
Language and Mind Decolonization: A Sure Way to Africa's Language Development

Cecilia A. Eme¹, Iwuchukwu C. Uwaezuoke²

Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka¹ Ebonyi State University,
Abakaliki²

ca.eme@unizik.edu.ng¹, iwuchukwuchinenye@yahoo.com²

Abstract

Almost every African country was colonized at a point in history. Colonization makes the colonized subservient to the colonizer, who determines their linguistic, cultural, social, political, religious and economic life and development. Colonization, bad as it is, goes beyond these to a worse scenario called language and mind colonization. This is more like leading the colonized into psychological bondage where the colonizer makes them have a sense of being inferior and less a human capable of engaging in developmental strides to better their lot. Of all the colonized peoples, Africans seem to be the worst hit by language and mind colonization, with its attendant drawbacks. There is the urgent need to explain the issues surrounding this phenomenon and proffer workable solutions that will pave the way for language and mind decolonization in Africa. This forms the thrust of this paper, aimed at making Africans re-discover themselves and work towards developing their countries by themselves rather than go begging for aids from their erstwhile colonial masters; as no one loves them enough to do it for them. Data were sourced mainly from our direct observation of Nigerians, internet materials, local and foreign media write-ups and broadcasts. After descriptive analysis of data, the paper discovered that Africans are no less endowed than their

colonizers and so, with proper language and mind decolonization through sensitization, Africans would not only improve themselves and their environment but also develop their countries to join the comity of developed nations.

Keywords: Africa, language, mind, colonization, decolonization, development

1. Introduction

Language is the powerful tool for communication. It has a direct relationship with thought and social environment. Thus, it could be positively or negatively manipulated for or against societal development. Colonizers often tilt towards negative manipulation in order to achieve their numerous goals, particularly the psychological defeat of the colonized. Almost every African country was colonized at one point in history or another. For instance, between 18th and 19th centuries, Nigeria and Ghana were British colonies. France colonized Benin Republic and parts of Ivory Coast. Between 1848 and 1962, Algeria was a French colony (Onyekpere and Amadi, 2013). Colonization makes the colonized subservient to the colonizer. This is because the colonizer would always want to assert superiority to prove to the colonized that whereas he, the colonizer, is the master, the colonized is the servant. In most cases the colonial ‘master’ influences and, more commonly, determines the linguistic, cultural, social, political, religious and economic life and development of the colonized ‘servant’.

Colonization, bad as it is, goes beyond these issues of master/servant relationship and control of the linguistic, cultural, social, political, religious and economic life and development of the colonized to a worse scenario called language and mind colonization. This is more like leading the colonized into

psychological bondage and defeat where the colonizer makes the colonized have a sense of being inferior, useless and less a human to the point of their having a deep sense of feeling that they are not capable of engaging in developmental strides to better their lot.

Of all the colonized peoples, Africans seem to be the worst hit by language and mind colonization, with its attendant drawbacks. There is the urgent need to explain the issues surrounding this phenomenon and proffer workable solutions that will pave the way for language and mind decolonization in Africa. This forms the thrust of this paper, aimed at making Africans re-discover themselves and work towards developing their countries by themselves. Yes, it is only imperative that Africa must be decolonized if visible and sustainable development will be achieved. Rather than Africans and, or through, their leaders going begging for financial or material aids from their erstwhile colonial masters- who treat them like the wretched of the earth and give them what their country rejected-they should decolonize themselves and become truly independent in all facets of their lives.

To conduct this study, the researchers sourced data mainly from the internet, local and foreign media write-ups and broadcasts, and literature. A few instances from our data collected through our direct observation of Nigerians may be brought into the paper. We subjected our data to descriptive analysis. We shall define some terms crucial to this study in our conceptual framework, review a few relevant materials, engage in a discussion on sources of Africa's colonization and the strategies for decolonization, we then summarize and conclude the paper.

2. Literature Review

Language is a very powerful means through which human beings communicate. "Language is very important to man. ... [It] is a

means which human beings have devised for communicating ideas, feelings, emotions, desires, etc. through complex vocal or written symbols” (Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme, 2010:1). O’Grady, Archibald and Katamba (2011:543) see “Language is about communication. It is through language that we are able to make our thoughts, feelings, intentions and desires known to other people.” One wonders how much human beings would have been able to achieve without language. This could be the reason Phan (2018) brings in some human inventions in his definition of language. He says,

Language is a means for communication...just as like electricity is a means to energize a light-bulb or an electric stove or a motor to propel a car, bus, street car, or train. ...Language is a means of communication, one which allows greater flexibility in expressing emotions, conveying information and discussing ideas. We can certainly communicate by pointing and grunting, but language gives us the ability to be far more informative and expressive. (36)

Talking about language is like asking blind men to touch an elephant and describe it, because of the numerous ways we can look at it. For instance, according to Nwobu (2020:90), “The natural language of a people is like a name as well as a face to them.” For Robins (1972:24), “Our social life depends on language. ...Many traditions treat language as a sacred thing; they are justified in so doing, for it is language that gives order and significance to primal chaos.” Language is even described as ‘the soul’ of its owners (Fafunwa, 2005) and “a vital force for the understanding and domination of the world” (Agbanusi, 2009:277). We must make it clear that language

is a possession of humans only; thus, supporting Umera-Okeke (2019:13) that, “Language is ... a tool for communication and this tool is human and can only be used by human.” This means that although different animals have different ways of communicating among themselves, it is only human beings that have the capacity and ability for language.

Humans have body as well as mind and other attributes of their being human. Unlike the body which can be seen and touched, the mind cannot. The fact of its being invisible does not make it less important than the body. Odey (1997:84) explains this further when he quotes Martin Luther King Jnr. thus:

Something should remind us once more that the great things in this universe are things that we can never see. You walk out at night and look up at the beautiful stars as they bedeck the heavens like swinging lanterns of eternity, and you think you can see all. Oh, no. You can never see the law of gravitation that holds them there. ... You look at me and you think you see Martin Luther King. You don't see Martin Luther King; you see my body, but, you must understand, my body can't think, my body can't reason. You don't see the *me* that makes me *me*. ...

The definitions of ‘mind’ vary; often depending on professions, and viewpoints. *Wiktionary* (online) has many definitions of ‘mind’; the one that interests us the most is, “(philosophy) The non-material substance or set of processes in which consciousness, perception, affectivity, judgement, thinking, and will are based. We now see that anyone whose mind is colonized is like a living dead, who does not

have any understanding, judgement, thoughts, etc. of their own. Such a one can definitely not ‘help’ themselves.

Colonization is the act of ‘taking over’ a people such that the colonizer comes and settles or lives among the local or indigenous people of a particular area and, usually forcefully, establishes control over such indigenous people. In many cases of colonization, the colonizers maintain their authority over the colonized by use of certain regulations that make the colonized people lose their sense of dignity and worth. It has been vividly explained that,

In most cases, the goal of the colonizing countries is to profit by exploiting the human and economic resources of the countries they colonized. ...In the process, the colonizers – sometimes forcibly – attempt to impose their religion, language, cultural and political practices on the indigenous population (Longley, 2021).

The colonized people could only extricate themselves from the shackles of colonization by making conscious efforts at decolonization of all aspects of their colonized lives.

Decolonization has been defined simply as “the undoing of colonialism...” (www.newworldencyclopedia.org). It can also refer to a “process by which colonies become independent of the colonizing country” (www.britannica.com). In this case, Africa became ‘decolonized’ in 1950s and 1960s when the British withdrew from Africa and granted independence to its numerous African colonies. For us decolonization goes beyond the formal gaining of independence to being “the process [or act] of rolling back the negative effects of colonial mentality [and all aspects of colonized life] that are still with us in this age” (Hwande, 2018:245).

Furthermore, we view development as a positive change in the overall living standards of the people. Giurgi, in Aghogho and Ita (2017:54), sees development as “the process of economic and social transformation that is based on complex cultural and environmental factors and interactions. ... It is a process of change – change that is positive, ... change that affects the good majority of the people, change that is sustainable.” Since development is that positive change that pervades all aspects of the community and touches every individual, Aghogho and Ita (2017:53) aver that, “The concept of development has become a household affair.”

Agbanusi (2009) uses a Shakespearean novel, *Julius Caesar*, to illustrate the power of language. After summarizing the events of the assassination of Caesar, he leads the reader into the events of his funeral, where he uses the speeches of Mark Anthony and Brutus to vividly illustrate “... the fact that language is a great instrument of motivation and mobilization” (p. 278). Brutus uses his speech to try to convince the Romans that his assassination of his friend, with the help of other conspirators, was in the best interest of all the Roman citizens. He almost succeeded. However, Mark Anthony engages his powerful speeches to overturn the table against Brutus and his co-conspirators. By the narrative and illustrations, Agbanusi (2009:277) shows “... the extent to which language can be used to influence or motivate or mobilize people into accepting an intended view-point, and even, putting them in the mind-set to act in a certain way.” From this we see how the power of language can be used to influence people’s behaviour and their mind-set. This was exploited by the colonizers against the colonized Africans.

We notice that many African countries are not making the needed efforts to promote and foster the development of their indigenous languages because of the fall out of colonization where the colonial masters made the language owners to jettison their

language in preference to the language of their colonizers. This happened irrespective of the fact that language marks or identifies a people, among other things. Hear Uyanne and Motanya (2013:173),

Every human language spoken by individual person or individual society is a sublime gift given to define and identify the person and the community. ...The fact is that our language is bound up [inextricably] with our humanity... [that is,] our value system and our socio-cultural views.

Oyeweso (2019) looks at plural loyalties and multiple identities in post-independence Nigeria. He believes that the nature of the politics, economy and other aspects of Nigeria's existence is determined by the experiences the country went through in the course of its history. He goes on to blame colonization of Nigeria by the British in the 19th and 20th centuries for most of Nigeria's woes. He points out that "[Nigeria] was a deliberate creation of the British colonial government to suit its imperial and colonial designs." The colonialists did all they could to achieve their purpose of the creation of Nigeria. Even after they formally left in the form of granting independence to Nigeria on 1st October 1960, they are still very much with us, wielding their undue influence that is detrimental to the development of Nigeria and her people.

Onyekpere and Amadi (2013) lament the negative attitude of the Igbo people towards their language – the Igbo language. They point out that Igbo, like other languages, confers a unique identity on its speakers. The Igbo poor attitude to their language, which results from the negative psycho-social effect of the English language and culture threatens the Igboness of the Igbo people. In their view, to amend the attitude, "Certainly, the Igbo need a re-orientation"

(p.147). This feeling expressed by Onyekpere and Amadi (2013) is not restricted to Igbo. We view it as an expression relevant to most African languages and cultures that were under the influence of colonization. The owners of such languages and cultures actually ‘need a re-orientation’ in form of decolonization of, especially, language and mind.

3. Discussion on Sources of Africa’s Colonization in Language and Mind

Through colonization that came with evangelism the colonizers made the local languages insignificant and pulled theirs to the level of prestige through language and mind colonization. Not much about the local people was left untampered with by the colonizers. The missionaries followed the same trend by denigrating the culture of the people they come to evangelize and imposed their own, in defiance to the directive of the Supreme Pontiff, Pope Pius XII. According to Muonwe (2014:54), the Pope cautions that in the course of evangelizing a society, foreign cultures should not be imposed on the society. The Pope “advocates rather that missionaries carry out their work with due respect for the indigenous peoples and cultures.” Nnaji (2021) confirms the role of evangelists in this regard when he explains that Christianity regards cultural practices, including indigenous names and naming ceremony, as pagan practices and by this restrict converts from adopting indigenous names.

We also noticed that majority of the Africans do not have regard for their languages, the reason being basically because of the negative effect of colonization on the indigenous languages. Africans must strive to preserve their identity by promoting their languages in all spheres of their lives, up to their national lives. It is not a thing of joy to hear that many African countries do not project

their indigenous languages long after they gained independence from their colonizers. It is a truism that “Tanzania [colonized by the British] is one of the few countries, along with Somalia and Ethiopia that promote the use of an indigenous African language as the medium of instruction throughout primary education” (Ideh, 2017:91). This is a sad scenario. African children should not be made to learn, dream and form their personalities based on foreign languages – the languages of the colonizers.

The media, due to colonial mentality, is a major source of language and mind colonization of Africa. They propagate everything from and by the colonizers as the best, while using pejorative language to describe all that has something to do with Africa. Let us take a few instances. In the television show of animal life in their habitat, called NatGeoWild, such terms as ‘savage’, ‘deadliest’, ‘weird’ are used in the description of animals in Africa, while in Europe, projecting animals that are fighting and wounding or killing themselves does not attract any of such terms. Such situation could only be described simply as ‘animal fight club’. During winter, the falling of snow that covers the fields and trees and causing the death of some animals is often described simply as ‘rumble’. We feel that the idea the presenters of the show create is to make the world know that Africa is bad. They expect Africans to loathe their environment and, consequently, themselves and all that pertain to them as Africans.

Reports have it that Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala’s victory as the First Female and First African Director General (DG) of the prestigious World Trade Organization (WTO), after beating many others from different parts of the world, was immediately greeted on 11th February, 2021 with demeaning language by a Swiss newspaper. Let us recall that the DG was appointed to the position on 15th February 2021 and assumed office on 1st March, 2021. One

wondered whether the insult on her person was meant to tell the world that it made a wrong choice and should not go ahead to appoint her, or may be to cause her to have a very low self-esteem on the new job. The abuse of this seventh DG of WTO, whose tenure will expire on 31st August 2025, was so glaring that it trended on the internet thus, “Swiss newspaper headlines the nomination of Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala for WTO Director General as, ‘This Grandmother will become the new boss of WTO’” pointing out that if not for her being an African, the headline would have projected her as “Harvard Economist, ex-World Bank Managing Director and ex-Minister of Finance...” Her comportment and outcry across the globe forced the Swiss newspaper to deliver apology to her by hand in her office.

Outside of the media, colonizers also invent concepts in various fields of human endeavour that place them higher and above the colonized. For instance, in Linguistics, Mbagwu and Eme (2012) view the concepts used by the colonizers in describing indigenous languages of the colonized and the languages of the colonizers as they relate in Pidgin language as faulty. For instance, with specific reference to the Nigerian Pidgin, with the source of its grammatical structure as the indigenous Nigerian languages, Mbagwu and Eme (2012) point out that the terms ‘superstrate’ and ‘substrate’ for the description of English and Nigerian languages respectively smacks of ‘master-servant’ or superior-inferior’ social relation. Other terms, like describing English as the dominant language is not acceptable either. They argue (p.136) that, “‘Dominant’ or ‘superstrate’ seems to us a product of imperialism which commenced with colonization, at a time when ‘superiority’ or ‘inferiority’ may have been a key concern.” Africans should reject such demeaning or debasing concepts that litter the different disciplines as we have them today.

In March, 2022, on the different WhatsApp platforms, we see Major Al Mustapha (rtd.), the Chief Security Officer (CSO) of the

Nigerian Military Head of State, General Sanni Abacha, lamenting on the cause of insurgency in Nigeria and accusing our colonial masters of playing a crucial role in ensuring that Nigeria is not developed. In his words,

... Since 1972 [when] Nigeria was 12 years old as an independent state; with the discovery of oil and with the [good] performance of General Gowon, the then Head of State, some certain forces came together and said, “It will be disheartening to see us serve this same colony of ours as now subordinates.” That was why at that material time, a new program came up on how to dwarf Nigeria; and I challenge the academia, I challenge patriots, I challenge leaders to go and search for that document and look at the arrangements of dividing Nigeria, creating crisis, creating differences ... in Nigeria that will dwarf us. ... The fear is: “Allow this country to be, we will all be there as subordinates working for them. ... No black man should be seen, particularly in West Africa and Nigeria; as a subject [none] should be allowed to grow.” ... Understand that there is a game that will never allow us to grow. We will be fighting ourselves while they are busy taking what we have.

This built-up non-development programme for Nigeria and many other African countries by their former colonizers must have greatly contributed to the poor state of the continent, up to this day. According to Ugwu (2009:195), “...it is disheartening to note that [Africa] is the only continent in the world that entered the 21st

century with all the negative human development indicators.” Africa must help herself and come out of her miserable situation.

Using the colonizers language to express our Africanness in works of literature and other works on Africa and her peoples can hardly yield the desired dividend. The truth remains that no other language can express a thing about a people better than that people’s language. Eme and Mbagwu (2012:115) aver that, “The use of language in communication illustrates its relationship with the mind. ... The mind here suggests creativity. ... [And] literature depends on language”, yet African languages have not been much engaged by African authors in their literary engagements. This is a case of language and mind colonization.

In many literary works and films involving Europeans and Africans, authored or directed by Europeans, African characters and actors are made to play the second fiddle. Where they are the protagonist, such a character is met with abysmal failure. The case is completely different for a European protagonist who succeeds even in the face of daunting challenges. Such characters achieve even the impossible and come out great achievers. This scenario is nothing but to create the impression in the psyche of Africans and African children that success is not for them. Thus, they create the false negative impression that success is the attribute of Europeans while failure is the attribute of Africans.

3.1 Strategies of Language and Mind Decolonization in Africa

Of all the strategies of language and mind decolonization available to Africans, we are of the view that the best approach is for Africans to non-violently tackle the problem headlong by asserting their humanness, intellectual sagacity and love for their linguistic and cultural identity. Our forebears were able to do this, even in foreign

lands. We should be able to do this to the colonizers who are still in our lands, either by their physical presence or by proxy, long after we secured our independence. If we fail to take up our rights and make it obvious to the colonizers or their cronies that we are standing up for what we are and should be, we may not be able to decolonize ourselves and all we stand for, especially in language and mind. An instance of how one of our very own, a respected African and our forefather we should emulate, Dr. Nelson Mandela of the blessed memory, was able to ‘decolonize’ himself in a foreign land is trending on the internet to mark his posthumous birthday. It involves his few encounters with his racial professor. The trending story is worth reproducing here:

When Nelson Mandela was studying law at the University, a white professor, whose last name was Peters, disliked him intensely. One day, Mr. Peters was having lunch at the dining room when Mandela came along with his tray and sat next to the professor. The professor said, "Mr. Mandela, you do not understand, a pig and a bird do not sit together to eat." Mandela looked at him as a parent would a rude child and calmly replied, "You do not worry, Professor. I'll fly away," and he went and sat at another table. Mr. Peters, reddened with rage, decided to take a revenge. The next day in class he posed the following question: "Mr. Mandela, if you were walking down the street and found a package, and within was a bag of wisdom and another bag with money, which one would you take?" Without hesitating, Mandela responded, "The one with the money, of course." Prof. Peters, smiling sarcastically said, "I, in your place, would have taken the wisdom." Nelson Mandela shrugged and responded, "Each one takes what he

doesn't have." Prof. Peters, by this time was about to throw a fit, seething with fury. So great was his anger that he wrote on Nelson Mandela's exam sheet the word 'IDIOT' and gave it to the future struggle icon. Mandela took the exam sheet and sat down at his desk trying very hard to remain calm while he contemplated his next move. A few minutes later, Nelson Mandela got up, walked up to the professor and told him in a dignified polite tone, "Prof. Peters, you signed your name on the sheet, but you forgot to give me my grade."

Don't mess with intelligent people; pass it on to your intellectual friends....
HAPPY MANDELA DAY everyone. May the Lord give us wisdom to respond to our haters. Don't hate back but apply wisdom!

If all Africans at home or in the Diaspora are able to intelligently claim their right and send the right signal to the 'abuser' to desist from the ignoble behaviour, it will go a long way in solving the problems left behind in Africa not just by colonization of the past but even by the current neo-colonialism where Africans, especially the leaders, are often used against their fellow Africans.

When Africans, nay Nigerians, who are leaders begin to behave like the colonialists of former years, they should be reminded in the language they understand that they are there to make life better for the Africans they lead. Sometimes, citizens of the various countries of Africa become so quiet and docile in the face of provocation. This could be attributed to language and mind colonization, and possibly economic deprivation. For instance, Nigerians are afraid to speak out or react in the face of misrule by their leaders. They are, therefore, often blamed for their predicament

by a very small minority that speak out, but whose voices are usually swallowed up in the palpable silence of the teeming majority. On this attitude, Odey (2007:162) says,

All said and done, I have said it several times that our so-called leaders treat us the way they do because we have allowed them to live in a different world where they use our money to provide for themselves a superabundance of everything that makes life comfortable but allow the rest of us to lack the barest necessities that could sustain our wretched lives.

Africans should rise up to the challenges of misrule by decolonizing their minds and employing the power of language to emancipate themselves from modern day colonization and stand up to their identity. It is only this way that they themselves can bring in the needed development in the African continent by non-violently compelling their leaders to do the needful.

When Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was insulted by the media to make her lose her self-worth, she was not deterred by the abuse; she knew the stuff she was made off. Africans are, therefore, encouraged to be the best of all. All the contenders for the WTO Director General's position were beaten by her. She has the African spirit of excellence. No African should drop this spirit for colonial mentality. Africans must promote and develop their indigenous languages bastardized in one way or the other by the colonizers. If they fail in this direction, they are not likely to regain their languages and cultures that they jettisoned in preference to those of the colonizers. Here, again, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's dress code stands out to edify her Africanness and beautiful culture.

The researchers' observation shows us that in establishments requiring security checks, anyone carrying the identity or passport of our colonizers is allowed to pass through without the stipulated thorough security checks. We see this as the colonial mentality of the staff of these establishments who believe that their erstwhile masters are incapable of committing security breaches, or cannot 'condescend' so low to commit a crime. For them, only Africans and their likes must be scrutinized. This observation is part of our effort at decolonizing Africans working in such places. Everyone should be treated equally.

Concerning the Major Al Mustapha's lamentation on the role of our colonial masters in entrenching crisis in Nigeria to ensure its non-development, it becomes clear that colonization is still with us. The colonizers are said to have left Nigeria on 1st October, 1960; but they are still in operation directly from their base and indirectly through their cronies who are themselves Nigerians. We are unequivocal in stating here that only decolonization will save the country and remove the colonial fetters from Nigerians to enable them think positive about developing the nation.

Most of the authors that do not use African languages in their literary works raise some issues why African languages may not be 'suitable' for their works. The issues range from non-development of the African languages, reducing the number of the readers of their works, etc. These issues could easily be addressed (see Eme and Mbagwu, 2012). Not properly engaging African languages in literary writings would become a thing of the past if African authors engage in concerted efforts at language and mind decolonization of Africa. With this determination that will launch African languages to the height of developed languages, there is nothing Africans cannot achieve with their language. The assumptions that African languages are inferior to other languages like English, and that

African languages are incomplete and, therefore, cannot be used to express the artistes' intentions have been dismissed as erroneous by many lovers of African languages (see Eme, 2015; Ugochukwu, 2021).

On the portrayal of Africans as failures in literary works and films, African literary writers and film directors must change this narrative. Even in works involving only Africans as characters, the characters should be made to succeed in their career and other worthwhile ventures they set their minds to. This is a decolonization strategy. We appreciate some African literary artistes who have adopted this strategy. One of them is Idongesit Lawrence Udoh, a young Nigerian literary writer. She condemns this idea of Nigerian authors projecting their characters as eventual failures. In her words, trending on the internet, Idongesit Lawrence Udoh raises a pertinent question:

Maybe, one day, we'll talk about Nigerian classics and how they've been used to instill failure in the Nigerian youth. Because, explain to me why school literature always has to have a tragic end if not to teach the youths that 'Failure is Imminent'. Long before we knew about *Game of Thrones*, our classical authors were destroying the lives of our main characters: *Beggars' Strike*, *Joys of Motherhood*, *Things Fall Apart*. IN BOOKS FOR CHILDREN. We'll read foreign books where the white characters [colonizers] go off and succeed at whatever crazy thing they want to do, and yet, the people who look like us, who have the same experiences as us, the people we identify with... are given failure and destruction in the end? Why???

Unless African literary artistes adopt this decolonization strategy and encourage our youth to step out and aim to achieve greatness, with the conviction that success is assured, African hope of development would continue to be a mirage. African youth, if so decolonized in mind using the power of literary language, will lead Africa into its much sort after development. Their strength, intelligence, forward-looking spirit, development-oriented mindset and all the virtues lying latent in the African youth must be enkindled for them to make exploits hitherto unimagined. Literature and films can play a very vital role in this direction.

4. Summary and Conclusion

The study has pointed out that although the colonized African countries have gained their independence, they are yet to decolonize themselves. Africans are, by this, still ‘colonized’, especially in language, mind and other areas of their lives. The listed evangelization, the media, concepts in various disciplines, negative attitude of language and culture owners, programmes negative for African development, foreign and indigenous literary artistes as some of the sources of language and mind colonization of Africans.

Africans should rise up to the challenges by decolonizing their minds and employing the power of language to emancipate themselves from modern day colonization and stand up to their identity. It is only this way that they themselves can bring in the needed development in the African continent. We agree with Hwande (2018:251) that, “It is only when they [Africans] change their minds and look back on their language and culture with love and admiration while charting a new course for their life that we ... as a continent can grow” and develop to our full potentials. This will make us to be proud of being Africans and be proud to raise our heads high for who, and what we are.

References

- Agbanusi, A. (2009). Language as an instrument of motivation and mobilization. In J. Eyisi, I. Odimegwu & N. Ezenwa-Ohaeto (eds.) *African literature and development in the twenty-first century: Proceedings of Ezenwa-Ohaeto International Memorial Conference*. Owerri: Living Flames Resources. 277-285.
- Aghogho, O.G. and M.R. Ita. (2017). Encouraging grassroots development through indigenous language. In O, Taiwo, F. Ogunkeye and H. Adeniyi (eds.). *Revitalization of African languages: A festschrift in honour of OzoMekuri Ndimele*. Ibadan: Linguistic Association of Nigeria. 53-56.
- Anagbogu, P.N., B.M. Mbah & C.A. Eme. (2010). *Introduction to linguistics*, second edition. Awka: Amaka Dreams.
- Eme, C.A. (2015). *Nchọchamgbakọ aka nke ndịnkaaasusu nandịọkachamaradiicheiche* (Linguists in collaborative research with other professionals), 27th Inaugural Lecture, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 22nd October. Nimo: Rex Charles & Patrick Ltd.
- Eme, C.A. & D.U. Mbagwu. (2011). African languages and African literature. *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities (UJAH)*. Vol. 12, No. 1, 114-127. Also in I. Nwankwo, T. Utoh-Ezeajugh & D. Tunca (eds.). 2008. *Professor Osofisan International Conference on performance: Proceedings*. 206-210. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v12i1.6>
- Fafunwa, A. B. (2005). Chairman's opening remarks. Presented at Forms and Functions of English and indigenous languages in Nigeria. In honour of Prof. Ayo Banjo at 70. University of Ibadan.
- <https://www.britannica.com> Decolonization: Definition, examples, and facts. Retrieved 19/3/2022.

- <https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org> Decolonization. Retrieved 16/3/2022.
- Hwande, T. (2018). Language and mental colonization in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. In H. Adeniyi, I. Maduako & P. I. Amadi (eds.). *Trends in African Linguistics and Language Development: Festschrift for Ismail Junaidu*. Lagos: Free Enterprise Publishers. 245-252.
- Ideh, A.E. (2017). The problems of English language teaching and learning in Tanzanian primary schools. In O, Taiwo, F. Ogunkeye and H. Adeniyi (eds.). *Revitalization of African languages: A festschrift in honour of OzoMekuri Ndimele*. Ibadan: Linguistic Association of Nigeria. 91-99.
- Longley, R. (2021). What is colonialism? Definition and examples. www.thoughtco.com Retrieved 31/3/2022.
- Mbagwu, D.U. & C.A. Eme. (2012). A question of the superstrate and substrate in Nigerian pidgin. *Legon Journal of the Humanities Special Edition 2012, Faculty of Arts, University of Ghana*. 133-148.
- Muonwe, M. (2014). *Dialectics of faith-culture integration*. Bloomington: Xlibris.
- Nnaji, C.I. (2021). A sociolinguistic investigation of genealogical naming system in Igboland. *Alóre: Ilorin Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. 30, 39-54.
- Nwobu, E.U. (2020). Igbo language and the younger generation: The need for motivation. *Odibendi: A Journal of Igbo Consciousness*, Maiden Edition. 89-100.
- Odey, J.O. (1997). *Nigeria: Search for peace and social justice*. Enugu: Snaap Press Limited.
- Odey, J.O. (2007). *Another madness called election 2007: Nigeria's journey from colonial bondage to democratic tyranny* (Volume 1). Enugu: Snaap Press Limited.

- O’Grady, W., J. Archibald & F. Katamba. (2011). *Contemporary linguistics: An introduction*. London: Longman.
- Onyekpere, G.N. & E.E. Amadi. (2013). The state of the Igbo language: Threat to Igbo identity and social stability. In P.A. Uchechukwu, E.U. Ibekwe, N.M. Obi and Chike Okoye (eds.). *The humanities and national identity*. Awka: Fab Anieh Nig. Ltd. 142-148.
- Oyeweso, S. (2019). Plural loyalties and multiple identities in post-independence Nigeria. In F.A. Adesanoye (ed). *Plural loyalties in a modernising state*. Ibadan: The Nigerian Academy of Letters. 1-105.
- Phan, H. (2018). What is the relationship between language and communication? <https://www.quora.com/what-is-the-relationship-between-language-and-communication-2> Retrieved 19th March, 2022.
- Robins, R.H. (1972). The structure of language. In A. Cashdan and E. Grugeon (eds.). *Language in education: A source book*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 17-24.
- Udoh, I. L. (2022). Why do our stories always have to be ‘realistic’? <https://web.facebook.com/100002069046130/videos/291365292980597/> retrieved 17.04.2022
- Ugochukwu, C.N. (2020). Igbo language amidst globalisation: The way forward. *Odibendi: A Journal of Igbo Consciousness*, Maiden Edition, 147-159.
- Ugwu, C.C. (2009). Democratic governance and challenges of poverty alleviation in Africa. In E.J. Otagburuagu (ed.) *Governance in Africa in the 21st century*. Nsukka: Global Publishers. 195-208.
- Umera-Okeke, N. (2019). Security and economic challenges in the new information communication age: The role of the social media in modern day Nigeria. *International Journal of the*

School of Languages (Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe). 1:1,12-23.

Uyane, C.M & C.C. Motanya. (2013). Style as the man: A continuum of thought and culture in nation building. In K. Nwadior, L. Nkamigbo, C. Nweke & N. Obi (eds.). *The humanities and nation building*. Awka: Fab Anieh Nig. Ltd. 173-186. *Wiktionary* (online). Retrieved 19/3/2022.