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Translation and the revitalization of the Igbo language: Cultural preservation and digital sustainability in Nigeria

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Abstract

The rapid decline of indigenous languages has become a major concern among linguists, translators, and cultural scholars across the world. In Nigeria, the Igbo language faces increasing threats arising from globalization, urbanization, western education, digital communication patterns, and excessive preference for English language usage among younger generations. This study examined translation and the revitalization of the Igbo language with emphasis on cultural preservation and digital sustainability in Nigeria. The study adopted a qualitative documentary research design anchored on the Language Maintenance and Revitalization Theory. Data were obtained from translated literary texts, digital media contents, educational materials, religious publications, online language platforms, policy documents, and scholarly literature published between 2018 and 2026. Findings revealed that translation contributes significantly to preserving Igbo cultural heritage through folktales, proverbs, oral narratives, poetry, and indigenous knowledge systems. The study further established that digital platforms such as BBC News Igbo, mobile applications, social media educational pages, and artificial intelligence translation technologies improve the visibility, accessibility, and modernization of the Igbo language. Educational and religious translations were also found to strengthen mother-tongue learning, literacy development, and intergenerational language transmission. Nevertheless, challenges such as inadequate governmental support, shortage of trained translators, poor indigenous language policies, insufficient technological infrastructure, and societal preference for English continue to hinder effective language revitalization efforts. The study concluded that translation remains an important socio-cultural and technological strategy for preserving indigenous identity and ensuring the digital sustainability of the Igbo language in contemporary Nigerian society.

Introduction

Language remains one of the most important instruments for cultural transmission, identity formation, social interaction, and historical continuity within human society. Indigenous languages, in particular, preserve the traditions, philosophies, values, and collective memory of their speakers. Through language, societies transmit oral traditions, folktales, proverbs, indigenous knowledge systems, religious beliefs, and communal experiences across generations. Consequently, the survival of indigenous languages remains closely connected to the preservation of cultural identity and societal continuity.

However, globalization, urbanization, migration, western education, and linguistic imperialism have continued to threaten the survival of many indigenous languages across the world. According to UNESCO (2021), many indigenous languages are gradually losing their communicative relevance and intergenerational transmission because of the increasing dominance of global

languages such as English, French, and Spanish. African indigenous languages remain particularly vulnerable because many are underrepresented within educational systems, digital technologies, media communication, and official governmental activities.

In Nigeria, the Igbo language remains one of the major indigenous languages predominantly spoken in southeastern Nigeria and among diaspora communities. The language occupies an important socio-cultural position among the Igbo people because it serves as a medium for transmitting oral traditions, indigenous philosophies, folktales, proverbs, religious beliefs, and communal values. Nevertheless, despite its historical significance and large population of speakers, the language continues to experience increasing threats arising from excessive preference for English language communication, urbanization, migration, and changing communication patterns among younger generations.

According to Egwuonwu-Chimezie (2022), many younger Igbo speakers demonstrate declining competence in reading, writing, and speaking the language fluently. Similarly, Ani (2019) argues that the increasing prestige associated with English language communication has weakened intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages within many Nigerian homes and educational institutions. Consequently, many younger generations increasingly prefer English for academic, professional, and social communication, thereby reducing the communicative relevance of indigenous languages.

Furthermore, the underrepresentation of the Igbo language within digital communication systems, online educational platforms, and artificial intelligence technologies creates additional barriers to sustainable language revitalization. Many indigenous African languages remain technologically marginalized because of inadequate linguistic databases, insufficient governmental support, poor funding, and limited computational resources. Consequently, scholars have increasingly emphasized the need for integrating indigenous languages into modern technological environments in order to ensure sustainable language survival within the digital age.

In view of these concerns, translation has emerged as an important mechanism for indigenous language preservation and revitalization. According to Nwammuo & Salawu (2019), translation strengthens linguistic sustainability by expanding the communicative domains of indigenous languages within education, religion, governance, literature, media communication, and digital technology. Furthermore, Baker (2019) maintains that translation functions as a cultural bridge that preserves indigenous philosophies, communal identities, and cultural memory across generations. Consequently, translation does not merely transfer linguistic meanings but also sustains cultural continuity and indigenous intellectual heritage.

Similarly, digital communication technologies have created new opportunities for language revitalization and digital sustainability. Eke & Salawu (2026) observe that digital platforms such as BBC News Igbo have significantly improved the visibility and prestige of the Igbo language through translated news contents and online communication. Likewise, Ezeani , Rayson, Onyenwe, Uchechukwu, & Hepple (2020) argue that machine translation systems and artificial intelligence technologies contribute significantly to the digital representation and modernization of low-resource African languages. Mobile applications, online dictionaries, YouTube tutorials, and social media educational platforms have also increased indigenous language accessibility among younger generations and diaspora communities.

Nevertheless, despite these technological advancements, several challenges continue to hinder effective revitalization of the Igbo language. These include inadequate governmental support, poor indigenous language policies, shortage of professional translators, orthographic inconsistencies, insufficient technological infrastructure, and negative societal attitudes toward indigenous language communication. According to Adegbija (2018), the continued dominance of English language communication within educational, political, and socio-economic domains undermines the practical relevance of indigenous languages in Nigeria.

It is against this background that this study examined translation and the revitalization of the Igbo language with emphasis on cultural preservation and digital sustainability in Nigeria. The study explored how literary, educational, religious, and digital translation practices contribute to preserving indigenous cultural heritage and strengthening language sustainability within contemporary Nigerian society.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Concept of Translation

Translation is widely recognized as a linguistic and cultural process through which meanings, ideas, and experiences are transferred from one language to another. Scholars in Translation Studies emphasize that translation extends beyond linguistic substitution because it also involves cultural interpretation and contextual adaptation. According to Baker (2019), translation functions as a bridge between cultures by preserving indigenous identities and facilitating intercultural understanding. Similarly, Newmark (2018) maintains that translation contributes significantly to cultural continuity because it preserves communal values, historical experiences, and indigenous philosophies embedded within language.

Furthermore, translation performs important socio-cultural functions within multilingual societies because it enables communication across linguistic boundaries while preserving indigenous knowledge systems. Nida (2019) argues that effective translation requires both grammatical and cultural equivalence in order to preserve intended meanings. Consequently, translation remains an important instrument for sustaining indigenous cultural expressions, oral traditions, and educational communication.

Translation and Language Revitalization

Translation has become increasingly relevant within discussions concerning indigenous language revitalization. Language revitalization refers to deliberate efforts aimed at preserving endangered languages and restoring their communicative relevance within society. According to Fishman (2019), revitalization requires institutional support, intergenerational transmission, educational implementation, and cultural continuity. Translation therefore contributes to revitalization by expanding the communicative domains of indigenous languages within education, religion, governance, literature, media communication, and digital technology.

Similarly, Nwammuo & Salawu (2019) maintain that translation strengthens indigenous language sustainability because it enables minority languages to function within modern communication systems. Venuti (2021) also argues that translation increases the visibility of marginalized languages and protects indigenous cultures from linguistic domination and cultural marginalization.

Igbo Language and Cultural Preservation

The Igbo language occupies an important socio-cultural position among the Igbo people of southeastern Nigeria because it serves as a medium for transmitting oral traditions, folktales, proverbs, indigenous philosophies, and communal values. However, scholars have continued to express concern over the gradual decline of the language among younger generations. Egwuonwu-Chimezie (2022) argues that urbanization, western education, migration, and preference for English language communication have weakened intergenerational transmission of the Igbo language. Similarly, Ani (2019) observes that many parents discourage indigenous language usage because of the prestige associated with English language communication.

The decline of the Igbo language threatens cultural preservation because language functions as a repository of collective memory and identity. Crystal (2020) maintains that language loss often results in cultural erosion because indigenous philosophies and symbolic meanings are embedded

within local linguistic expressions. Consequently, translation becomes important in preserving Igbo cultural heritage through translated folktales, proverbs, oral narratives, and literary texts.

Translation and Digital Sustainability

The emergence of digital communication technologies has transformed contemporary language preservation strategies. Eke and Salawu (2026) maintain that digital media platforms such as BBC News Igbo contribute significantly to language revitalization through translated news contents and online communication. Similarly, Ezeani , Rayson, Onyenwe, Uchechukwu and Hepple (2020) argue that machine translation systems and artificial intelligence technologies strengthen the digital representation of low-resource African languages.

Mobile applications, online dictionaries, YouTube tutorials, and social media educational platforms have also increased indigenous language accessibility among younger generations and diaspora communities. Nevertheless, Orife (2020) observes that many African indigenous languages remain underrepresented within artificial intelligence systems because of inadequate linguistic databases and computational resources. Consequently, technological marginalization continues to hinder effective digital sustainability of indigenous languages.

Translation, Education, and Religious Sustainability

Educational and religious translations contribute significantly to indigenous language sustainability. UNESCO (2021) maintains that mother-tongue educational translation improves literacy development and cognitive comprehension among learners. Educational translation also expands the communicative relevance of indigenous languages by enabling them to communicate scientific and academic concepts effectively.

Similarly, Adegbija (2018) argues that translated Bibles, hymn books, and liturgical texts strengthen indigenous language prestige and communal attachment through repeated religious communication. Consequently, educational and religious translations contribute significantly to preserving indigenous identity and sustaining intergenerational language transmission. Despite these contributions, challenges such as inadequate governmental support, shortage of trained translators, poor indigenous language policies, and societal preference for English continue to hinder effective revitalization of the Igbo language in Nigeria. Therefore, translation remains an important socio-cultural and technological strategy for preserving indigenous identity and promoting digital sustainability within contemporary Nigerian society

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Language Maintenance and Revitalization Theory within Sociolinguistics and Translation Studies. The theory explains how deliberate cultural, educational, linguistic, and institutional interventions contribute to the preservation and revitalzation of endangered languages within multilingual societies. The theory is closely associated with Joshua Fishman, who emphasized the importance of intergenerational transmission, cultural continuity, institutional support, and communicative relevance in sustaining indigenous languages.

According to Fishman (2019), endangered languages can survive when they remain actively used within homes, schools, religious institutions, media communication, and public life. Consequently, language revitalization involves more than symbolic preservation because indigenous languages must participate actively within everyday communication and societal activities. The theory therefore emphasizes that language survival depends significantly on practical relevance within educational, cultural, political, and socio-economic domains.

Within Translation Studies, translation functions as an important mechanism for language maintenance because it expands the communicative domains of indigenous languages. Baker (2019) argues that translation strengthens linguistic sustainability by enabling indigenous languages to

participate within educational, scientific, literary, religious, and technological discourses. Similarly, Venuti (2021) maintains that translation increases the visibility of marginalized languages and protects indigenous cultures from linguistic domination and cultural marginalization.

The theory further explains that language revitalization requires preservation of cultural identity and indigenous knowledge systems. Indigenous languages preserve folktales, proverbs, oral traditions, communal philosophies, and historical experiences that define collective identity within society. Consequently, translation contributes significantly to cultural continuity by preserving and transmitting indigenous meanings across generations and across linguistic boundaries.

Furthermore, the theory is relevant to digital sustainability because contemporary indigenous language survival increasingly depends on technological participation and online communication. Indigenous languages that remain absent from digital communication systems risk further marginalization within technologically globalized societies. Therefore, digital communication technologies such as social media platforms, online dictionaries, artificial intelligence systems, and mobile learning applications have become important tools for modern language revitalization.

Nevertheless, critics argue that Fishman's theory initially paid limited attention to digital communication technologies and artificial intelligence infrastructures because the theory emerged before the rapid expansion of contemporary digital globalization. Consequently, the present study extends the assumptions of the theory by emphasizing digital participation and technological integration as important dimensions of contemporary indigenous language sustainability.

The relevance of the theory to this study lies in its emphasis on cultural continuity, educational implementation, institutional support, communicative relevance, and technological adaptation in sustaining endangered languages. The theory therefore supports the argument that literary translation, educational translation, religious translation, media communication, and digital technologies can strengthen the revitalization and sustainability of the Igbo language within contemporary Nigerian society.

Empirical Studies

Several empirical studies have examined indigenous language revitalization within the contexts of translation, digital technology, media communication, and cultural preservation. Eke & Salawu (2026) investigated the impact of digital media on Igbo language revitalization using BBC News Igbo as a case study. Their findings revealed that translated digital news contents improved language visibility, prestige, and accessibility among younger audiences. The study is relevant because it demonstrates the importance of digital translation in sustaining indigenous language communication.

Similarly, Egwuonwu-Chimezie (2022) examined the declining status of the Igbo language and identified urbanization, western education, migration, and preference for English language communication as major threats to indigenous language survival. The study recommended stronger cultural commitment and institutional support for language revitalization. However, unlike the present study, it paid limited attention to translation and digital sustainability.

Furthermore, Ezeani, Rayson, Onyenwe, Uchechukwu and Hepple (2020) investigated Igbo-English machine translation systems and developed benchmark datasets for low-resource African languages. Their findings established that artificial intelligence technologies and natural language processing systems can strengthen digital language preservation and accessibility. The study is relevant because it highlights the technological dimension of language revitalization. Nevertheless, the present study differs because it examines translation from broader cultural, educational, and communicative perspectives.

Obiwuru (2025) also examined the impact of artificial intelligence translation systems on Igbo language preservation using Critical Discourse Analysis. The findings revealed that AI translation technologies improve indigenous language modernization and online participation. However, the

study identified semantic inaccuracies and inadequate cultural contextualization affecting machine translation systems. The study is important because it demonstrates the relationship between technology and indigenous language sustainability.

Similarly, Okeke (2023) investigated digital technology and indigenous language sustainability in Nigeria. The study revealed that online dictionaries, mobile applications, translated educational materials, and social media communication contribute significantly to indigenous language revitalization. The study emphasized that technological innovation increases indigenous language participation within modern communication systems.

In view of the reviewed studies, it is evident that previous scholars concentrated largely on digital technology, media communication, and language endangerment independently. Nevertheless, limited scholarly attention has been devoted specifically to translation as a multidimensional strategy for cultural preservation and digital sustainability of the Igbo language. Therefore, the present study fills this scholarly gap by examining how translation contributes simultaneously to indigenous cultural preservation, educational accessibility, religious communication, and digital sustainability within contemporary Nigerian society.

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative documentary research design anchored on Translation Studies and Sociolinguistics. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on interpretive analysis of translated literary texts, digital contents, educational materials, religious publications, and scholarly documents relating to the revitalization of the Igbo language in Nigeria.

Data for the study were purposively selected from translated folktales, proverbs, oral narratives, BBC News Igbo publications, social media educational pages, online dictionaries, mobile applications, religious texts, policy documents, journal articles, and scholarly literature published between 2018 and 2026. The purposive sampling technique enabled the researcher to select materials directly relevant to translation, cultural preservation, and digital sustainability.

The study employed thematic analysis as proposed by Braun & Clarke (2021). Data were categorized into themes such as cultural preservation, digital sustainability, educational translation, and religious communication. The findings were interpreted using the Language Maintenance and Revitalization Theory. To ensure credibility and validity, data were obtained from scholarly and institutional sources including UNESCO publications, academic journals, translated indigenous materials, and recognized digital platforms. Ethical considerations relating to academic integrity and intellectual property were also observed through proper citation and referencing of all consulted materials.

Sampled Translated Materials

Theme One:Translation as a tool for cultural preservation

Sample 1: Egbe bere, ugo bere; nke si ibe ya ebena, nku kwaa ya. (Let the kite perch and let the eagle perch; whichever denies the other the right to perch, may its wings break.)

This translated proverb preserves indigenous values of peaceful coexistence and justice. It demonstrates how translation sustains Igbo philosophical expressions while promoting intercultural accessibility and cultural continuity.

Sample 2: Onye kwe, chi ya ekwe. (When a person agrees, his spirit agrees.)

The translation reflects Igbo beliefs concerning destiny, determination, and personal responsibility. It contributes to preserving indigenous worldview and sustaining traditional philosophical expressions across generations.

Sample 3: Mbe kwuru na ọgụgụ isi ka ike. (The tortoise said that wisdom is greater than strength.)

This translated folktale preserves oral storytelling traditions and indigenous moral instruction. It demonstrates how literary translation contributes to cultural preservation and language revitalization.
Sample 4: Ala nna anyi bụ isi iyi nke ndụ anyị. (Our ancestral land is the source of our life.)
The translation preserves emotional attachment to ancestry and communal identity. Furthermore, it promotes cultural continuity and intercultural understanding through accessible indigenous expressions.
Sample 5: Communal Proverb Translation
Nku di na mba na-eghelu mba ọkụ. (The firewood in the community cooks for the community).
This proverb promotes communal cooperation and collective responsibility. The translation sustains indigenous social values and communal philosophy.

Theme Two: Translation and digital sustainability
Sample 6: Gọọmenti kwuru na a ga-eme mgbanwe ọhụrụ n'usoro akụ na ụba. (The government announced that new reforms would be introduced into the economic system.)
The translated statement demonstrates modernization of Igbo vocabulary within political and economic communication. It reflects the role of translation in digital sustainability and media visibility.
Sample 7: Ụtụtụ ọma. (Good morning.)
This translated greeting promotes daily indigenous language communication among younger generations through social media and digital learning platforms.
Sample 8: Bịa mụta asụsụ Igbo site na ekwentị gị. (Come and learn Igbo language through your mobile phone.)
The translated expression highlights the relationship between language revitalization and digital technology. Mobile learning applications improve accessibility and modern usage of the Igbo language.
Sample 9: Igbo Amaka. (Igbo is beautiful.)
This translated slogan promotes positive indigenous language identity and counters negative societal attitudes toward indigenous language communication among younger generations.

Theme Three: Translation and religious sustainability
Sample 10: Onyenweanyị bụ onye nche m; ọ dịghị ihe ga-akọ m. (The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.)
This biblical translation preserves spiritual communication and sustains indigenous language usage within religious worship and intergenerational communication.
Sample 11: Ka anyị too Chineke n'ihi ịhụnanya ya. (Let us praise God for His love.)
The translated hymn sustains indigenous worship traditions and promotes oral language transmission through repeated communal religious activities.
Sample 12: Onyenweanyị nọnyere gị. (The Lord be with you.)
This liturgical translation promotes indigenous participation in worship and preserves ecclesiastical communication within the Igbo language.

Theme Four: Translation and educational development
Sample 13: Akwụkwọ bụ ụzọ e si enweta ọmụma. (Education is the pathway to knowledge.)
This translated educational statement supports mother-tongue learning and demonstrates that indigenous languages can effectively communicate academic concepts.
Sample 14: Mmiri dị mkpa maka ndụ mmadụ na anụmanụ. (Water is essential for human and animal life.)
The translated science statement expands the functional relevance of the Igbo language within science education and contemporary academic communication.

Sample 15: Onye ọbụla nwere ikike ịhọpụta onye ndu ya. (Every citizen has the right to elect a leader.)
This translated civic statement demonstrates how indigenous language translation promotes democratic awareness and public participation within local communities.
Sample 16: Sachaa aka gị mgbe niile iji gbochie ọrịa. (Wash your hands regularly to prevent disease.)
The translated health statement improves indigenous access to public health information and demonstrates the relevance of translation in community awareness programmes.

Findings

The findings of this study confirmed that translation remains an important mechanism for preserving and revitalizing endangered indigenous languages. The study revealed that literary translation contributes significantly to cultural continuity through the preservation of proverbs, folktales, oral narratives, and indigenous philosophies. This finding supports the position of Baker (2019), who opines that translation functions as a cultural bridge that sustains indigenous identity and historical consciousness across generations.

Furthermore, the findings established that digital communication technologies enhance the visibility and modernization of the Igbo language. The use of translated digital contents on BBC News Igbo, social media platforms, and mobile learning applications demonstrated that indigenous languages can remain relevant within technologically driven societies. This finding agrees with Eke & Salawu (2026), who maintain that digital media translation improves indigenous language prestige and accessibility among younger audiences.

Similarly, the findings showed that religious translation contributes significantly to language maintenance through translated Bibles, hymns, liturgical texts, and devotional materials. This finding corroborates Crystal's (2020) argument that religion remains one of the strongest institutions for sustaining indigenous language usage because religious practices are continuously transmitted across generations.

In addition, the study revealed that educational translation improves mother-tongue learning and enhances educational accessibility among indigenous language speakers. This supports UNESCO's (2021) position that educational translation strengthens literacy acquisition and cognitive development. Nevertheless, the findings identified challenges such as inadequate funding, poor institutional support, shortage of translators, and dominance of English language communication. These findings agree with Adegbija (2018), who argues that societal preference for English continues to undermine indigenous language development in Nigeria. Consequently, the study established that translation, when integrated with digital technology, education, religion, and cultural preservation initiatives, can significantly strengthen the revitalization and digital sustainability of the Igbo language in contemporary society.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that translation plays a significant role in the revitalization and preservation of the Igbo language through cultural preservation, digital sustainability, educational accessibility, and religious communication. The study established that translated literary materials such as folktales, proverbs, oral narratives, and indigenous philosophical expressions preserve communal identity and cultural heritage. This finding supports Baker's (2019) view that translation functions as a cultural bridge that sustains indigenous historical consciousness and traditional values across generations.

Furthermore, the study showed that digital communication technologies such as BBC News Igbo, mobile applications, social media platforms, and online educational resources contribute significantly to the modernization, visibility, and accessibility of the Igbo language. This finding agrees with Eke & Salawu (2026), who argue that digital media translation improves indigenous

language prestige and participation among younger generations. However, the study also identified semantic inaccuracies and inadequate cultural contextualization in some artificial intelligence translation systems, thereby indicating that technological integration without cultural sensitivity may weaken indigenous semantic meanings.

Similarly, the findings revealed that educational and religious translations strengthen intergenerational language transmission and improve mother-tongue learning, literacy development, and communal participation. Nevertheless, despite these revitalization efforts, English language communication continues to dominate educational, technological, and socio-economic domains in Nigeria. Consequently, many younger speakers increasingly prefer English because of its perceived prestige and economic relevance.

The study therefore argues that translation should not be viewed merely as a linguistic activity but as a socio-cultural and technological strategy for preserving indigenous identity and sustaining language continuity. Sustainable revitalization of the Igbo language requires coordinated governmental support, technological investment, educational implementation, and positive societal attitudes toward indigenous language communication in contemporary Nigerian society.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have important educational, cultural, technological, and policy implications for indigenous language revitalization in Nigeria. Educationally, the study revealed that translation strengthens mother-tongue learning, literacy development, and academic comprehension among indigenous language speakers. Consequently, educational institutions should encourage the translation of instructional materials and scientific concepts into indigenous languages to improve educational accessibility and inclusiveness.

Culturally, the study demonstrated that translation preserves folktales, proverbs, oral traditions, communal philosophies, and indigenous knowledge systems. This implies that sustainable language revitalization remains closely connected to cultural continuity and identity preservation. Communities and cultural organizations should therefore promote indigenous language usage within homes, festivals, storytelling traditions, and social interactions.

Technologically, the findings established that digital communication technologies such as BBC News Igbo, mobile applications, online dictionaries, and artificial intelligence systems contribute significantly to indigenous language modernization and visibility. However, the study also revealed that many AI translation systems affecting African indigenous languages experience semantic inaccuracies and inadequate cultural contextualization. Consequently, technology developers should improve indigenous language databases and computational linguistic resources for more culturally accurate machine translations.

From a policy perspective, the findings revealed that poor implementation of indigenous language policies continues to hinder effective language revitalization in Nigeria. Therefore, government agencies and educational policymakers should formulate and implement stronger indigenous language policies that encourage translation, digital participation, and institutional usage of the Igbo language within education, governance, media communication, and technological development.

Conclusion

This study examined translation and the revitalization of the Igbo language with emphasis on cultural preservation and digital sustainability in Nigeria. The study established that translation contributes significantly to preserving indigenous cultural heritage through folktales, proverbs, oral narratives, educational materials, religious texts, and digital communication platforms. Translation therefore functions as an important mechanism for sustaining indigenous identity, cultural continuity, and historical consciousness among the Igbo people.

The study further revealed that digital technologies such as BBC News Igbo, online dictionaries, social media educational platforms, mobile applications, and artificial intelligence translation systems have improved the visibility, modernization, accessibility, and communicative relevance of the Igbo language within technologically driven environments. Educational and religious translations were also found to strengthen mother-tongue learning, literacy development, and intergenerational language transmission.

Nevertheless, the study identified several challenges hindering effective language revitalization, including inadequate governmental support, shortage of trained translators, and poor implementation of indigenous language policies, insufficient technological infrastructure, and societal preference for English language communication. These challenges indicate that translation alone cannot guarantee sustainable indigenous language revitalization without broader institutional and societal commitment.

Theoretically, the study reinforced the assumptions of the Language Maintenance and Revitalization Theory by demonstrating that language survival depends on communicative relevance, institutional participation, cultural continuity, and technological integration. Consequently, the study concludes that sustainable revitalization of the Igbo language requires coordinated educational, cultural, technological, and governmental interventions. Translation, when effectively integrated with digital communication technologies and indigenous language policies, can significantly strengthen the preservation and sustainability of the Igbo language within contemporary Nigerian society.

Contributions to Knowledge

This study contributes significantly to Translation Studies and Sociolinguistics by demonstrating that translation is not merely a linguistic activity but also a socio-cultural and technological strategy for revitalizing endangered indigenous languages. The study expanded existing scholarship by integrating cultural preservation, educational accessibility, religious communication, and digital sustainability within a unified framework for examining Igbo language revitalization.

Furthermore, the study contributed theoretically by extending the Language Maintenance and Revitalization Theory to include digital participation and technological integration as important dimensions of contemporary indigenous language sustainability. The study also provided empirical insights through the analysis of translated literary texts, digital media contents, educational materials, and religious publications relating to the Igbo language.

In addition, the study contributed practically by highlighting the importance of artificial intelligence technologies, online communication platforms, and digital translation systems in improving indigenous language visibility and modernization. The study therefore provides useful recommendations for policymakers, educators, translators, media organizations, and technology developers concerning sustainable strategies for preserving and revitalizing the Igbo language in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were suggested:

1. Government should formulate and effectively implement indigenous language policies that promote translation and digital preservation of the Igbo language.
2. Educational institutions should encourage the translation of instructional and scientific materials into Igbo to strengthen mother-tongue learning and literacy development.
3. Media organizations should expand indigenous language broadcasting and digital communication platforms for wider accessibility.
4. Technology developers should improve artificial intelligence translation systems affecting indigenous African languages.

5. Religious institutions should continue translating liturgical materials and devotional texts into Igbo to sustain intergenerational language transmission.
6. Government and private organizations should provide adequate funding for indigenous language documentation and technological development
7. Cultural organizations should intensify awareness campaigns promoting positive attitudes toward indigenous language communication.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to qualitative documentary analysis because it relied mainly on secondary sources such as translated texts, journal articles, digital media contents, educational materials, and policy documents. The study focused specifically on the Igbo language within Nigeria and did not comparatively examine other African indigenous languages. Limited access to extensive indigenous language digital databases and computational linguistic resources also restricted broader technological analysis. Furthermore, some online translation materials lacked sufficient cultural contextualization, thereby affecting detailed evaluation of artificial intelligence translation systems and indigenous semantic interpretations within contemporary digital communication environments.

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