to prepare it, we can have *buru ago* (“pepper soup cooked with fish and yam”) or *beriba ago* (“pepper soup cooked with fish and plantain”). We can also have *ago* prepared with fish alone without yam or plantain and, thus, it is named after the fish (e.g. *umụnụ*, *ẹkẹu*, *ọdiya* etc.) which is used to prepare it. Thus, “umụnụ pepper soup” is a pepperish soup cooked with the “umụnụ fish” (cat fish).

This is reflected in text 36 already cited under “drink pepper soup.”

4.3.3.3 Other Coinages from the Nigerian Socio-cultural Environment

There are some coinages in the English of Izon-English bilinguals which can neither be traced to the Izon language nor linked to the Izon culture. However, they occur in the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals because they are widely used in the Nigerian setting to appropriately reflect the Nigerian socio-cultural experience. These coinages are presented and analyzed as follows:

Brown envelop.

“Brown envelop” refers to an envelop loaded with naira notes which is offered, especially by those in government or other exalted positions in the Nigerian setting, as a present for somebody after paying a solidarity visit or attending a political rally, meeting etc. so as to secure his or her continued support or loyalty. The “brown envelop” has, therefore, become a metaphor for the endemic evils of bribery and corruption prevalent in the Nigerian setting. This sense of “brown envelop” is reflected in text 40:

Meanwhile, there was no item 7 and the *brown envelops* often sardined in Ghana-must-go bags did not change hands. Thus, our brothers who shamelessly attended the Aso Rock meeting came home in disappointment.

Co-outfit.

“Co-outfit” is used within the Nigerian context to refer to a party outfit usually worn by the members of a social group for identification.

Due process.

“Due process”, popularized by the Obasanjo administration (1999 – 2007) in its anti-corruption crusade, is widely used in the Nigerian context to describe a situation where Nigerians have to get whatever they need, (including contracts, jobs, political appointments etc.), by going through the right process or channel and not through the “back door”.

Fire-brigade approach.

“Fire-brigade approach” is derived from the uncoordinated activities of the Nigerian Fire Service which, perhaps because of its ill-equipped nature, is known for its inability to prepare adequately in advance for any fire outbreak. It is generally believed in the Nigerian setting that, in most cases, it is only when a distress call comes that the officials of the Nigerian Fire Service run around for water, petrol, vehicle and other equipment needed for the operation and, in most cases, these are never available or sufficient. Thus, before the officials of the Nigerian Fire Service get to the scene, all must have been consumed by the fire. “Fire-brigade approach” is, therefore, used within the Nigerian context as a metaphor for inadequate preparation or planning and, thus, anything done without adequate preparation or planning has been given a “fire-brigade approach”. This is reflected in text 49:

We don't have to give a *fire-brigade approach* to things. If we want to celebrate Egbesu Day next year, it must be planned adequately.

Foot-mobiles.

“Foot-mobiles”, also known as “footswagen”, is used in the Nigerian context to refer to the foot as a means of transportation for the poor who could not afford a vehicle.

Ghana-must-go.

“Ghana-must-go” is a type of bag made of sack, used by Ghanaians to pack their belongings in the 1980s when the Nigerian government ordered them to leave the country following the harsh treatment given to Nigerians in Ghana by the Ghanaian government. “Ghana-must-go” is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals in text 40 already cited under “brown envelop”.

God-fatherism.

A “god-father”, especially in the Nigerian political context, refers to a *money bag* that sponsors a politician for an elective position and, thus, controls the politician’s activities after he or she must have succeeded in getting the position. “God-fatherism”, therefore, describes the practice of having, or becoming, a “god-father”.

Go-slow transaction.

Within the Nigerian context, “go-slow” is coined and used as a variant of “traffic jam”. It describes a situation where vehicles have to move slowly because of traffic congestion. In the Nigerian setting, whenever there is a “go-slow”, hawkers often use the opportunity to sell their wares. A “go-slow transaction” is, therefore, a transaction made in a “go-slow”. However, this expression has become idiomatic in the English of Izon-English bilinguals because of the risks involved in the transaction. In some cases, a dubious seller may take an undue advantage of the situation to sell sub-standard goods to the buyer since he/she does not have the opportunity to properly examine what he/she is buying. Similarly, the seller may, in some cases, lose his/her money in the process because the buyer may, after collecting the item from the seller, refuse to throw the money down when the vehicle moves fast and the seller is unable to catch up with it. It is, therefore, a transaction involving risks. This therefore provides the context within which Izon-English bilinguals use the expression,

“go-slow transaction”, to describe any uncertain and risky undertaking. This is reflected in text 48:

It is just like a *go-slow transaction*. You either gain or lose.

247.

“247” is currently used in the Nigerian setting to mean “at all times”. The “24” in “247” represents the twenty-four hours we have in a day, while “7” represents the seven days we have in a week. Thus, “247” means twenty-four hours in a week. “247” is, therefore, used in the Nigerian context as a synonym for the phrase “at all times” as reflected in the following text:

The network is 247.

This means that “the network is available at all times”.

Money bags.

In the Nigerian context, “money bags” is coined and used to describe the people who are very wealthy. Thus, a wealthy person is described as “a money bag”.

National cake.

“National cake” refers to that portion of Nigeria’s wealth which Nigerians acquire especially through illegal and fraudulent means.

Open the floor.

This describes a party situation whereby the chairman of the occasion is given the privilege to dance before other people are allowed to dance. Thus, he “opens the floor” for others to dance.

Socialite.

“Socialite” refers to a person who is fond of associating with people especially to the extent of belonging to a group.

Toaster.

In the Nigerian context, someone who woos a girl or woman is described as her “toaster”.

VIP treatment.

“VIP” is an acronym for “Very Important Personality”. Thus, “VIP treatment” is a kind of preferential treatment given to “important people” in the society who are often favoured for one reason or the other. The occurrence of “VIP treatment” in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is reflected in text 51:

The youths and the security operatives in the Niger Delta understand themselves. They dine and wine and do the oil business together. Even when the youths are arrested, they are given *VIP treatment*.

Yahoo boys.

This refers to a group of young, wealthy people who got their wealth through involvement in cyber crime or on-line fraud which is often referred to as “electronic 419” in the Nigerian context. This is reflected in text 50:

Bunkerers are very rich people because they truck a lot. They are as rich as the *yahoo boys*: the latest group of four-one-niners.

These young wealthy boys are called “yahoo boys” because they usually get their wealth by defrauding people mostly through yahoo messenger chat rooms.

“Yahoo boys” are described as “the latest group of four-one-niners” because the cyber crime they are involved in is a criminal act outlined, among many others, in Section 419 of the Criminal Code of Nigeria. Thus, anyone who engages in on-line fraud or any other financial or economic crime outlined in this section of the Criminal Code is a “four-one-niner” in the Nigerian context.

4.3.4 Idiomatic Expressions

One of the most fascinating manifestations of the influence of the Izon language and culture on the English of Izon-English bilinguals is noticed in the area of idiomatic usage where authentic idiomatic expressions, sourced especially from Izon folklore, are translated into English to appropriately reflect the cultural contexts within which they are used, interpreted and understood in the Izon socio-cultural setting. These idiomatic expressions manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals, which are linked to one cultural belief or the other and which, therefore, attest to the strong influence that the Izon language and culture have on English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting, are presented and analyzed as follows:

To cross to the other side of the river.

The idiom, “to cross to the other side of the river” (die), which is a translation of the Izon idiom *una kiri bein*, is interpreted and understood within the context of the Izon belief that the living and the dead are separated by a wide, deep river. It is believed within the Izon socio-cultural setting that the living live on one side of the river while the dead live on the other side (*duweji ama*, that is, “the dwelling-place of the dead”). Thus, it is only when a person dies that he/she can cross over to the other side. This, therefore, serves as the cultural base on which the meaning of the expression, “to cross to the other side of the river”, rests. Thus, “to cross to the other side of the river” has, within the Izon socio-cultural context, become an acceptable, and a more preferred, variant of the English idiom “to kick the bucket”. “To kick the bucket” appears to be inappropriate and, therefore, less preferred in the Izon socio-cultural setting because it has no socio-cultural relevance to the concept of death in Izon in the sense that there is nothing within the Izon culture that links it to the concept of death and, thus, even if somebody “kicks the bucket” two hundred million times, he/she will not die. Thus, while “to kick the bucket” may be appropriate elsewhere, it is inappropriate in

the Izon socio-cultural context. “To cross to the other side of the river”, which is strongly situated within the Izon cultural belief that the dead must cross the deep, wide river separating the living and the dead before he/she can get to *dūweị ama* (the dwelling place of the dead), is, therefore, considered more appropriate in the Izon context.

“To cross to the other side of the river” is reflected in the English of Izon-English bilinguals as shown in text 37 cited under “duburuku corpse”.

To split open the crocodile’s intestine.

“To split open the crocodile’s intestine” (to reveal a secret) is a translation of the Izon idiom, *segi ufurou tu*, which is situated within a strong cultural belief in the Izon socio-cultural setting. The crocodile is a scarce amphibious carnivore which, as it is believed in the riverine Izon setting, is difficult to find and kill. It is, therefore, strongly believed that whatever that is inside the crocodile’s intestine is a “top secret” since nobody knows what is there. The crocodile’s intestine is, therefore, a metaphor for secrecy. Based on this, it is believed within the Izon cultural setting that the intestine of the crocodile, which is expected to contain many “strange” things including parts of the human body like the hair, teeth, finger-nails etc., should not be “split open” in the public especially in the presence of children because no one knows what will be found in it. “To split open the crocodile’s intestine” is, therefore, used in the Izon context to mean “to reveal a secret” and, thus, it is a variant of the English idiom, “to let the cat out of the bag”.

“To let the cat out of the bag”, just like “to kick the bucket”, has no socio-cultural relevance in the Izon cultural context because, in the Izon socio-cultural setting, cats are never put in bags. Thus, “to put a cat in a bag” is contrary to the Izon worldview because it does not reflect what actually happens in the Izon socio-cultural setting where cats are, especially when they are newly-bought, put in an *ite* (a locally-made fish cage). The expression, “to let the cat out of the bag” is, therefore, inappropriate within the Izon socio-

cultural context because, despite the fact that it has no socio-cultural relevance in the Izon cultural setting since cats are not put in bags, the *ite* which, within the Izon setting, performs the function of the “bag” in the idiom “to let the cat out of the bag” has nothing secret in it since what is inside it is clearly seen by everyone. It is, therefore, more appropriate for Izon-English bilinguals to use the idiom “to split open the crocodile’s intestine” instead of the expression “to let the cat out of the bag” which is, in fact, contrary to the Izon worldview.

The occurrence of “to split open the crocodile’s intestine” is reflected in text 43 already cited under *Okparan*.

To rehearse the cock’s foolishness.

“To rehearse the cock’s foolishness” (to behave in such a way as to endanger one’s life) is situated within the Izon folktale involving the cock (*oweí ofini*) and the wildcat (*ewere*) which explains why the wildcat kills and eats the cock. The wildcat, as it is believed within the Izon socio-cultural setting, would have lived in mortal fear of the cock if the cock had not revealed the secret of the “fire” on its head to the wildcat. The wildcat dreaded the cock so much that it could not come close to it (the cock) because it thought that the *kón* (the reddish organ) on the head of the cock was a fire. Thus, whenever the wildcat saw the cock, it would run away because it didn’t want the “fire” on the cock’s head to burn it to death. One day, when the cock noticed this strange behaviour of the wildcat towards it, the cock called the wildcat and asked it why it was behaving that way. The response of the wildcat was quite revealing of the fact that it was living in constant dread of the cock: “I don’t want to be consumed by the fire on your head.” This sounded so funny that the cock had to explain to the wildcat that what was on the cock’s head was not a fire and that the wildcat should not be scared because it was not hot and could not, therefore, burn the wildcat. The cock then persuaded the wildcat to come closer so as to feel what was on the cock’s head. When the wildcat, after a long hesitation, came closer to the cock and touched the “reddish organ” on

the cock's head, the wildcat realized to its utter amazement that the "reddish organ" on the cock's head, which was thought to be a fire, was not hot. It was on that day that the wildcat stopped fearing the cock because it had been made to discover that what it had dreaded in the cock was not a fire and was, therefore, harmless. Thus, from that day, the wildcat began to kill and eat the cock because the cock was so foolish that it endangered its life by revealing the secret that scared the wildcat. This folktale, therefore, provides the context within which the idiom, "to rehearse the cock's foolishness" (to behave in such a way as to endanger one's life), is used, interpreted and understood within the Izon socio-cultural setting.

This sense of "to rehearse the cock's foolishness" is reflected in text 46:

There is no smoke without fire. They *rehearsed the cock's foolishness* and this gave the government an edge over the Ibe.

To have hooks in one's fingers and toes.

The idiom, "to have hooks in one's fingers and toes", which is a translation of the Izon expression *kòbò tūwa abịra mọ bụwọ mọ* (the fingers and toes that have hooks), is considered appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context because it is in line with the worldview of the Izon people. "To have hooks in one's fingers and toes" (be clever at stealing or picking other people's belongings) reflects what happened in an Izon folktale where the cat visited its friends (the lion, the tiger and the squirrel) and used the hooks mysteriously fixed to its fingers and toes to "hook up" all the precious belongings of the animals it visited. Thus, whenever the "clever" cat put its fingers or toes on anything in the house of any of the animals visited, that thing was hooked up and, thus, it went along with the cat. This clever nature of the cat in stealing or picking the belongings of other animals, therefore, provides the context within which the idiom, "to have hooks in one's fingers and toes" is used, interpreted and understood within the Izon socio-cultural context to mean "be clever at stealing or picking other people's belongings." "To have hooks in one's fingers and

toes” has, therefore, become a variant of the English idiom “to be light-fingered” in the Izon socio-cultural setting.

To meet somebody well.

“To meet somebody well”, (as in “You have met me well”, used as an invitation when one is visited while eating), is a translation of the Izon expression, *i bo ẹ la tẹi*, which is used to invited a visitor to partake in a meal. The appropriateness of this idiom within the Izon socio-cultural context lies on the Izon belief that when a visitor meets one while eating, the visitor should be allowed to partake in the meal because it is strongly believed that such a visitor has good intentions for one. Thus, “You have met me well”, as a form of invitation to the visitor who meets one while eating, is appropriate within the Izon cultural setting where people eat together in the same plate. This may, however, sound strange and, therefore, inappropriate within the English cultural context where people, including the members of the same (nuclear) family, are required by the demands of the English culture to eat separately. Thus, within the English culture, it may not be necessary for someone already eating to invite another person to join him/her in eating the meal since no provision is made for the person.

To go on a dog’s errand.

“To go on a dog’s errand” is derived from the direct translation of the Izon idiom, *obiri ikọ wọni*, which reflects what happened in an Izon folktale that explains the role the dog played in the contest between the ram and the he-goat. The contest between the ram and the he-goat was a fight for supremacy, and it became so fierce that the horns on the heads of the two animals got broken. Thus, to ensure that the fight was won, the ram sent the dog to its (the ram’s) house to bring an extra horn given to it by the Creator. The he-goat, on its part, sent the she-goat to do the same. Both the dog and the she-goat were seriously warned not to do any other thing until the extra horn was brought since this was very crucial to the determination of the winner in the contest. On its way to the ram’s house, the dog was invited

to eat faeces and, in disregard of the urgent mission on which it was sent, it entered without any hesitation and ate all that it was offered. Similarly, the she-goat was invited to eat plantain peelings but it declined firmly on the grounds that it was going on an urgent mission. Thus, the she-goat went straight to the place where the horn was kept and took it to the he-goat. With this, the he-goat became strengthened and it began to hit the ram very hard. The helpless ram managed to endure the hard hits for a while but couldn't stand it any longer. How the poor ram wished that the dog had brought the horn at the right time when it was badly needed. But all was in vain since the dog was busy eating faeces instead of doing what it was sent to do. At the end, the he-goat used the horn that the she-goat brought to kill the ram.

This folktale, therefore, provides the context within which the idiom, “to go on a dog’s errand”, is used within the Izon socio-cultural setting in the sense of “doing something which is contrary to what one was sent to do.” This is reflected in text 45:

Those we chose to represent us in the past *went on a dog’s errand*. Instead of doing what we sent them to do, they did otherwise.

To hold the walking stick.

“To hold the walking stick” (to become very old) is a direct translation of the Izon idiom *akolol korij* where *akolol* means “a special type of walking stick held by old people to support themselves while walking”, while *korij* means “hold”. The *akolol* is, therefore, a metaphor for old age since it is known to be associated with the old people who hold it so as to support themselves while walking. “To go on a dog’s errand”, therefore, means “to become very old” as reflected in the following text:

It is the responsibility of the *opu dūwej* to protect the living. As part of this responsibility, each *opu dūwej* in an Izon family ensures that the members of the family whom he has left behind do not die young but be old enough *to hold the walking stick*.

To be a mosquito to somebody's ears.

“To be a mosquito to somebody's ears” (to be a constant source of disturbance to somebody) can be traced to the love affair between the mosquito (*otungbolo*) and the ear (*beri*). According to an Izon folktale which explains why the mosquito disturbs the ear, the mosquito was in passionate love with the ear and, thus, it had to propose marriage to the ear. However, the ear turned down the mosquito's offer on the grounds that the mosquito had an uncertain future in the sense that the mosquito could, because of its light nature, be blown away to the sea by the breeze and make it perish there. The mosquito begged the ear to consider the proposal but the ear maintained that it would not marry the mosquito. Thus, the mosquito had no other option than to leave the ear alone. But before it left, the mosquito promised that whenever it came across the ear, it would remind the ear that it (the mosquito) was still alive and not dead. This is what the mosquito usually does whenever it comes close to the ear and, thus, the mosquito serves as a source of disturbance to the ear. The mosquito has, therefore, become a metaphor for any constant source of disturbance in the Izon socio-cultural context. This, therefore, provides the context within which the idiom, “to be a mosquito to somebody's ears”, is used and understood within the Izon setting to mean “a constant source of disturbance to somebody.” This is reflected in text 44:

The Ijaw Nation will continue *to be a mosquito to the ears of*
Nigeria until our demands are met.

To beat one's chest.

This is a translation of the Izon expression, *agbobu titi*, which is often associated with the gorilla's habit of beating its chest. It is believed among the Izons that it is the gorilla which is of age that beats its chest so as to signify that it is bold enough to do anything to protect itself. The expression, *agbobu titi* (to beat one's chest), therefore, connotes boldness. Thus, “to beat one's chest” means “be bold enough to do or say something.”

To be under the white cloth.

The “white cloth” (*pina bide*) is believed within the Izon socio-cultural setting to be the symbol of the Egbesu: the god of war and peace. The “white cloth”, therefore, represents the Egbesu and all that it stands for in the Izon setting – purity, justice, power, protection etc. This perhaps explains why the youths, who go to the war front, usually tie a piece of white cloth round the head since the “white cloth” signifies the presence of the Egbesu at the war front and, thus, provides protection for them. The effect of this white cloth is most felt especially when the bullets that are shot at the youths are either diverted elsewhere or made ineffective as they are prevented from penetrating the bodies of the youths. The youths are, therefore, protected by the Egbesu because they are believed “to be under the white cloth” which is the symbol of the Egbesu.

“To be under the white cloth” is, therefore, used and understood within the Izon context in the sense of “being under the protection of the Egbesu”. This context of “to be under the white cloth” is what is reflected in text 42:

The youths cannot be harmed because they are *under the white cloth*.
It serves as bullet proof for them.

4.3.5 Proverbs

Another fascinating manifestation of the influence of the Izon language and culture on English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting is the use of Izon proverbs which give a sumptuous Izon flavour to the English of Izon-English bilinguals. Various proverbs, which are directly translated from the Izon language into English, are used by Izon-English bilinguals in the Izon cultural context to warn, caution, admonish, console, encourage and to generally add colour and vigour to what is being said. Some of these proverbs are presented and analyzed as follows:

The head of the family-head is a refuse dump.

“The head of the family-head is a refuse dump” is derived from the translation of the Izon proverb *okosuwei tibi mi udusu* which reflects the significant role that the head of the family plays in the Izon cultural setting and the sacrifices he is required to make in the course of carrying out his responsibilities as the eldest man in the family. In the Izon setting, though the family-head is highly respected and admired by all in the family, he is often held responsible for the misconduct of any member of the family. This is so because all the members of the family are recognized and treated as individuals under the name of the family-head who is widely regarded as a role model that is expected to provide the right type of cultural training to each member of the family. Thus, if a man or woman from the family misbehaves, it is assumed that the family-head did not give the required cultural training to the person and, thus, he is blamed for failing to perform his cultural responsibilities. If, for example, a woman from the family gets married and behaves in an improper manner in her husband’s house, it is the family-head that will, in most cases, receive the blame for not giving her the right cultural training required of a good Izon woman despite the fact that he is not her biological father.

Similarly, if any male member of the family takes a wife from another family, it is in the name of the family-head that the *ikpo* is arranged and, thus, if the woman has any problem in her matrimonial home and the members of her family want to talk to the husband, the message is usually conveyed through the family-head. The family-head, therefore, receives all the heaps of insult, blame, attack etc. directed at the family because of the misconduct of individual members of the family. This is why the head of the eldest man in the family is described as a refuse dump in the Izon context. The “head of the family-head”, therefore, becomes a metaphor for anyone holding a leadership position. Thus, the proverb serves as a form of encouragement to those in leadership positions to forge ahead despite the expected

impediments that may come their way in the course of performing their leadership responsibilities. This proverb also reminds every leader of the fact that the role he/she plays is that which requires selfless devotion and sacrifice and, thus, he/she should be prepared to endure any misfortune that may be suffered in the course of performing this responsibility.

A finger cannot pick a louse from the head.

The proverb, “a finger cannot pick a louse from the head”, is derived from the Izon proverb *kẹnị bira isọlọ nimi tịbị ọ uku kọn ghan* which reflects the importance attached to unity, co-operation and peaceful co-existence in bringing about development and progress in the Izon socio-cultural setting. “A finger” is a metaphor for any isolated effort made by an individual which may, therefore, not succeed in producing the desired result. Thus, as it is impossible for a finger to take a louse from the head and, therefore, the need for the other fingers to get involved in the effort, it is also impossible, in most cases, for the isolated effort of an individual to produce the desired results especially in terms of rapid societal development and, thus, it is important for all in the society to come together and work hard to ensure that the common goal of the society is achieved. The significance of this proverb, therefore, lies on its emphasis on unity, co-operation and peaceful co-existence for the development and progress of society.

Even if the bead is not long enough to go round the neck, it can still be used to tie the wrist.

This proverb is a translation of the Izon proverb, *pọn la gha ibọlọ kpọ kọ bira kaka mịnị ye*, which underlies the high premium placed on prudent management of available resources in the Izon setting. The proverb, “even if the bead is not long enough to go round the neck, it can still be used to tie the wrist”, therefore, lauds prudent management of resources and discourages wastefulness in the sense that it teaches people to make good use of whatever they have no matter how small or little it is and, thus, urges them to avoid wastefulness and extravagance. Thus, the didactic strength of this proverb lies on its ability to

teach people to be contented with whatever they have and to ensure that they use it to do exactly what it is most useful for.

He who closes the door does not close the ears.

“He who closes the door does not close the ears” is a translated version of the Izon proverb, *wari gban bọ beri gban ghan*, often used at the end of a speech or announcement to draw attention to the importance and urgency attached to what has been said thereby jolting the hearer to respond immediately to it. It, therefore, serves as a form of warning to all that hear the message and, thus, urges them to adhere strictly to it and do what it requires them to do.

The sick is a slave to the medicine man.

This proverb, which is sourced from the Izon proverb *dọnwei burịwei omini*, is often used within the Izon setting as a form of consolation for those who are helpless and are, therefore, at the mercy of other people who usually oppress or exploit them because of their condition.

In this section titled “Analysis of Lexico-semantic Influences”, we have presented and analyzed the various lexico-semantic influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals and have, in a bid to ascertain their appropriateness (or otherwise) within the Izon socio-cultural context, traced them to the Izon socio-cultural milieu so as to identify the cultural force that provides the context within which they are used and understood in the Izon socio-cultural setting. As it has been found in this section, the lexico-semantic influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals are, except in a few cases⁴¹, largely found to be deeply rooted in the cultural practices and beliefs of the Izon people and are, therefore, considered appropriate within the Izon context because they reflect the Izon socio-cultural experience. Thus, they should be accepted and treated as permissible local variations

whose appropriateness and legitimacy are strongly founded on the cultural patterns of the Izon people and are, therefore, in conformity with their worldview.

4.3 A SUMMARY OF THE SYNTACTIC AND LEXICO-SEMANTIC INFLUENCES ANALYZED IN THIS STUDY

Samples of the syntactic and lexico-semantic influences analyzed in sections 4.2 and 4.3 of this study are summarily presented in the following table:

	Syntactic/Lexico-semantic Influences	Example	Acceptability/ Unacceptability
1.	Using the base form of the verb even when the subject is in the third person singular.	Text 1: Amafoin <i>perform</i> many functions in Arogbo-Izon community.	Unacceptable
2.	The occurrence of the reflexive pronoun <i>his self</i> instead of <i>himself</i> .	Text 2: If Dęgbęla love <i>his self</i> , he will go.	Unacceptable
3.	The use of such masculine pronouns as <i>he</i> , <i>him</i> and <i>his</i> for animals including the female.	Text 3: The dog bite <i>his</i> tail.	Unacceptable
4.	The pluralization of all nouns, including the irregular nouns, through the addition of -s to the singular form.	Text 4: At this evil forest, there are several skulls and <i>tooths</i> of dead people who are not clean.	Unacceptable
5.	The formation of the past or past participle forms of irregular verbs through the addition of the -ed past tense morpheme.	Text 5: This traditional thing, <i>isele</i> , is <i>grinded</i> on wood with sand.	Unacceptable
6.	The treatment of <i>fell</i> (the past tense of <i>fall</i>) as the base form of the verb.	Text 6: The crown of Agadagba must not <i>fell</i> . If it <i>fells</i> , there will be problem in the community.	Unacceptable
7.	The double-making of tense (past) for both the auxiliary verb and the main verb especially in wh-questions.	Text 7: That Obasanjo destroyed Odi that year was ridiculous. When <i>did</i> he <i>became</i> the president? Was it not in 1999?	Unacceptable
8.	The use of aspect especially in sentences involving both the perfective aspect and the progressive aspect.	Text 8: The kulikuliweis <i>have being walking</i> round the town since morning.	Unacceptable
9.	The use of <i>which</i> in contexts where <i>who</i> would have been preferred.	Text 9: The Agadagba <i>which</i> is responsible for administrating the kingdom have chiefs under him.	Unacceptable
10.	The use of <i>who</i> in contexts where <i>whom</i> would have been preferred and vice versa.	Text 10: Munbo is the man <i>whom</i> , they allege, is killing goats during amafoin.	Unacceptable

11.	Dropping the indefinite article before such determiners as <i>little</i> and <i>few</i> especially when they are used to mean <i>a little</i> and <i>a few</i> .	Text 11: There is <i>little</i> water left in the bucket; go and have your bath.	Unacceptable
12.	The co-occurrence of such words as <i>refill</i> , <i>repeat</i> and <i>return</i> with <i>again</i> .	Text 12: If the oil touches the ground, the kpokpotin priest has to <i>refill</i> the bottle <i>again</i> .	Unacceptable
13.	The co-occurrence of possessives and demonstratives as pre-modifiers in the structure of a noun phrase.	Text 13: For a European to come to <i>that our</i> late Agadagba and ask for the secret of <i>this our</i> Egbesu, you know that something has happened somewhere.	Acceptable
14.	The occurrence of adjectives of quality before adjectives of colour in the structure of a noun phrase.	Text 14: That <i>clean pure white</i> cloth is the symbol of Egbesu.	Acceptable
15.	The pluralization of certain non-count nouns.	Text 15: These <i>behaviours</i> are not acceptable among the IZONS.	Acceptable
16.	The use of such stative verbs as <i>see</i> and <i>hear</i> with the <i>-ing</i> morpheme.	Text 16: She <i>is hearing</i> you.	Acceptable
17.	The substitution of certain prepositions for others.	Text 17: I may say that fishing is the major occupation of the IZONS because their environment is <i>conducive for</i> fishing activities.	Acceptable
18.	The treatment of some non-prepositional verbs as prepositional verbs.	Text 18: The Agadagba and his chiefs will sit, put their heads together and <i>discuss about</i> the progress of the whole community.	Acceptable
19.	Using some prepositional verbs as non-prepositional verbs.	Text 19: One other point that can be used to buttress what Chief Okpoka has said is that Egbesu is the god of war and peace.	Acceptable
20.	Showing a preference for the co-occurrence of the auxiliary verb and the main verb in response to polar questions.	Text 20: Question: Will you attend the meeting? Response: Yes, I will attend.	Acceptable
21.	The use of feminine pronouns to reflect the femininity of God (the Woman who created the universe).	Text 21: Tẹmẹaraṣi is what we call God. <i>She</i> is the Creator of the universe.	Acceptable

22.	The use of neuter-reflecting pronouns such as <i>it</i> and <i>its</i> for <i>god</i> .	Text 22: Egbesu is the god of war. <i>It</i> is the god that leads the Izens to attack their enemies.	Acceptable
23.	The use of <i>they</i> to refer to a caller whose identity or sex is unknown or as an honorific pronoun to show respect to an elderly person.	Text 23: Somebody is calling you. <i>They</i> are calling you, can't you hear?	Acceptable
24.	The occurrence of the first person before the third person in the structure of a compound subject-NP.	Text 24: For example, if I like the girl and want to marry her, <i>I and my father</i> will go to her parents and pay the <i>ikọ</i> .	Acceptable
25.	The avoidance of tag questions.	Text 25: You are going?	Acceptable
26.	The extension of the meanings of kinship terms to accommodate the Izon cultural context.	Text 31: Our brothers and sisters in Odi were massacred. Our fathers, mothers, wives, sons, daughters all were callously maimed. This was the reward they had to receive for voting Obasanjo to power.	Acceptable
27.	Domesticating greetings in English to accommodate the contexts which the Izon culture provides for them.	Text 32: Greeting: How do you do? Response: Fine.	Acceptable
28.	Extending the meaning of <i>borrow</i> to cover that of <i>lend</i> .	Text 27: You don't have to tell anybody to borrow you the items you will use to make sacrifice to Kpokpotin.	Acceptable
29.	<i>Drink pepper soup</i> .	Text 36: We usually drink umun pepper soup with boiled yam and palm oil.	Acceptable
30.	Using <i>escort</i> in the sense of <i>see off</i> , <i>accompany</i> or <i>usher in</i> .	Text 34: The <i>dụweị anume</i> are songs that escort the dead to the realm of the ancestors.	Acceptable (usher in) / Unacceptable (accompany or see off).
31.	Extending the meaning of <i>hear</i> to cover that of <i>smell</i> .	Text 29: When you go near the shrine, the first thing you will hear is the smell of palmy.	Unacceptable
32.	<i>Madam</i> , used in a derogatory sense, for a married woman who engages in extra-marital relations for financial gains.	Text 28: All the women in our towns and villages have become madams overnight because of these bunkerers.	Acceptable

33.	Share (a husband).	Text 41: Within the Izon culture, when a man marries a new wife, the senior wife is expected to receive the junior wife and treat her as her sister because they share the same husband.	Acceptable
34.	<i>Bullet proof</i> : a piece of white cloth prepared in the Egbesu shrine, used as a protection against gunshots.	Text 42: The youths cannot be harmed because they are under the white cloth. It serves as bullet proof for them.	Acceptable
35.	<i>Bunkerers</i> refers to the people involved in illegal oil deal in the Niger Delta.	Text 50: Bunkerers are very rich people because they truck a lot. They are as rich as the yahoo boys: the latest group of four-one-niners.	Acceptable
36.	<i>Resource control</i> refers to the traditional Izon shirt called <i>amayanabọ</i> .	Text 39: The second thing the Ijaw Nation demanded for was fresh fish and it was smartly given a snake. But to the amazement of the Nigerian State, the spokesman for the Ijaw Nation accepted the snake and expressed his profound appreciation for 60 minutes without swallowing saliva, and put it into one of the pockets in his resource-control attire without any danger.	Acceptable
37.	<i>Ikọ</i> refers to the money the husband (bridegroom) pays on the newly-taken <i>ayoro</i> (bride).	Text 26: <i>Ikọ</i> is the amount that the husband pays on the head of his wife as bride price.	Acceptable
38.	<i>Ogele</i> refers to a procession of people who sing and dance as they move round the town.	Text 33: For how else can we explain the shooting, maiming and killing of defenceless youths, singing and dancing in an ogele?	Acceptable
39.	<i>Duburuku rite of passage</i> describes the traditional burial rite that a <i>duburuku corpse</i> (the corpse of an adherent of Izon traditional religion) must undergo before it is allowed passage to the realm of the ancestors.	Text 37: When an old man or woman dies, he/she becomes a <i>duburuku corpse</i> . Until the <i>duburuku rite of passage</i> is performed, there is no way he/she can cross to the	Acceptable

		other side of the river where the dead live.	
40.	<i>Egbesu Day</i> refers to the 28th of September when the culture of the Izon people is celebrated yearly in Arogbo: the seat of the Egbesu.	Text 49: We don't have to give a fire-brigade approach to things. If we want to celebrate Egbesu Day next year, it must be planned adequately.	Acceptable
41.	<i>Ijawness</i> describes the Ijo (Ijaw) blood that flows in the veins of every Ijaw man or woman which propels him/her to protect the Ijaw interest and, thus, cater for his/her fellow Ijaw men and women.	Text 35: Odi was destroyed because some greedy Ijaw people sold the town out to the Nigerian State. They sold their essence, their Ijawness, because of the peanuts the Nigerian State offered them.	Acceptable
42.	<i>Kpokpotin arcade</i> refers to the open space behind the <i>General Wharf</i> in Erubiri Quarters, Arogbo where the <i>Kpokpotin masquerades</i> dance every year.	Text 38: During the last Egbesu Day Celebration, it was Robert Ebizimor, the King of Owugiri music, that played on the Kpokpotin arcade.	Unacceptable
43.	<i>Umunu pepper soup</i> is pepperish soup cooked with the <i>umunu fish</i> (cat fish).	See text 36 already cited under <i>drink pepper soup</i> .	Acceptable
44.	<i>To cross to the other side of the river</i> (die).	See text 37 already cited under <i>duburuku rite of passage</i> on this table.	Acceptable
45.	<i>To rehearse the cock's foolishness</i> (to behave in such a way as to endanger one's life).	Text 46: There is no smoke without fire. They rehearsed the cock's foolishness and this gave the government an edge over the Ibe.	Acceptable
46.	<i>To go on a dog's errand</i> (to do something which is contrary to what one was sent to do).	Text 45: Those we chose to represent us in the past went on a dog's errand. Instead of doing what we sent them to do, they did otherwise.	Acceptable
47.	<i>To be a mosquito to somebody's ears</i> (to be a constant source of disturbance to somebody).	Text 44: The Ijaw Nation will continue to be a mosquito to the ears of Nigeria until our demands are met.	Acceptable
48.	<i>To be under the white cloth</i> (to be under the protection of the Egbesu).	See text 42 already cited under <i>bullet proof</i> .	Acceptable
49.	<i>To split open the crocodile's intestine</i> (to reveal a secret).	Text 43: The Okparans cannot disclose the secret of the Egbesu because it is a taboo to split open the	Acceptable

		crocodile's intestine in public.	
50.	<i>He who closes the door does not close the ears</i> is often used at the end of a speech or announcement to draw attention to the importance and urgency attached to what has been said thereby jolting the hearer to respond immediately to it.	Text 47: He who closes the door does not close the ears.	Acceptable
51.	<i>Brown envelop</i> is a Nigerian English item used as a metaphor for the endemic evils of bribery and corruption prevalent in the Nigerian setting.	Text 40: Meanwhile, there was no item 7 and the brown envelops often sardined in Ghana-must-go bags did not change hands. Thus, our brothers who shamelessly attended the Aso Rock meeting came home in disappointment.	Acceptable
52.	<i>Fire brigade approach</i> , a Nigerian English item, is used as a metaphor for inadequate preparation or planning.	See text 49 already cited under <i>Egbesu Day</i> .	Acceptable
53.	<i>Go slow transaction</i> describes any uncertain and risky undertaking.	Text 48: It is just like a go-slow transaction. You either gain or lose.	Acceptable
54.	The restriction of the meaning of <i>light</i> , <i>road</i> or <i>water</i> to mean electricity, motor-way or pipe-borne water provided especially by government.	Text 30: We don't have light, road or water. In fact, we are the most neglected people in Ondo State.	Unacceptable
55.	<i>VIP treatment</i> is a kind of preferential treatment given to <i>important people</i> in the society who are often favoured for one reason or the other.	Text 51: The youths and the security operatives in the Niger Delta understand themselves. They dine and wine and do the oil business together. Even when the youths are arrested, they are given VIP treatment.	Acceptable
56.	<i>Yahoo boys</i> (a group of young, wealthy people who got their wealth through involvement in cyber crime or no-line fraud popularly referred to as <i>electronic 419</i> in the Nigerian context).	See text 50 already cited under <i>bunkerers</i> .	Acceptable

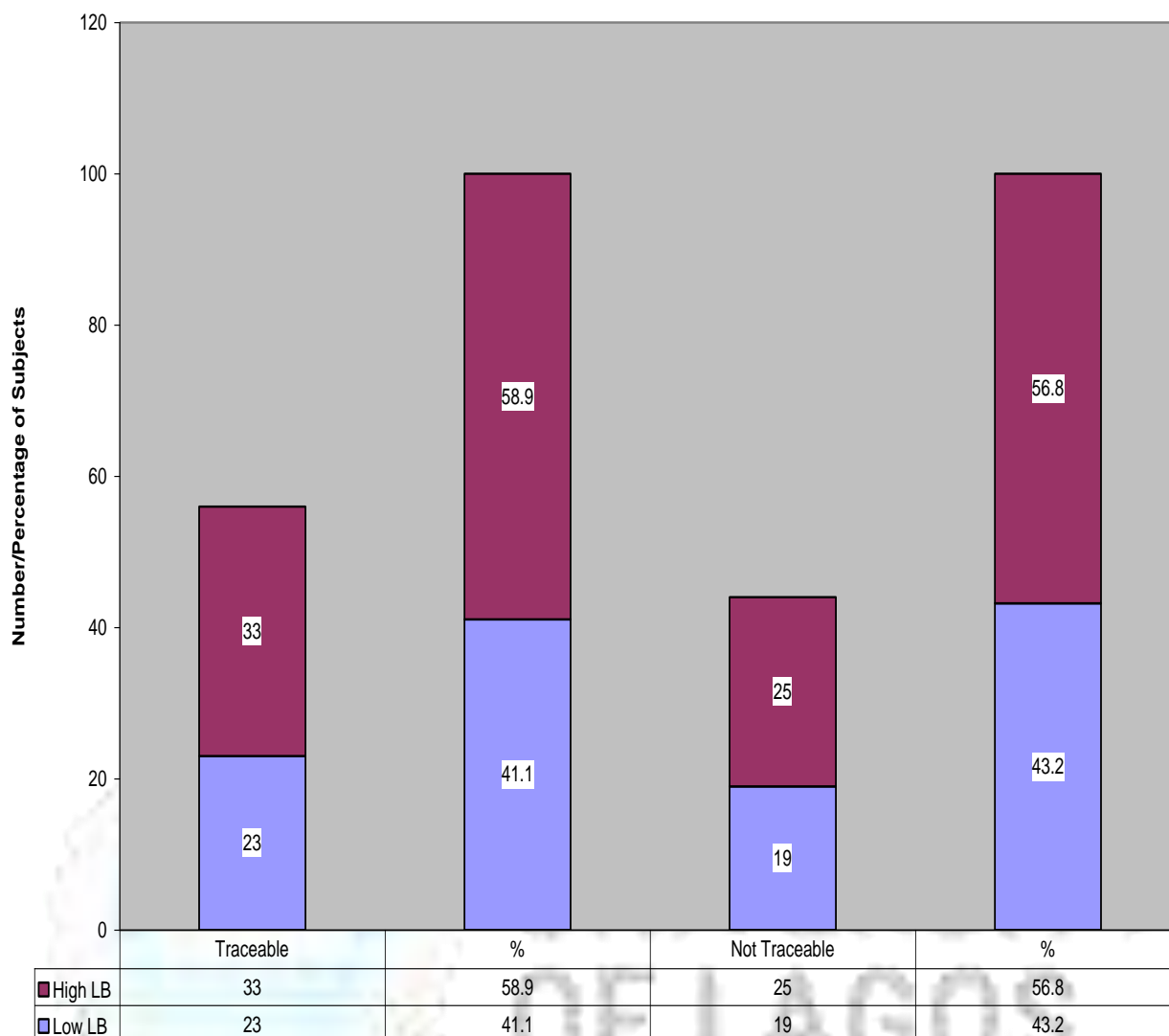
4.5 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF STATISTICAL DATA

This section deals with the presentation and analysis of the statistical data collected to measure the extent to which the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals within the Izon socio-cultural setting can be induced by their linguistic, cultural and educational background. The data collected for the study are presented below:

(a) **Table I: The Influence of Izon on the English Usage of Izon-English Bilinguals**

Departures Traceable to Izon Influence	Linguistic Background			Percentage	
	High	Low	Row Total	Traceable	Not Traceable
Traceable	33	23	56	56%	44%
Not Traceable	25	19	44		
Column Total	58	42	100		

Table I shows that fifty-eight (58) of the one hundred subjects used for the study have high linguistic background, while forty-two (42) of the subjects have low linguistic background. While thirty-three (33) out of the fifty-eight (58) subjects who have high linguistic background agreed that the departures noticed in the English of Izon-English bilinguals are traceable to the influence of the Izon language, the remaining twenty-five (25) disagreed. They rather traced the departures to lack of exposure to correct English usage. Similarly, out of the forty-two (42) subjects who have low linguistic background, twenty-three (23) agreed that the departures in the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals are the consequences of the influence of the Izon language, while the remaining nineteen (19) disagreed. This is reflected in the following percentage bar chart:



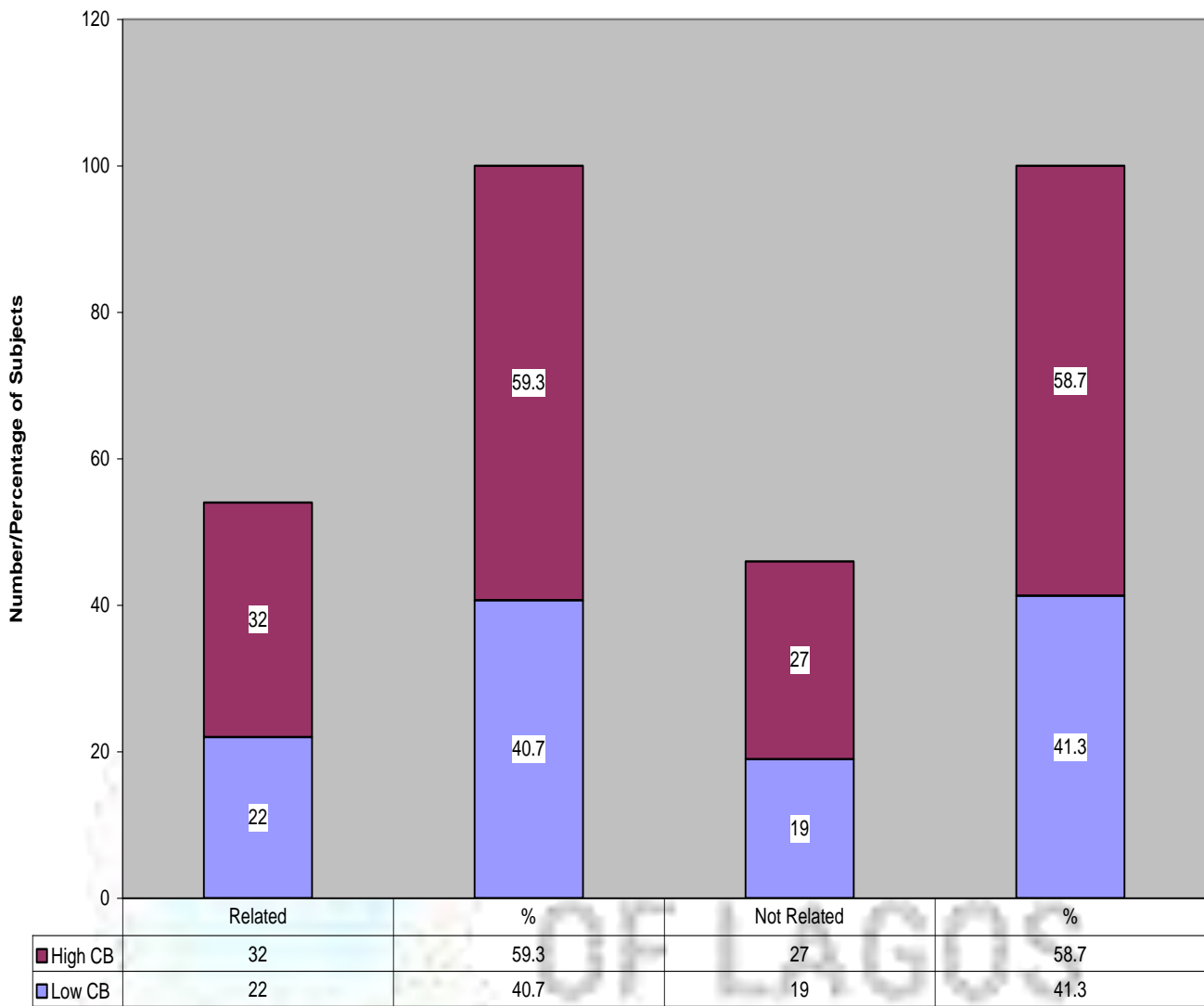
Responses of the subjects on the Influence of Izon on the English of Izon-English Bilinguals

According to table I, 56% of the subjects confirmed that the departures noticed in the English of Izon-English bilinguals are traceable to the influence of the Izon language, while the remaining 44% traced the departures to lack of exposure to correct English usage. The fact that the percentage of positive responses (56%) is higher than that of negative responses (44%) implies that the linguistic background of Izon-English bilinguals has a lot to do with their English usage. It therefore follows that the syntax and lexis of Izon have tremendous influence on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

(b) Table II: The Izon Culture and English Usage in the Izon Socio-cultural Setting

English Usage	Cultural Background			Percentage	
	High	Low	Row Total	Related	Not Related
Related	32	22	54	54%	46%
Not Related	27	19	46		
Column Total	59	41	100		

Table II shows that fifty-nine (59), out of the one hundred subjects used for the study, have high cultural background, while forty-one (41) are of low cultural background. Out of the fifty-nine (59) subjects with high cultural background, thirty-two (32) are of the opinion that English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting is related to the Izon culture, while twenty-seven (27) of them rejected this view. Similarly twenty-two (22) of the forty-one (41) subjects whose cultural background is low attested to the relationship between the Izon culture and the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals. However, the remaining nineteen (19) disagreed: The information is presented in the percentage bar chart below:



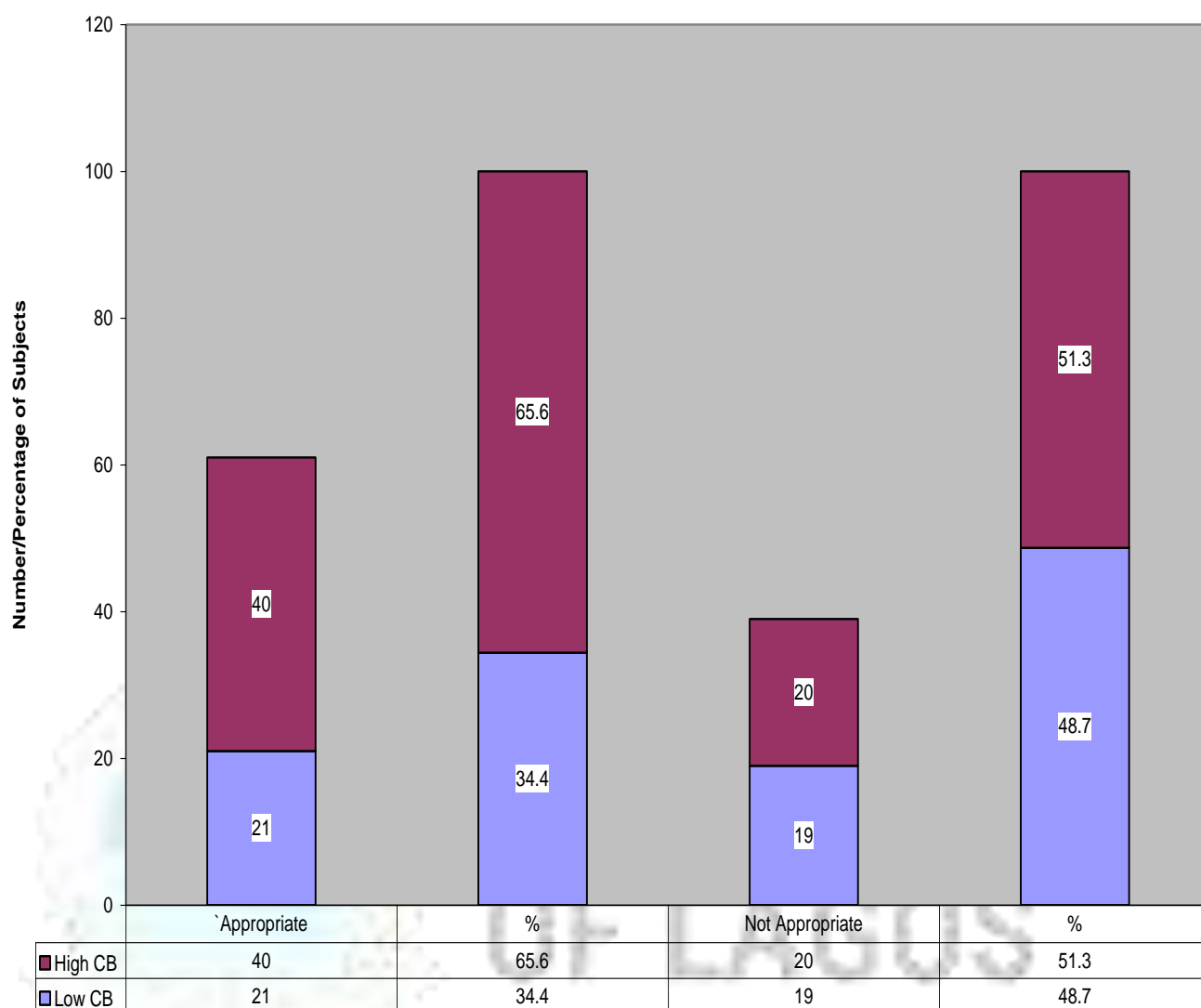
Responses of subjects on the Relationship between the Izon Culture and English usage

According to table II, 54% of the respondents are of the opinion that there is a strong connection between the Izon culture and English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting. This indicates that the percentage of positive responses is higher than that of negative responses (46%). This, therefore, implies that the Izon culture, to a large extent, influences English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting.

(c) Table III: The Izon Culture and the Appropriateness of the English Usage of Izon-English Bilinguals within the Izon Socio-cultural Context

English Usage	Cultural Background			Percentage	
	High	Low	Row Total	Appropriate	Not Appropriate
Appropriate	40	21	61	61%	39%
Not Appropriate	20	19	39		
Column Total	60	40	100		

Table III shows that sixty (60) of the one hundred sampled subjects are of high cultural background, while forty (40) have low cultural background. While forty (40) of the sixty subjects whose cultural background is high agreed that the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals is appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context, the remaining twenty (20) disagreed. Similarly, while twenty-one (21) of the forty (40) subjects who have low cultural background attested to the appropriateness of the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals, the remaining nineteen (19) expressed the opinion that the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals is inappropriate as far as the use of English is concerned. This is reflected in the following percentage bar chart:



Response of Subjects on the Appropriateness of English usage within the Izon Socio-Cultural Context.

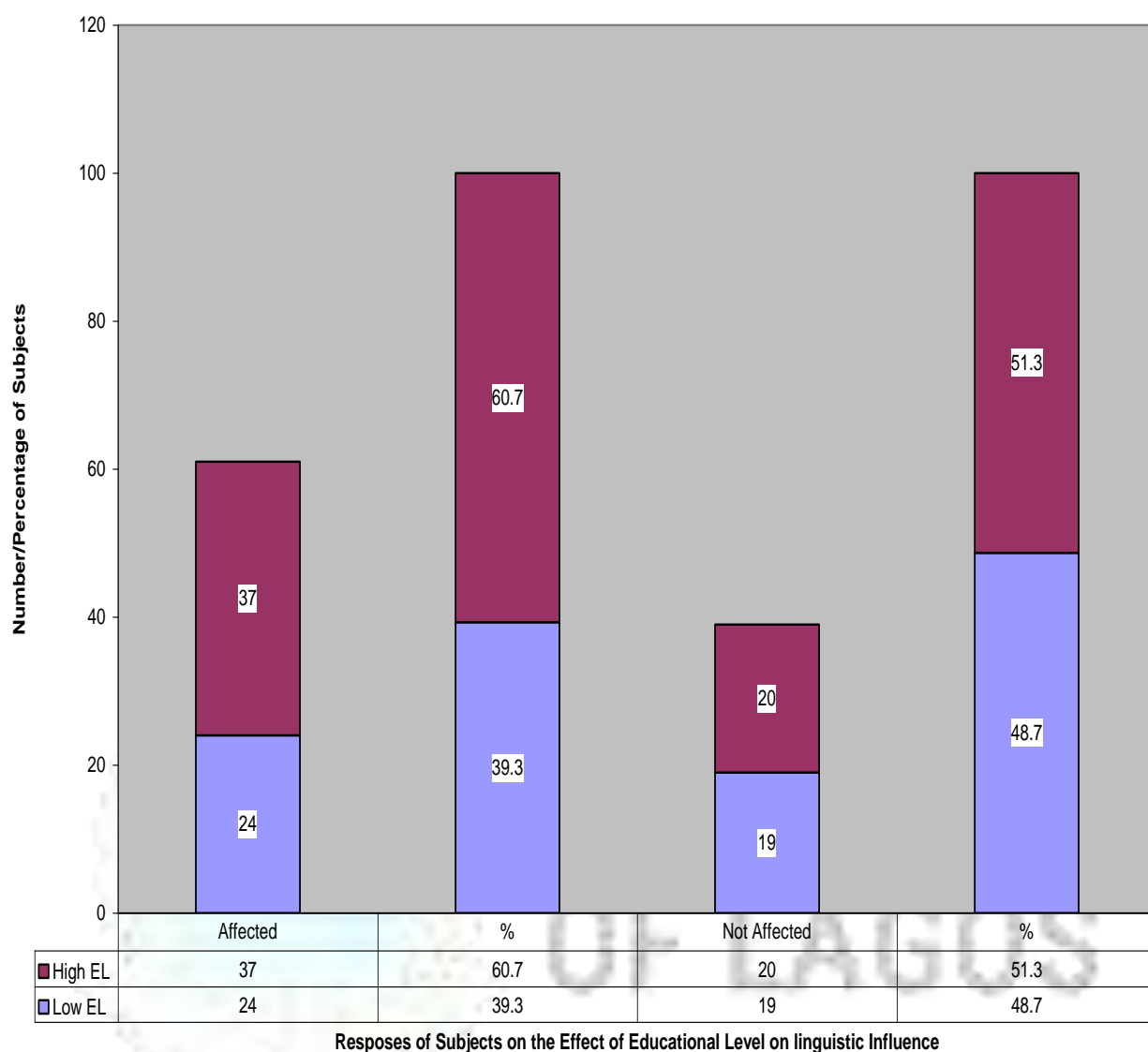
On the appropriateness of the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals within the Izon socio-cultural context, table III indicates 61% of positive responses and 39% of negative responses. This implies that the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals within the Izon socio-cultural context is appropriate since it reflects the Izon socio-cultural experience.

(d) Table IV: Degree of Linguistic Influence and Educational Level

Degree of Linguistic Influence	Educational Level			Percentage	
	High	Low	Row Total	Affected	Not Affected
Affected	37	24	61	61%	39%
Not Affected	20	19	39		
Column Total	57	43	100		

Table IV portrays that fifty-seven (57), out of the one hundred (100) subjects used for the study, have high educational background, out of whom thirty-seven (37) agreed that the educational level of the user usually affects the degree of the influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals, while the remaining twenty (20) disagreed. Similarly, forty-three (43) of the subjects have low educational background but while twenty-four (24) of them opined that educational level affects the degree of linguistic influence, nineteen (19) disagreed that the educational level of Izon-English bilinguals affects the degree of the influence that Izon has on their English. The information is presented in the following percentage bar chart:





According to table IV, 61% of the subjects are of the opinion that the educational level of the user usually affects the degree of the influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals. The fact that the percentage of positive responses (61%) is higher than that of negative responses (39%) implies that the educational background of Izon-English bilinguals has a lot to do with their English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting. It therefore follows that the educational level of the user affects the degree of the linguistic influence that is manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

(e) **Table V: Distinguishing Permanent Influences from Temporary Influences**

Distinction	Educational Level			Percentage	
	High	Low	Row Total	Possible	Not Possible
Possible	36	28	64	64%	36%
Not Possible	21	15	36		
Column Total	57	43	100		

It is shown in table V that fifty-seven (57) of the one hundred subjects sampled for the study have high educational background, while forty-three (43) are of low educational background. Out of the fifty-seven (57) subjects whose educational background is high, thirty-six (36) had the opinion that the influences Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals can be classified into permanent influences and temporary influences, while twenty-one (21) disagreed. Similarly, while twenty-eight (28) of those with low educational background agreed that a line can be drawn between temporary influences and permanent influences, fifteen (15) expressed the opposite view. The following percentage bar chart presents this information:

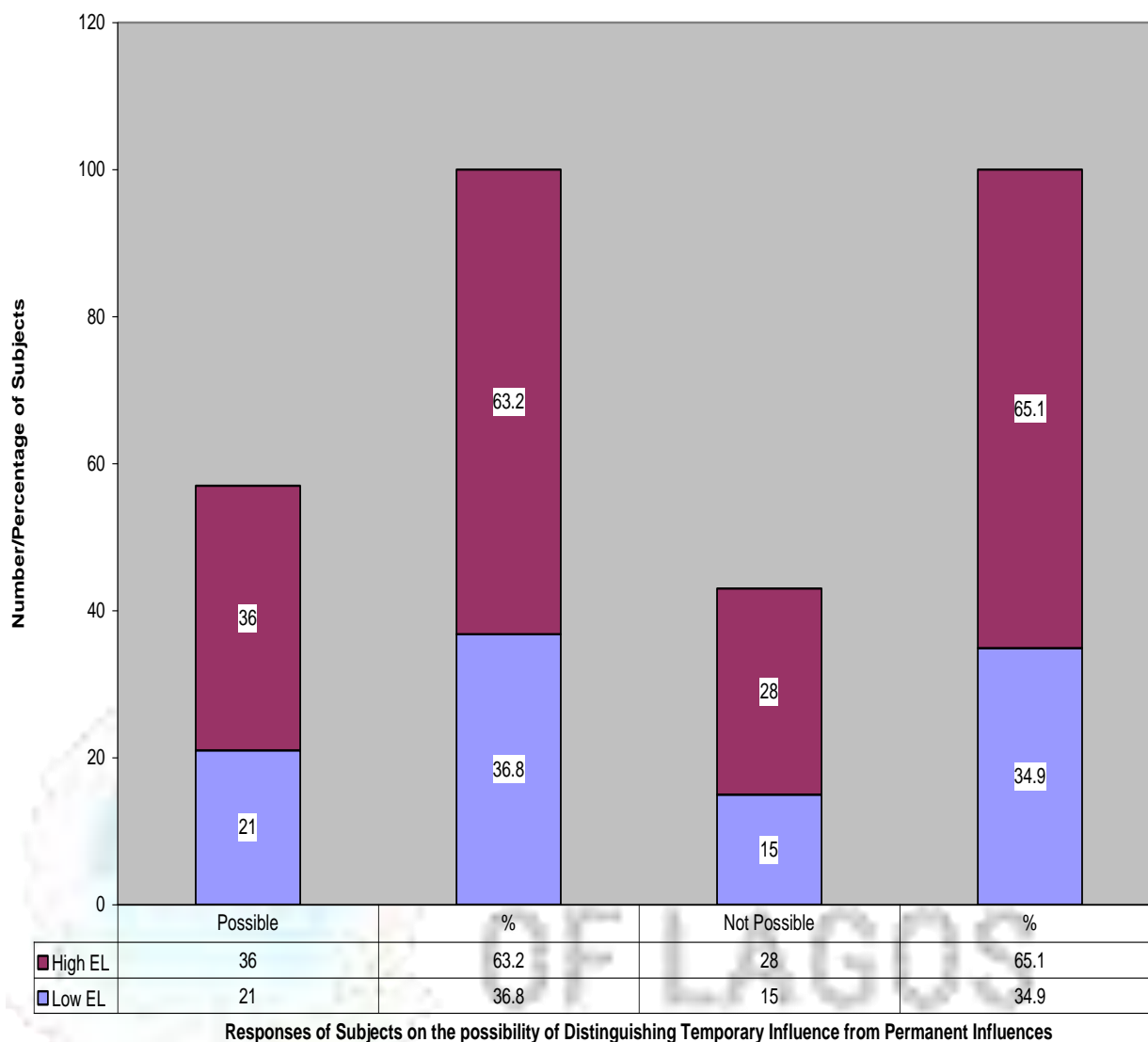


Table V indicates 64% of positive responses and 36% of negative responses. This, therefore, implies that a line can be drawn between permanent influences and temporary influences since the percentage of positive responses is higher than that of negative responses.

4.6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table I shows that the linguistic background of Izon-English bilinguals has tremendous influence on their English usage since a considerable number of the departures noticed in their English is traceable to the influence of the Izon language. As reflected in the table, 56% of the one hundred subjects used for the study attest to the strong influence that Izon has on the syntax and lexis of their English. Thus, the Izon language influences

the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. In the area of syntax, this influence is manifested in the Izon-English bilinguals' use of agreement, tense, aspect, the indefinite article, the relative pronoun and non-count nouns as well as in their modification system and their preference for statements uttered with the rising tune to tag-questions, among others.

In terms of lexis, the meanings of such lexical items as “lick”, “drink”, “escort”, “share”, “sweet”, “drop”, “village”, “madam”, “borrow”, “hear”, “father”, “uncle”, “brother”, “wife” and many others have either been restricted or extended to reflect the meanings that such lexical items express in the Izon language. Similarly, various forms of greetings in English, (including “How do you do?”, “How are you?”, “Well done” and “Good morning/ afternoon/evening”), have been adapted to reflect the Izon socio-cultural environment. Also reflected in the lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals are idiomatic expressions translated from Izon into English as well as loan-words taken from various aspects of the socio-cultural life of the Itons: titles, religion, food, dress, music/entertainment, marriage and many others.

These manifestations are therefore indicative of the influence that the Izon language has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals. This finding supports the views of Greenberg (1964), Bamgbose (1971), Kirk-Greene (1971), Adetugbo (1977), Adekunle (1979) and Wiltshire and Harnsberger (2006) on the influence that the first language of a bilingual has on his/her performance in the second language. Since the Izon-English bilinguals use both Izon and English alternately in the Izon socio-cultural environment and since Izon was acquired at an earlier age and with far greater thoroughness than English which is usually learned later in life, it is expected that certain aspects of Izon influence corresponding aspects of their English. Thus, the syntax and lexis of Izon influence the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

With reference to table II, 54% of the one hundred subjects used for the study confirm that there is a strong connection between the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals in the Izon socio-cultural setting and the Izon culture. This implies that the Izon culture, to a large extent, influences English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context. It is an indisputable fact that language is closely linked to culture and, thus, appropriate language use is culture-dependent. By extension, the influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals is embedded in the Izon culture which the Izon language tends to express and reflect.

Thus, to understand this linguistic influence, its cultural base should, first of all, be investigated and understood. In other words, to understand how English is used to communicate appropriately in the Izon socio-cultural milieu, it is necessary to study the cultural meaning that is given to the English words and expressions that are used in this context because there is such a convincing correlation between language use in a society and the cultural patterns of the users of the language that there is no way language use can be divorced from its cultural context. Thus, to study language is to study the culture within which the language is used. By implication, to study English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting is to study the cultural context, which creates, sustains and gives meaning to such usage.

It therefore holds that there is a strong connection between the Izon culture and English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting. This finding corroborates the views of Hymes (1971), Gumperz (1971), Kluckholm (1967), Labov (1972), Fishman (1979), Adetugbo (1979 a and b), Adekunle (1979), Bryan (1988), Saville-Troike (1989), Jowitt (1995) and Sharifian (2006) on the relationship between language and the culture within which it is used.

Table III indicates that the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals is appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context. The majority of the subjects used for the study (61%) opined that, though there are a few lapses in the English of Izon-English bilinguals especially in the area of syntax, the linguistic influence that Izon has on their English has created some culturally-motivated departures that are appropriate to the Izon socio-cultural context because they are expressive of the cultural patterns of the Izens and are, therefore, in conformity with their worldview. These culturally-motivated departures are, therefore, created, sustained and made meaningful by a strong cultural reality which serves as the basis of their appropriateness. Thus, the subjects agreed that the culturally-motivated departures noticed in the English of Izon-English bilinguals are appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context and that they use them frequently, especially in informal situations, because of their effectiveness in capturing and expressing the Izon socio-cultural experience. They are, therefore, generally acceptable within the Izon socio-cultural environment, not as errors, but as legitimate variants which owe their appropriateness and legitimacy to the Izon culture which provides the context within which they are interpreted and understood.

With reference to table IV, 61% of the subjects confirmed that there is a connection between educational level and the degree of linguistic influence and, thus, the educational background of Izon-English bilinguals has a lot to do with their English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting. It therefore follows that the educational level of the Izon-English bilingual affects the degree of the linguistic influence manifested in his/her English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting. This, therefore, confirms the view of Banjo (1971) on the issue. The effect that the educational level of the user has on his/her English usage may be positive or negative. There is a negative effect when an increase in the educational level of the user brings about a decrease in the degree of this influence. On the other hand, a positive

effect occurs when an increase in the educational level of the user brings about a corresponding increase in the degree of the linguistic influence manifested in his/her English usage.

Thus, in terms of syntax, there is negative effect because when the educational level of the Izon-English bilingual increases, the degree of the linguistic influence that Izon has on the syntax of his/her English decreases. In other words, as the bilingual goes higher in the educational ladder and, therefore, becomes more exposed to good English usage, the occurrence of such syntactic deviations as *Amafoin perform many functions in Arogbo-Izon community*, *When did he became the president?* *The kùlìkùlìweis have being walking round the town since morning* and *The Agadagba which is responsible for administrating the kingdom have chiefs under him*, becomes drastically reduced. 61% of the 100 subjects used for the study explained that a greater proportion of the syntactic deviations noticed in the English of Izon-English bilinguals are unable to stand the level of the competence associated with the high level of education of the bilingual partly because they are products of inadequate exposure and partly because they are inappropriate to the Izon socio-cultural context since they are not expressive of the cultural patterns of the society in which they are used.

The effect of the educational level of the Izon-English bilingual on the linguistic influence manifested in the lexis of his/her English, especially in the area of extending or restricting the meanings of English words and expressions to accommodate the Izon socio-cultural context, is, on the other hand, said to be positive since this linguistic influence has been found to increase as the educational level of the bilingual increases. This has been accounted for by the fact that, with the increase in the level of education of the user, his/her competence in the use of the language for communicative purposes also increases and, thus, his/her eyes become more open to appreciate the appropriateness of these culturally-

motivated variations within the Izon socio-cultural context. Thus, to ensure that there is communicative appropriateness, the Izon-English bilingual tries as much as possible to skilfully twist the English words and expressions used for communication in the Izon socio-cultural setting to reflect and accommodate the Izon socio-cultural context. These culturally-motivated variations that are manifested in the lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals are, therefore, able to stand the challenges of the educated Izon-English bilingual because they are deeply rooted in the Izon culture which creates, sustains and gives meaning to them.

Table V reveals that a line can be drawn between the temporary influences and permanent influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals. The majority of the subjects used for the study, (that is, 64%), opined that those linguistic influences whose manifestation in the English of Izon-English bilinguals decreases or totally disappears as the bilingual's level of education and exposure to good English usage increase are temporary influences. On the contrary, those influences that are sustained by their appropriateness to the Izon socio-cultural context and whose manifestation is seen even in the English of the most educated Izon-English bilingual in spite of his/her high level of education and exposure are permanent influences. Thus, while the temporary influences may be regarded as errors, the permanent influences should be seen as variants whose appropriateness has been conditioned by the Izon culture.

4.7 CONCLUSION

We have presented and analyzed the syntactic and lexico-semantic influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals and have traced them to the Izon socio-cultural milieu so as to ascertain their appropriateness or otherwise within the Izon socio-cultural context. We have also presented, analyzed and interpreted the statistical data collected in this study to ascertain the extent to which the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals within the Izon socio-cultural setting can be induced by such variables as the

bilinguals' linguistic, cultural and educational background, and have exhaustively discussed the findings. The findings are, therefore, summarized as follows:

1. The syntax and lexis of Izon have tremendous influence on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. This finding therefore provides a satisfactory answer to the question raised in research question 1 on whether or not the syntax and lexis of Izon have any influence on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. Thus, research objective (a) of this study has been achieved since the study has succeeded in providing convincing evidence to prove that the departures manifested in the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals are largely traceable to the influence of the Izon language.
2. There is a connection between the Izon culture and English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting. Thus, research question 2, which seeks to ascertain whether or not there is any connection between the Izon culture and English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting, has been satisfactorily answered. This therefore indicates that research objective (b) has been achieved since this study has convincingly proved that there is a strong connection between the Izon culture and English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting because language use is largely culture-dependent.
3. There is a link between the Izon culture and the appropriateness of the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals in the Izon socio-cultural context. Thus, in response to research question 3, the Izon culture influences or determines appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting and, thus, the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals is appropriate within the Izon context because it reflects the Izon socio-cultural experience. This finding therefore addresses the issue raised in research objective (c) on the nature of these Izon influences on appropriate English usage in the Izon socio-cultural context.

4. The educational level of the user affects the degree of the influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals. The effect that the educational level of the user has on English usage may be positive or negative. There is a negative effect especially in the area of syntax where an increase in the educational level of the user brings about a decrease in the degree of this influence. On the other hand, there is a positive effect especially in the area of lexis where an increase in the educational level of the user brings about a corresponding increase in the degree of the linguistic influence manifested in his/her English usage. This finding therefore takes care of the issues raised in research question 4 and research objective (d) on the relationship between educational level and the degree of linguistic influence.
5. A distinction can be made between temporary influences and permanent influences. While the temporary influences can be regarded as errors caused by inadequate exposure since their manifestation in the English of Izon-English bilinguals decreases or totally disappears as the bilingual's level of education and exposure to good English usage increase, the permanent influences should be accepted as variants whose appropriateness and legitimacy lie on the Izon culture. This is so because their manifestation is seen even in the English of the most educated Izon-English bilingual in spite of his/her high level of education and exposure because of their appropriateness to the Izon socio-cultural context. Thus, this study has, through this finding, succeeded in addressing the issues raised in research question 5 and research objective (e) respectively on the temporariness or permanence of the Izon influences manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

ENDNOTES

1. Some people, perhaps because of their Christian background, call God *Tẹmẹowei* (the Man who created the universe).
2. Deities like *Egbesu*, *Opẹlẹ*, *Kpokpotin*, *Egbunu* etc. are, however, treated as neuter nouns.

3. *Erin* (the sun), however, falls under neuter nouns.
4. Though *anị* and *a* also appear under feminine, they are different in this context. While the feminine pronouns *anị* and *a* are uttered with the low tone, their neuter counterparts take the high tone.
5. This was quoted from Morgenthau (1978:94).
6. The term *tense marker* is an abbreviation for *tense-aspect-modal marker* (see Jenewari, 1989:117).
7. However, some adverbs like *ebimọ* (well), *seimọ* (badly) and *kurọmọ* (strongly) do follow the verb to enhance grammaticality. Thus, they usually occur in post-verbal positions e.g. *fị ebimọ* (eat well), *a mịyẹn seimọ* (do it badly) and *a kọrị kurọmọ* (hold it strongly).
8. *Kịmị* in Izon means *man* but it may be used as a generic term to cover both men and women as people.
9. *Ọnị* (your) is said on a low tone while *onị* (their) is said on a high tone.
10. The distinction between *anị* (feminine) and *anị* (neuter) has already been made in 4 above.
11. *Ma* following the singular noun as in *ere ma* (the wife), *iyọrọ tọbọu ma* (the girl) etc. indicates femininity, while *ma* occurring after the plural noun as in *ere abụ ma* (the wives), *iyọrọ ọwọu ma* (the girls) etc. indicates plurality.
12. This excludes *oi kẹnị fịnị* (eleven) and *si kẹnị fịnị* (twenty-one) which do not take *a* e.g. *oi kẹnị kịmị fịnị* (eleven men) and *si kẹnị zuru fịnị* (twenty-one rooms).
13. For *isẹn* (nine), *oi isẹn fịnị* (nineteen) and *si isẹn fịnị* (twenty-nine), the *a* is usually attached as a suffix to the numerals as in *isẹna fẹrẹ* (nine plates), *oi isẹna kụwị fịnị* (nineteen stars) and *si isẹna warị fịnị* (twenty-nine houses).
14. Fifteen is also called *diye* in Izon.
15. Plurality in this case is usually indicated by the numerals *suwei* (thirty) to *suwei isẹn fịnị* (thirty-nine).
16. This excludes nouns that begin with the letter *a*.
17. See 9 above for the distinction between *onị* (your) and *onị* (their).
18. While most English nouns usually form their plurals through the *-s* suffix added to the singular form of the noun (e.g. boy: boys, book: books, card: cards), some form theirs through a replative (e.g. man: men, foot: feet, tooth: teeth), through the addition of the *-en* suffix (e.g. child: children, ox: oxen) and through zero plurals (e.g. deer: deer,

sheep: sheep), among others (see Christophersen and Sandved, 1969 and Huddleston, 1984).

19. These include especially those whose level of education and exposure to good English is low. However, many Izon-English bilinguals with high educational background also add –s to such non-count nouns as *information*, *hair*, *behavior* and *dress*.
20. These include graduates too.
21. In English, *hair*, in this sense of collective singular, is usually used to refer to all the thread-like growths on the skin of animals, especially on the human head.
22. This is used in the sense of clothing in general (for both men and women) especially outer garments.
23. *Egberi* may be interpreted to mean *story*, *news* or *information*. In the context of this sentence, however, *egberi* means *information*.
24. See Christophersen and Sandved (1969), Huddleston (1984), Lamidi (2000) and Akere (2001) for some of these techniques in English.
25. Sometimes, however, a stative verb can be used in a special sense with –ing. Thus, the sentence *I am seeing the Dean at 10.00 a.m* means that *I have booked an appointment to see him at that hour* (see Akere, 2001: 79).
26. While statements end with the low tone, interrogatives end with the high tone.
27. Fowler (1965) reports that, as a result of cultural contact and economic as well as technological development, American English has tremendously influenced several other varieties of English in the world including British English. The influence of American English particularly on British English is so strong that even a British Minister, when delivering a speech at the Annual Congress of the Conservative Party in 1958, used the American variant *aim to do*:

What we aim to do is to widen the whole field of house purchase.

Thus, according to Kujore (1995: 369), *aim to do* has become fully accepted and undisputed in British English usage alongside the British form *aim at doing*.

28. Both *tebira kẹ i mọ emi ghan?* (How are you?) and *tebira kẹ i mọ miyẹn emi ghan?* (How do you do?) are usually shortened as *tebira?*
29. Those in the villages see this as degoratory and, therefore, attempt to remedy the situation by referring to their settlements as *ama* (town).
30. The people of Arogbo-Izon Ibe migrated from Gbaraun in Bayelsa State to their present location in Ondo State. Thus, all the three Quarters in Arogbo in Ondo State, (Agwọbiri, Erubiri and Egbesubiri), are also in Gbaraun, Bayelsa State. As the Agwọ in Arogbo is the head of the Agwọbiri Quarters of Arogbo in Ondo State, so is the Agwọ in Gbaraun the head of the Agwọbiri Quarters of Gbaraun, Bayelsa State. The

same is applicable to the *Eruwei of Erubiri* and the *Egbesuwei of Egbesubiri* both in Arogbo, Ondo State and in Gbaraun, Bayelsa State.

31. Besides assisting the *Agwọ* in the day-to-day administration of the streets in Agbwobiri Quarters, these chiefs also perform other significant traditional functions. For example, they, among other chiefs representing the Erubiri Quarters and the Egbesubiri Quarters, constitute a twelve-member Council of Chiefs responsible for electing the *Tarabiritọrọ of Arogbo*.
32. This is sometimes used to refer to the *smallest wife* in a polygamous family. As long as the husband has not married another (new) wife after her, she is still addressed as *ayoro*.
33. Erubiri Quarters is, perhaps, not represented in this council because the Agadagba, as culture demands, always comes from Erubiri. It is, therefore, felt that it is not necessary for Erubiri to be represented in the council.
34. They also function as the representatives of the Egbesubiri Quarters in the twelve-member Council of Chiefs responsible for electing the *Tarabiritọrọ*.
35. They represent the Erubiri Quarters in the Council of Chiefs in charge of the election of the *Tarabiritọrọ*.
36. This is not the exclusive right of the *Ibagbunu* since anybody from the Egbesubiri Quarters of Arogbo can be appointed to perform this function. This, perhaps, explains why Pa Nathaniel Okpokiyo Ajama crowned the Late Pẹrẹ D.M.E. Eperetun, Aga II during his coronation as the *Agadagba of Arogbo-Izon Ibe* even when the *Ibagbunu*, High Chief Oḍṇḍi, was still alive.
37. Sometimes, some women prefer to sleep in their kitchens. It is only when it is their week that they go to the *opu warị* to sleep with the husband.
38. These are meals prepared in the Izon setting.
39. All the reasons given to prove the appropriateness of *siever* within the Izon context are also applicable to *stirrer*. They are, therefore, left unrepeated because of the fear of being too repetitive.
40. Women are considered *unclean* in the Izon socio-cultural context when they are in their menstrual period or when they, after sleeping with men, fail to take their bath.
41. These include the use of *administrate* instead of *administer* (text 9), the wrong use of *arcade* in *Kpokpotin arcade* (text 38) where *arcade* is used for an *open space* (playground), the extension of *hear* to cover the sense of smell (text 29), the use of *escort* as a synonym for *see off* or *accompany* where no security or protection is required and the wrong use of *sweet* for an *agreeable but non-sugary taste*, which are all considered as inappropriate and, therefore, unacceptable even within the Izon setting.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

On the basis of the findings made in Chapter Four, conclusions are drawn and suggestions on future areas of research in this field are given in this concluding chapter. The relevance of the study in terms of contribution to knowledge is also highlighted in this chapter.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings discussed in Section 4.6 of this study, the following conclusions are drawn.

1. The departures that are manifested in the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals are traceable to the influence of the Izon language. It follows, therefore, that the syntax and lexis of Izon have a strong influence on the syntax and lexis of the English of Izon-English bilinguals.
2. The Izon culture, to a large extent, influences English usage within the Izon socio-cultural setting. This indicates that there is a strong connection between the Izon culture and English usage in the Izon socio-cultural context.
3. The English usage of Izon-English bilinguals within the Izon socio-cultural context is appropriate because, as a result of the quest for communicative appropriateness, English is used in line with the Izon socio-cultural experience which provides the context within which the language is used and understood. The Izon culture, therefore, influences or determines appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context.
4. The educational level of the user affects the degree of the influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals.

5. A line can be drawn between temporary influences (that is, those that are caused by inadequate exposure) and permanent influences (that is, those that are created and sustained by their appropriateness to the Izon socio-cultural context). Those linguistic influences whose manifestation in the English of Izon-English bilinguals decreases or totally disappears as the bilingual's level of education and exposure to good English usage increase are temporary influences (or errors). On the other hand, those influences whose manifestation, because of their appropriateness to the Izon socio-cultural context, is seen even in the English of the most educated Izon-English bilingual in spite of his/her high level of education and exposure are permanent influences (or variants).

5.2 CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

English has, today, become a world language. Besides the nearly 300 million people in Britain, America, Australia, New Zealand and Canada who use English as their first language, English is also an additional language of hundreds of millions of people in many other countries of the world where English is used especially as a second language. This global status of English, therefore, demands that a vibrant International English to which both Inner and Outer Circle Englishes have contributed be fashioned to carry out the global communicative functions which English must inescapably perform within both native and non-native contexts. By implication, there must be an urgent shift of emphasis, as it is currently reflected in the International Corpus of English (ICE) Project, to accommodate the Outer Circle Englishes whose rich and fascinating contributions to International English must be considered and appreciated, especially if English must function effectively as a global language that can cater for the numerous and diverse communicative needs of all its speakers whether native or non-native. Thus, as Banjo (2004: 11) suggests, emphasis has increasingly been placed on the linguistic behaviour of the bilingual, bidialectal and bicultural speaker of English as he/ she uses the language for communicative purposes, especially in non-native

contexts. This corroborates the viewpoints of Bamgbose (1971), Adekunle (1979), Adetugbo (1979a and b), Kachru (1981), (1982), (1986), (1988), Holzknicht (1989), Kenkel and Tucker (1989), Bamiro (1994), (2006a and b), Malcolm (2001), Sharifian (2003), (2005), (2006), Nelson (2006) and Wiltshire and Harnsberger (2006). This is so because the use of English as a world language has gone beyond the confines of the native English culture to accommodate various multilingual and multicultural contexts which are, as it should be expected, different from what obtains in the native-speaker environment and, thus, as Adegbija (2004) argues, English must be domesticated to suit the numerous conveniences, experiences, nuances and sensibilities of its speakers in this non-native socio-cultural environment.

In Nigeria's multilingual setting where English and over 250 Nigerian languages are in contact, for example, the linguistic and cultural influences which the Nigerian languages and the Nigerian culture have on English in Nigeria and the resultant departures they manifest in the English of Nigerians have been extensively explored thereby providing data for the description of the nature and character of Nigerian English (see Banjo, 1971, 1996; Adetugbo, 1977, 1987, 2004; Adeniran, 1979; Bamgbose, 1982a and b; Kujore, 1985; Okoro, 1986, 2004a and b; Awonusi, 1987, 1990; Jowitt, 1991; Igboanusi, 2001 and Udofot, 2004). Despite the numerous vigorous research efforts made towards the description of the nature and character of Nigerian English, especially from the perspective of the influences that the Nigerian languages and cultures have on it, very little has been done to reflect the rich linguistic and cultural influences that Izon-English bilinguals manifest in their English usage. This study, therefore, contributes to knowledge in the following ways:

1. This study provides an Izon perspective to the description of Nigerian English especially within the Izon socio-cultural context. The rich linguistic and cultural data presented in this study indicate that English usage in the Izon socio-cultural context is appropriate because it reflects the Izon socio-cultural experience and, thus, provide a

- strong basis to support the existence and appropriateness of Nigerian English as already attested to by Bamgbose (1971), (1995), Adekunle (1974), (1979), Ubahakwe (1979a), Adetugbo (1979a and b), (2004), Adegbija (1989), (2004), Akere (1982), (1984), (2004) and Kujore (1995).
2. The syntactic and lexico-semantic data in this study provide evidence to prove that English usage in the Izon socio-cultural environment has been given a sumptuous Izon flavour. The study therefore provides an Izon dimension to our understanding of the syntax and lexico-semantics of Nigerian English. The data therefore serve as a rich supplement to the syntactic and lexico-semantic data on Nigerian English earlier presented in Odumuh (1984a and b), Kujore (1985), Jowitt (1991), Adegbija (1989), Bamiro (1994) and Igboanusi (2001).
 3. This study provides useful data to support the existence of sub-varieties in Nigerian English. Considering the linguistic influence that Izon has on the English of Izon-English bilinguals and the various socio-cultural factors which provide the context within which the language is used and understood, English usage in the Izon socio-cultural setting is different from that of other socio-cultural settings in Nigeria. This, therefore, provides the basis for us to distinguish Izon English from all other sub-varieties of Nigerian English such as Hausa English, Igbo English and Yoruba English.
 4. This study also provides concrete evidence to prove that English usage in the Izon socio-cultural context is culture-dependent and, thus, the variations manifested in the English usage of Izon-English bilinguals are induced by the Izon culture. This study, therefore, gives support to the cultural-conceptual approach to language study (see Hymes, 1971; Bamgbose, 1971; Adetugbo, 1979a and b; Saville-Troike, 1989; Adegbija, 1989; Kovecses, 2005 and Sharifian, 2006).

5. Finally, it is hoped that the linguistic and cultural influences presented in this study will contribute rich data to support the Nigerian Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE) Project especially from the Izon perspective.

5.4 RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the findings made in this study and the conclusions drawn from them, the following recommendations are made:

1. The syntactic and lexico-semantic variations presented in this study should be included in the Nigerian Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE) Project so as to add an Izon dimension to the description of (Standard) Nigerian English. This is necessary because these permissible local variations, which reflect the Izon socio-cultural experience, are found to be appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context and, thus, they constitute acceptable standard usage especially in the Izon socio-cultural setting. Thus, if the rich syntactic and lexico-semantic variations in this study are incorporated into the ICE Project, it will project not only the sumptuous Izon flavour given to English usage in the Izon socio-cultural context but will also put an end to the doubts that people, especially in the Izon setting, cast on the appropriateness of these variations and will, therefore, enhance their acceptability and frequency of use both within and outside the Izon socio-cultural setting.
2. The syntactic and lexico-semantic influences, whose appropriateness and legitimacy within the Izon socio-cultural setting have been proved and are, therefore, considered as permissible local variations in this study, should be taught in Nigerian schools alongside all other Nigerian variations which appropriately reflect the Nigerian socio-cultural experience. This will enable the learners of English in Nigeria's ESL situation to be exposed to the English language, not exactly as it is prescribed in the dictionary compiled by Britons or Americans who do not know or appreciate the contexts which

the Nigerian cultures create for the language in the Nigerian setting, but as it is actually used by Nigerians to suit local conditions, to express local experiences and to cater for the local needs of the local Nigerian environment. This, if done, will certainly serve as a bold step towards satisfying the yearning of Nigerians for the use of an endonormative model of English in Nigerian schools.

3. There is an urgent need to design an appropriate pedagogical approach that can be effectively used to teach the endonormative model of English recommended in this study with all its local linguistic and cultural coloration. For example, when teaching the syntactic and lexico-semantic variations in this Nigerian model of English, it is necessary that they are traced to their cultural roots so as to situate them within the strong cultural foundation that provides the contexts within which they are used, interpreted and understood. As this is done, these Nigerian variations should also be compared to their British counterparts, if there are any. This serves two major purposes. One, it is aimed at putting in the limelight the appropriateness of the Nigerian variants and, by extension, the inappropriateness of the British variants in the Nigerian socio-cultural context thereby making the learners to develop strong faith in the ability of the Nigerian variants to appropriately reflect and express the Nigerian socio-cultural experience. Two, the fact that the Nigerian variants are compared to the British variants in the course of teaching makes it possible for the Nigerian learners of English to be exposed to, at least, two varieties of English at the same time thereby making them to be bidialectal and, thus, equipping them with the communicative competence required to switch from one dialect to the other depending on the situation and context of use.

On the other hand, where the syntactic and lexico-semantic influences manifested in the English of Izon (Nigerian) speakers are seen, not as variants, but as errors, the need to design an effective pedagogical approach to tackle these errors,

which are usually caused by inadequate exposure, becomes doubly necessary. To this end, this study recommends that the error should, first of all, be traced to the source language so as to explain why it is considered as an error in English even within the Nigerian setting. This will, at least, draw the attention of the learners to such errors and, thus, guide the learners to correct or avoid them.

4. A massive awareness campaign on the relationship between language and culture should be launched in the Izon setting so as to call attention to the fact that the way English is used in the Izon (Nigerian) culture cannot be exactly the same as it is used especially in the native British contexts which are indicated in the dictionary. Thus, even if an expression in the English of Izon-English bilinguals is not found in the dictionary, such an expression should not be condemned as an error but should be considered and accepted as a variant especially if it reflects the Izon socio-cultural experience and is, therefore, considered appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context by the majority of educated Izon-English bilinguals. Seminars and workshops should, therefore, be organized regularly to enlighten people on the appropriateness of these Izon-induced variations manifested in the English of Izon speakers thereby emphasizing the need to have a positive attitude towards them.
5. More emphasis should be placed on cultural education so as to enhance creativity in language use.
6. Both the federal and state governments, the Ministry of the Niger Delta, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and other similar commissions in the oil-producing states where Izon is spoken should make it a point of responsibility to provide the required enabling environment that can assist the learners in terms of exposure to good English. The government should, as a matter of urgency, embark on the employment of qualified language teachers and a massive teacher-improvement

programme to enrich the teachers' knowledge of English and, particularly, Izon and to improve their methodology of language teaching. The NDDC and other similar commissions should also assist in building language laboratories in each of the Izon-speaking communities of Ondo, Edo, Delta and Bayelsa States, depending on the number of schools in each community. In the Arogbo-Izon community of Ondo State where there are seven secondary schools, for example, two language laboratories can be built so that the schools in the community can take their students there for language teaching/learning at specified periods. Similarly, the local councils in the Izon communities of Ondo, Edo, Delta and Bayelsa States should be persuaded to spend part of the allocation they receive from the oil revenue to build relaxation centres with satellite facilities where students can watch/listen especially to local programmes in stations like AIT, DBN, NTA, Silverbird, FRCN, Ray Power etc. so as to improve their level of exposure to good English usage, particularly Standard Nigerian English usage.

7. Finally, further research on the phonetic and phonological influences that Izon has on the spoken English of Izon-English bilinguals should be carried out so as to provide a complete picture of the various influences that the Izon language and culture have on English usage in the Izon setting. This aspect is not included in the present study because it forms a significant part of an on-going study conducted by the researcher.

5.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study, which investigates the influence of the Izon language and culture on the English of Izon-English bilinguals and the extent to which the variations manifested in their English usage can be induced by such variables as the bilingual's linguistic, cultural and educational background, reveals that the Izon language has tremendous influence on the syntax and lexico-semantics of the English of Izon-English bilinguals. In the area of syntax, this influence is manifested in the English of Izon-English bilinguals in terms of their use of

agreement, tense, aspect, the indefinite article, the relative pronoun, prepositions, stative verbs and non-count nouns as well as in their modification system and their preference for statements uttered with the rising tune to tag-questions, among others. In terms of lexico-semantics, this fascinating influence is noticed in the way such words and expressions as “father”, “uncle”, “brother”, “wife”, “village”, “madam”, “borrow”, “escort”, “bigmanism”, “to lick an orange”, “to drink pepper soup”, “to share a husband”, “how do you do?”, “how are you?”, “well done”, “sorry”, “Ijawness”, “Agadagbanship tussle”, “duburuku rite of passage”, “to cross to the other side of the river”, “to split open the crocodile’s intestine”, “the head of the family-head is a refuse dump” and many others that have been domesticated to reflect the Izon socio-cultural experience. It is also found, among others, that English usage in the Izon setting is closely linked to the Izon culture and, thus, the Izon culture determines or influences appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context. Thus, the lexico-semantic influences presented and analyzed in this study are found to be appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural context because they are found to be deeply rooted in the cultural practices and beliefs of the Izon people. They are, therefore, accepted as permissible local variations within the Izon context. Similarly, some of the syntactic influences, especially those presented in Group C, are found to be firmly grounded in the Izon culture and are, therefore, considered appropriate within the Izon socio-cultural setting. However, those in Group A, despite the fact that they reflect the structural patterns of the Izon language, are considered and treated, even within the Izon setting, as errors that must be corrected because of their gross violation of the rules of Standard English syntax. Thus, while the syntactic and lexico-semantic influences, which have been found to be appropriate in this study and which, therefore, constitute acceptable standard usage within the Izon context, can be considered and treated as permanent influences (variants) because of their occurrence even in the English of educated Izon-English bilinguals, the syntactic influences, particularly those

in Group A, which are found to be inappropriate and, therefore, unacceptable even within the Izon setting, should be treated as temporary influences (errors) whose occurrence in the English of Izon-English bilinguals drastically reduces or totally disappears as the user's level of education/exposure increases. It is, therefore, recommended, among others, that the permissible local variations whose appropriateness and legitimacy within the Izon context have been convincingly proved in this study should be included in the Nigerian Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE) Project, be taught in Nigerian schools alongside other Nigerian variants and be given more positive recognition and attention especially in the Izon (Nigerian) setting.



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APPENDIX B

MAPS SHOWING IZON AND ITS SUB-DIALECTS

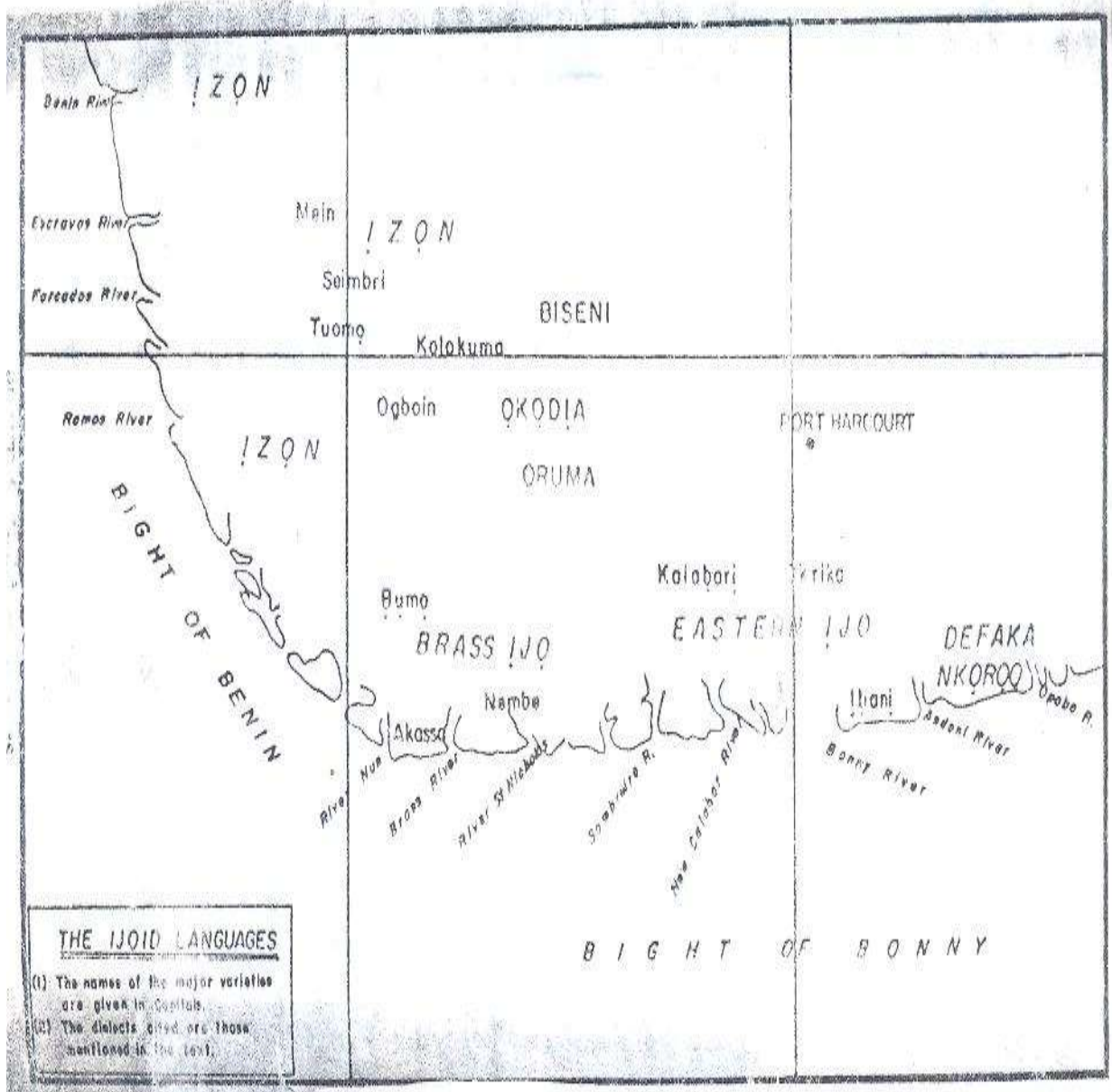


Fig. 1: The Dialects of Ijo

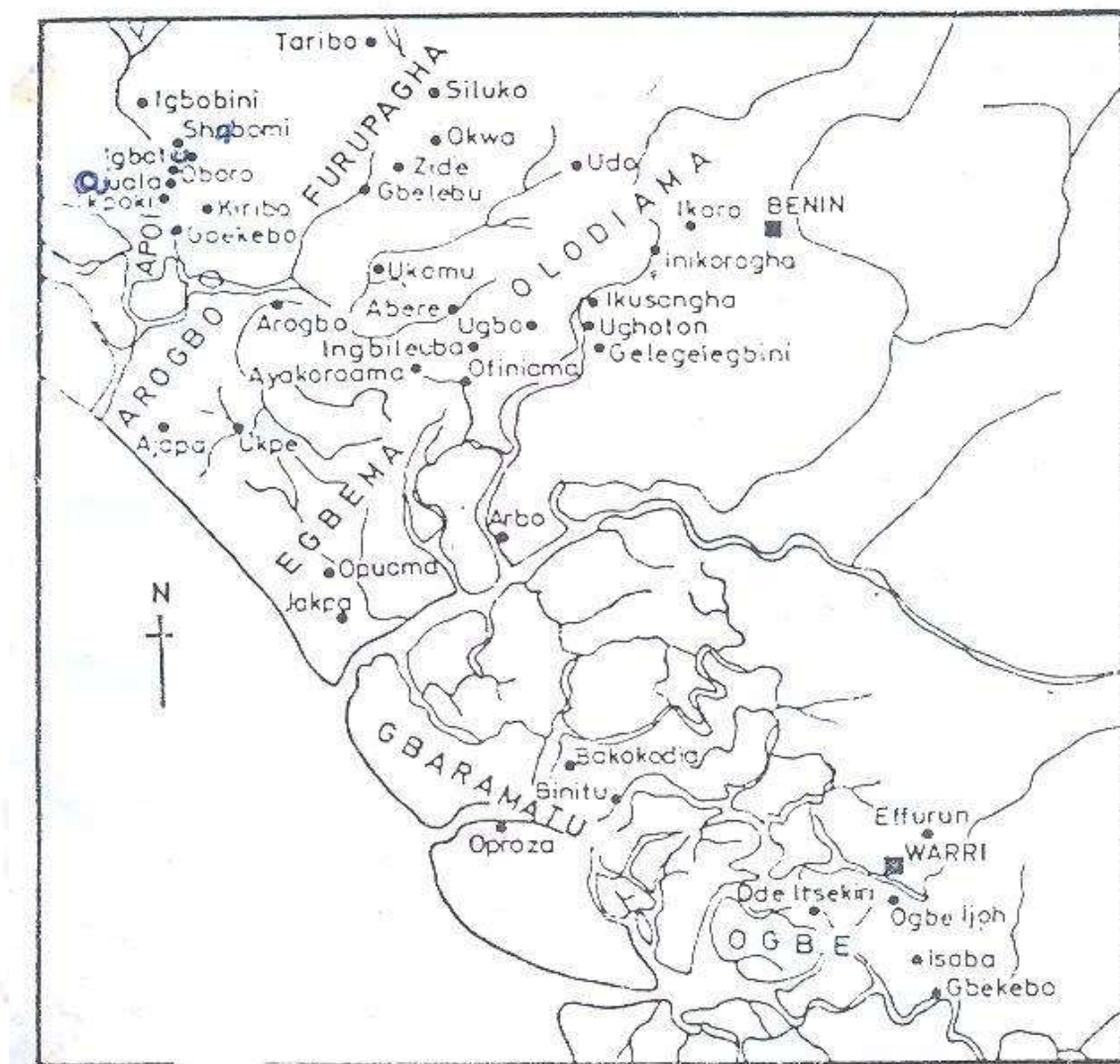


Fig. 2: Southwestern Izon

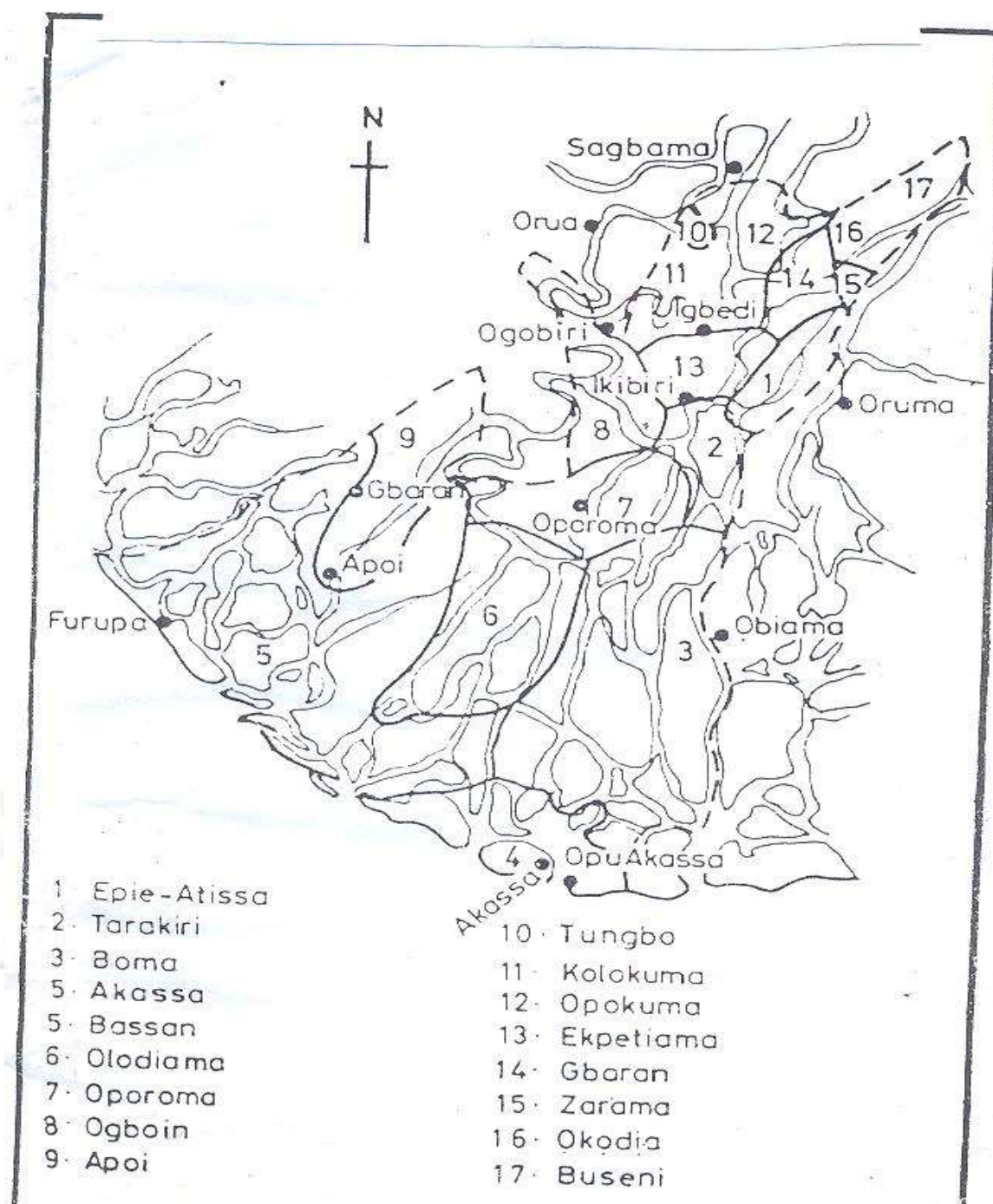


Fig. 4: Izon of the Central Delta

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE OF THE TRANSCRIPTION OF THE ORAL DATA COLLECTED

Text 1: Amafoin perform many functions in Arogbo-Izon community.

/ amafõi pafõm meni fõnksõns in arogbo izõ kõminiti/

Text 4: At this evil forest, there are several skulls and teeth of dead people who are not clean.

/ at dis ivul forest dea a sevrål skõls and tuts of ded pipul hu a not klin/

Text 5: This traditional thing, *isele*, is grinded on wood with sand.

/ dis tradisõnal tin isele is grainded on wud wit sãnd/

Text 9: The Agadagba which is responsible for administrating the kingdom have chiefs under him.

/ di agadagba wis is rẽsponsibul fõ administratin di kindõm av sifs õnda im/

Text 12: If the oil touches the ground, the Kpokpotin priest has to refill the bottle again.

/ if di õyel tõsis di graund di kpokpotĩ prist has to rifil di botul agen/

Text 14: That clean pure white cloth is the symbol of Egbesu.

/ dat klin pio wajit klot is di simbõl of egbesu/

Text 15: These behaviours are not acceptable among the Isons.

/ dis bihevios a not asẽptebul among di izõs/

Text 17: I may say that fishing is the major occupation of the Isons because their environment is conducive for fishing activities.

/ aĩ me se dat fiĩin is d mezo õkupefõn of di izõs bikõs diã evaĩronmẽnt is kondusiv fõ fiĩin aktivitis/

Text 19: One other point that can be used to buttress what Chief Okpoka has said is that Egbesu is the god of war and peace.

/ wan õða point ðat kan bi juld to bõtrẽs wõt ƒĩĩf okpoka has sɛd is ðat egbesu is ði god of wõ and pis/

Text 24: For example, if I like the girl and want to marry her, I and my father will go to her parents and pay the *ikõ*.

/ fõ igzãmpl if ai laik ði gɛl and wõnt to mari ha ai and mai faða wil go to ha perents and pe ði ikõ/

Text 29: When you go near the shrine, the first thing you will hear is the smell of palmy.

/ wɛn ju go nia di srain di fɛst tin ju wil hiɛ is di smɛl ɔf pami/

Text 31: Our brothers and sisters in Odi were massacred. Our fathers, mothers, wives, sons, daughters - all were callously maimed. This was the reward they had to receive for voting Obasanjo to power.

/ awa brɔdas and sistas wa masakad/ / awa fadas mɔdas waifs sons dɔtas ɔl wa kalɔsle memd/ / dis wɔs di riwɔd de had to risiv fɔ votin ɔbasãʒɔ to pawa/

Text 33: For how else can we explain the shooting, maiming and killing of defenceless youths, singing and dancing in an ogele?

/ fɔ hao ɛls kan wi ɛksplɛn ði futin memin and kilin ɔf difɛnsɛs juθs singin and dansin in an ogele/

