

Aspects of Conjunction In Igbo: The Case of Nsukka-Ideke Dialect of Igbo

by

Ezebuilo, Comfort Nwuka

Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages,

Faculty of Arts

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

08062710168, Comfort.ezebuilo@unn.edu.ng

Abstract

This study examines aspects of Igbo conjunctions with particular focus on the Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo, Enugu State, Nigeria. It is our intention to investigate such conjunctions with a view to highlighting other forms of conjoining discovered in the dialect. The study also sets out to achieve the following objectives, which include: 1) to find out if there is any difference between the identified forms of conjoining in the dialect (Nsukka-Ideke) and the already existing conjunctions in the standard Igbo or not, and 2) to find out if there are tonal differentiation or variations on the conjunctions (the identified conjunctions in the Nsukka-Ideke dialect) based on their syntactic occurrences or as a result of their co-occurrence with other linguistic elements. By adopting a descriptive survey method, the study tries to ascertain the factual behaviour of conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke dialect. The data used for this study are gathered through introspection because the researcher is from Nsukka and from documented material from authors who have written on Igbo conjunctions. The study discovers that Nguru, in Nkpunanọ, one of the quarters that make up Nsukka-Ideke Igbo, that 'má' is used in place of 'ká', a monosyllabic conjunction to mean "in order to". Also, some cases of conjoining were discovered in the dialect. They include: ñtẹgx/ødqgx (otherwise), tènẹ (also that), mà ó bụgụ (either) ... q bxx□(or), and ọ bxxg (neither). The above findings fall within correlative, subordinate and coordinative uses. Again, without the help of conjunctions, sentences would be realised in fragments that will not be comprehensible. The clear-cut distinction between subordinate and coordinating constructions, which might be regarded as a language universal phenomenon does not hold true for the dialect and Igbo as a whole. Igbo has a genius of its own, which any analyst must approach in his/her analysis with no presupposition from his/her knowledge of English.

Abbreviations and Tone-marking Convention

The tone-marking convention used here is that introduced by Welmers, where only the first of a sequence of syllables on the same pitch level is marked, leaving the subsequent ones unmarked until a contrasting pitch is observed, which is then marked.

CV	-	Consonant plus vowel "r" plus vowel becomes
rV	-	"r" plus vowel
→	-	Becomes
⇒	-	transformed into
()	-	optimality
$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} a \\ b \end{array} \right\}$	-	Either a or b can be used
$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} A \\ B \end{array} \right\}$	-	Phonological Symbol representing affixation, the phonetic value of which is determined by vowel harmony

Introduction

The term conjunction, according to Mbah (2006) originates from the Latin word 'con' and 'jungere', which mean 'together' and 'to join' respectively. For him, conjunction is both a linking word as well as the process of joining or synthesising sentence structures in grammar. He has the following as some of the conjunctions in Igbo: na, ma, ka, kwa, kama, mana, tupu, tutu, kamgbe, kama na, maka na, mgbe, ebe, etu sẹ, tẹ, and tem.

The idea of conjoining is a language universal phenomenon. All languages do this by using certain formatives known as conjunctions. Conjunction, one of the eight parts of speech in Igbo, is an integral part of Igbo syntax. It is also an apparent feature of language. No language can exist with all its words or sentences in isolation, hence, the

need to link them together. Human speech always involves the joining of lexical items or sentences in order to ensure comprehensibility. The linking, therefore, may involve the use of certain words or group of words called conjunction. The specific conjunction used shows how the joined parts are related. Emenanjo (2015) sees it (conjunction) as a class of function words or part of speech made up, essentially, of connectives. Ajuede (2017) in his contribution asserts that conjunction is a part of speech that joins words, phrases, clauses and sentences together. Examples:

- 1a. *Ézè na Ekené bù, ényì* (Eze and Ekene are friends)
- b. *Óbì toro ógologo ebe Nnà yá d[mkpxmkpx* (Obi is tall while his father is short)
- c. *Jón txmad[xmx òkórobìá nd[òzó àgábago nta àgábago nta* (John as well as the other boys have all left for hunting)

Considering the above examples, grammatically, the above definitions are correct. Again, without the help of conjunctions, the above sentences would be realised in fragments. The role of conjunctions is invariably unique from other parts of speech. In this regard, Ajuede (2017) redefines conjunctions as the invariable grammatical particle that conjuncts lexical properties and other materials relevant for language analysis. By so doing, conjunction creates unity among lexical properties, particularly, nouns and pronouns. However, conjunctions are never found at the utterance or word final position in standard Igbo, but it is evidenced in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo.

It is necessary to note that conjunctions are grammatical in function, and as such, they are described as semantically empty. They are only structurally necessary in forming sentences. Their meanings are defined by illustrating their uses in sentences of different patterns. Otherwise, they (conjunctions) belong to certain formatives that do not represent or signify anything; rather, such forms impose different structural forms to the sentences in which they occur (Eze, 2012). The structural meanings they possess are equally as important as the lexical meanings of words. In fact, they are invariable words and belong to a closed system. This is as a result of their fewness in number. This member class remains the same for all users of that language (i.e. any language under consideration). Any addition or loss of a member brings about a structural alternation in that grammar of the language as whole. Furthermore, conjunctions do not exhibit any inflectional changes, though some of them are combined to give compounds as in the case of Igbo: *mà + kà* → *màka* (because); *mà + nà* → *màna* (though, but); *mà + kwà* → *màkwa* (and, yet); *tè + nè* → *tẹnẹ* (also that). Just like verbs, enclitics and most suffixes, conjunctions have an initial consonant.

The Nsukka-Ideke conjunctions just like Igbo conjunctions have peculiar distinctive features. These features of the conjunctions include: (i) Their tones are almost always invariable i.e. always having the same value. In other words, they almost, always retain their lexical tones. (ii) All conjunctions (Nsukka-Ideke and Igbo conjunction) function as linking words. However, they differ in the things they link together. While some of them seem to be used exclusively with noun nominals or infinitive phrases, e.g. 2. ‘*nà*’ (and), some other seem to be used exclusively before verb phrases. Example: 3. ‘*túpu*’ (before); ‘*nà*’ (that), while yet some others seem to be used before both nominal and verb phrases e.g. 4. ‘*kà*’ (like). (iii) Some of the Igbo (Nsukka-Ideke) conjunctions can be combined to give compounds. These combined conjunctions translate into English as if they were independent conjunctions. Examples:

5.
 - a) *nẹkwa* (and) + *mà* (also) → *nẹkwa ma* ‘and also’
 - b) *tè* (also) + *nẹ* (that) → *tẹnẹ* ‘also that’
 - c) *mà* (but) + *kà* (that) → *màka* ‘because’
 - d) *mà* (but) + *nà* (that) → *màna* ‘but that’, ‘except that’
 - e) *mà* (but) + *kà* (that) → *nà* (that) → *màka na* ‘because’ of

Igbo conjunctions are classified into three subclasses – coordinators, subordinators and correlatives. Coordinators link words of varying categories such as nouns, words, phrases and clauses of equal rank. Subordinators on the other hand link clause of unequal rank, one subordinate or dependent, the other matrix or independent. While correlatives join words of varying categories, sentence parts of equal rank. Similarly, the forms of conjoining discovered in the Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo also fall within coordinative, subordinative and correlative uses.

Problems of the study

This study is carried out because of the following reasons: 1. none of the research work carried out by researchers about conjunctions has given adequate attention to the investigation of the conjunctions in the Nsukka-Ideke Igbo. Rather, their attention are focused on other aspects of Igbo grammar such as negators in Igbo, Igbo plural markers, simple grammatical negatives in Igbo and other parts of speech such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, adverbs and so forth. 2. This study will add to the existing body of literature on morphology and syntax in the Igbo language. This, it does by exploring the categories of conjunctions in the Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo.

Again, the grammatical analysis of this work is also a contribution from Igbo to the cross-linguistic study of conjunction, and the universal cognitive category of conjunction. 3. This study is also necessary because the standard Igbo is fed from various dialects of Igbo.

Objectives of the study

With regard to the above mentioned reasons for the study, the major objective of this study is to examine the forms of conjunctions in the Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo. Other objectives of this study include: 1. to find out if there is any difference between the identified forms of conjunction in the dialect and already existing conjunctions in the standard Igbo. 2. to find out if there are tonal differentiation or variations on the conjunctions identified in the dialect based on their syntactic occurrences or as a result of their co-occurrence with other linguistic elements.

Research methodology

The methodological approach adopted in this research work is a descriptive survey research that sets out to investigate conjunction in the Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo. The data used for this research work are got through introspection (because the researcher is a native speaker of Nsukka-Ideke Igbo), and from works of some authors, whose work are related to the topic. The works of these authors were selected through purposive random sampling. By using descriptive survey method, the data were analysed and conclusion drawn from the analysis.

Significance of the study

This study will act as a guide to researchers who might decide to embark on the same or similar academic exercise – conjunctions in the Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo or any other dialect or language. Other intended users of the output of the study include among others. The learners of the language, the users of the language, the teachers of the language at various levels, and lastly, the syllabus designers in the language because the study will expose other forms of conjunctions, which will enrich the grammar of the Igbo language.

Literature Review

The term conjunction, according to Mbah (2006) originates from the Latin words ‘con’ and ‘jungere’, which mean together and to join respectively. Scholars have approached the meaning of conjunction from different angles. Eyisi & Okolo (2015) describe conjunction as a part of speech that connects two words, sentences, phrases or clauses. In other words, a conjunction performs linking functions. They submit the following as example of conjunction in English: and, but, for, since, while, as, if though, because, whether, unless, however, than, etc. They stressed in their work that the previous held view, that certain conjunctions such as and, but, because, and so should not begin sentences has no historical or grammatical foundation so, they can be used to begin a sentence. Ajuede (2017) defines conjunction as the invariable grammatical particle that conjuncts lexical properties and other materials relevant for language analysis. It is gathered from the above definition that the role of conjunction is invariably unique from other parts of speech. Webster (2017) asserts that conjunction is an uninflected linguistic form that joins together sentences, clauses, phrases or words. Emenanjo (2015) avers that conjunction is a process which has primary function of ‘connecting or joining’ (from its etymology) two or more elements: words, phrases, clauses and sentences. He posits also that conjunctions are a class of words or parts of speech made up, essentially, of connectives.

According to Hodges and Whitten (1982), conjunction is a part of speech used to connect and relate words, phrases, clauses or sentences. This definition is captured in Emenanjo's (1978), where conjunction is described as the only part of speech which is used for linking words or syntactic structures. Similarly, Everyman (1978) defines conjunction as word used as a connection between one word and another, or sentence and another, the act of joining or the state of being joined together. The above definitions of conjunction suggest that conjunctions function as connectors of words, phrases, clauses and sentences. In essence, a conjunction is both a linking word, and also, the process of bringing together sentence structures in grammar.

Crystal (1992) avers that conjunction is a term used in the grammatical classification of words, to refer to an item or a process whose primary function, is to connect words or other constructions. According to Onah (2010), conjunction is defined as a word in sentences, used to join or link words, phrases or clauses. Norton, Kimbrough and Norton (1988) describe conjunctions in logic, as a connective word or group of words joining two or more propositions together, thus forming a conjunctive proposition. They assert also that when two or more propositions are stated as true at the same time, they are said to be related by conjunction. For example:

6. Ó nwèrè égo màna águu nà-égbu ya
He/she has money but h/she is dying of hunger

7a) Ñík[ta nò n'elu àkwá
 (Dog is on the bed) | **b)** Ázù d[í n'ime ite
 (fish is inside the port)
Here, the word '*na*' is a preposition, introducing the prepositional phrases '*n'elu akwa*' and '*n'ime ite*' in the examples 2(a) and (b) respectively. Again, the comitative marker expresses the role of secondary participant of a situation as we have said before: It is the person involved in the situation together with the main participant. Below is example in Igbo:

- Here, the word '*na*' is a preposition, introducing the prepositional phrases '*n'elu akwa*' and '*n'ime ite*' in the examples 2(a) and (b) respectively. Again, the comitative marker expresses the role of secondary participant of a situation as we have said before: It is the person involved in the situation together with the main participant. Below is example in Igbo:

However, Bantu and Kru languages are absent from this list. The reason for that of Bantu languages is because many of them rely on juxtaposition for clausal conjunction. In the Igbo language as well as in the Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo, there is no neat distinction between coordinating and subordinating conjunction, unlike in Indo-European languages, where the neat distinction between coordinating and subordinating conjunction is established. However, the followings are the common subordinating conjunctions in the Igbo language: *kà* (when), *kà* (so that), *kà* (hortative maker), *mà* (if, whether), *nà* (that), *kama/tuma* (instead of). These conjunctions do not exhibit any inflectional changes, though some of them are combined as in the case of Igbo: *mà + kà – màka* (because); *mà + nà - màna* (though, but); *mà + kwà- màkwa* (and, yet).

Adá rìrì
(Ada) rìrì éde and
Òdo bìara
(Odo) làa

10a) Ngqz[nə ʎneka bũ úmũnneē ‘Ngozi
na Nneka are sisters. **b)** Any[rùtere kà mmemme ahũ.. malitere
‘We arrived when the programme just began’

In the first sentence, two words are linked. In the second sentence, two clauses are linked. The major function of the conjunctions in examples 10 (a and b) are to connect and expand sentence patterns in various ways. Robert (1964) also observes that the function of a conjunction is to expand and combine sentence patterns in various ways and in general, to indicate the structural relationship between members of the form class. Roberts's definition of the function of conjunction is quite embracing. It specifies that conjunction does not only expand and combine sentence patterns in various ways but it also highlights the structural relationship between members of the form class.

Emenanjo (1978) defines and classifies conjunctions in Igbo. In his study of conjunction, he recognizes the following Igbo conjunctions: *nà, mà, kà, kwà, kàmà, mànà, túpu, tútu, kàmgbè, kàmà nà, ébè, sé, tén*. He classifies them into monosyllabic and disyllabic. He sub-groups them into coordinators and subordinators disregarding the over-lappings that exist. Out of the above listed conjunctions by Emenanjo, ‘*nà*’ is the most frequently used in joining words, phrases, and sentences together. We strongly suggest that the typical Igbo conjunctions are *nà, mà*

and tupu. Others are either dialectical variations of one conjunction or the other or that they are auxiliary to the above listed typical Igbo conjunctions. Alio (1978) disagreeing with the above listed Igbo conjunctions by Emenanjo, states that *nà*, *mà*, *kámà* and *tupu* are the only conjunctions in Igbo. However, he failed to emphasise why he disagreed with the Emenanjo's. Contrary to the afore-listed Igbo conjunctions, Onwubuariri (1978) recognizes that *nà* is the only typical Igbo conjunction and as such, he makes no classification whatsoever since there is nothing to classify. Ogbalu (1974) recognizes that '*nà*' is the most popular and frequently used conjunction in joining words, phrase and sentences together. For him, *kámà* seems to be a dialectical variation of *ma* (but) and that the prefix '*ka*' has practically no function. We agree with Ogbalu that *na* is the most frequently used conjunction to join words, phrases and sentences, but we disagree with him that *nà* is the only Igbo conjunction. We strongly contend that Igbo conjunctions include *nà*, *mà*, and *tupu*.

Mbah (2006) submits that conjunction is both a linking word as well as the process of joining or synthesizing sentence structures in grammar. He has the following as some of the conjunctions in Igbo: *na*, *ma*, *ka*, *kwa*, *kama*, *mana*, *tupu*, *tutu*, *kamgbe*, *kama na*, *maka na*, *mgbe*, *ebe*, *etu*, *se*, *tem*. According to www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conjunction (2017), conjunction is an uninflected linguistic form that joins together sentences, clauses, phrases or words. This sense is captured in <https://English-dictionary.help/English-to-Igbo-meaning-conjunction> where conjunction is described as a connective or connecting word; an indeclinable word which serves to join together sentences, clauses of a sentence, or words; as, and, but, if an so forth. Also, Thesaurus.com available at www.dictionary.com/browse/conjunction?=&t explains conjunction as any member of small class of words distinguished in many languages by their function as connectors between words, phrases, clauses, or sentences, as and, because, but, however. Thesaurus also asserts that conjunction can be seen as any other word or expression of similar function, as in any case.

Data Analysis

Presentation of Data

The following are composite of the identified conjunctions in Igbo:

má 1.		'in order to'
mà 2.		'whether'; if
mà 3.		'but'
kà 1.		'like' 'as'
kà 2.		'when'
kà 3.		'(so) that'
kà 4.		'hortative marker'
nà 1.		'and'
nà 2.		'because', 'for'
na 3.		'that' marker of NP complementation
	kámà	} 'Instead of'; 'rather than'; 'even if'
	túmà	
	tútu	} 'until'
	dága	
	rúe	
ńtà□	1.	'then'
ńtà	2.	'instead of'
ńtà ..	kà 1.	'both ... and'
kà ...	kà 2.	'whether .. not'
mà...	mà 1.	'so... as'
ma ...	ma 2.	'every ... every'
kwà ...	kwà	'both ... and'

The above conjunctions have been analysed by various researchers such as Emenanjo (1978, 1985, & 2015; Nwachukwu (1987) and so on in some many ways. As a result, they are not analysed in this work. Rather, the identified conjunctions in the dialect under investigation are focused.

Some cases of conjunction and conjoining have been discovered in Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Waawa Igbo. The forms of conjunction and conjoining are analysed in this work according to their uses in the dialect. These conjunctions include:

Má	'in order to'
Tè	'and', 'even'
tẹnẹ	'also that'
nẹkwa ma	'and also'
ntegu	'otherwise', or
mà □ ọ □ bụgu	'either' ... ọ bụrụ 'or'
ọbụgu	'neither'

The traditional categorisation of conjunctions, which are coordinating and subordinating conjunctions does not hold true for all languages. Conjunction in Igbo, for instance, fall into two morphological groupings. The same thing applies to Conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo, which is an aspect of Igbo conjunctions. Nwachukwu (1987) makes it emphatically clear that such traditional classification cannot be applied in a language like Igbo that is, dividing conjunctions into coordinating and subordinating subsets. Rather, the classification should be based on the morphology as well as grammatical function they perform. As a matter of fact, the identified conjunctions in the said dialect, fall into morphological groupings: 1. Monosyllabic conjunctions and 2. Disyllabic/non-monosyllabic conjunctions. This grouping is based on the number of syllables they have. Nwachukwu (1987) asserts also that Igbo conjunctions fall into two morphological groupings – monosyllabic and disyllabic conjunctions.

Monosyllabic conjunctions

Monosyllabic conjunctions in Igbo perform both coordinating and subordinating functions. They are such conjunctions that have one syllable. They are involved in coordination. Coordination, according to Emenanjo (2015) is a relation, which holds between two or more elements of equal functional rank of status. The elements linked by coordinators are known as coordinates. This shows that none of the elements linked is dependent on the other, nor a head. In fact, coordination is a non-headed structure. The monosyllabic conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo include: má 'in order to' 'tè₁ 'and'; tè₂ 'even'.

Examples:

11. Ngozi tẹ Ebéré bjara (Ngozi and Ebere came)

12a) Nd[ngwuro tẹ nd[ịsha bjachara (The lame and also the blind came)

b) Ejekogu m tẹ (I will not even go)

The occurrence of tẹ is not restricted only to the medial position; it can come at the beginning of the sentence as in:

13. Tè nwóke tẹ nwáanyị socha (Both the men and the women are inclusive)

Also, the conjunction tè can come at the final position of a sentence without distinction in the underlying structure. Here, it functions as an emphasizer as in example 12(b). That is, it can be fronted for emphasis.

Mà as a conjunction in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo

The conjunction mà in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo is pronounced in two different forms to realise two different things. The two forms of realising the conjunction are: 'mà' with low tone and 'má' with high tone. 'Mà' with low tone in Igbo, is translated in English in various ways such as: mà 'but', 'and', 'if', 'whether' and 'so that' while má with high tone is translated in English as 'in order to'. These English translations depend on the context and the type of construction it is found in.

The conjunction 'mà' (i.e. mà with low tone) functions both as a coordinator or correlator and as a subordinator. When mà comes in between two declarative sentences, it is a coordinator and the two sentences joined are of equal rank. Each of the sentences can independently stand on its own when separated. In such construction, mà is translated as 'but' in English. However, mà links a maximum of two clauses, and has the notion of constructiveness. The combination of similarity and differences determines the use of contrastive mà and this resulted to two semantic interpretations of contrastive ma viz: i) Semantic opposition and ii) Denial of expectation.

Examples of semantic opposition are:

14a) Ádà shìrì nri mà Ujú zàrà ezí (Ada cooked food but Uju swept compound)

b) Ngozi jèrè ákwúkwọ mà Ebéré sụrụ ákwà (Ngozi went to school but Ebere washed clothes)

On the other hand, in the denial of expectations, there is an assertion and a presupposition. The presupposition makes a general expectation, and where the expectation is not met, the sentence becomes contrastive.

15a) Nnekà mara ríma mà agwa yá jqrq njq (Nneka is beautiful but her behaviour is bad)

b) Òkéke nà-áru ezigbo oru mà ó nweghi egò (Okeke has a nice work but he has no money)
 Mà, is also used as correlator to join two nouns or two NPs together. Here, the conjunction is used in pair, one preceding the first noun or NP and the other preceding the second noun or NP.

Mà nwóke mà nwàanyị
 Both men and women

Mà introduces also sentential complements just as 'nà' introduces. However, the type of complements mà introduces differs from that of nà. Mà as a complementizer has the following translations: whether, if, and that

Mà, used as 'whether', shows a type of complement known as Yes-No sentential complement. That is, a sentence type with no propositional content. Worth knowing of this kind of construction, is that, both the monosyllabic and disyllabic conjunctions are always on low tones but it is not always in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo.

Example:

16. Áchqrò m [ma mà ọ nọ n'xlo ákwukwọ (I wanted to know whether s/he is in school)

Mà as 'if', specifically, introduces a conditional complement. This type of construction always has a logical dependence between the consequence clause and the antecedent clause. Here, mà signals the consequent (clause). When the consequent clause comes before the antecedent clause, ma is not used but the conditional implication still obtains or holds.

Example:

17a) Há gà-ejé mà ọ bja (They shall go if s/he comes)

b) Odo ga-eri nri mà ọ hụ (Odo will eat food if he sees)

In the example (17a), 'Ha gà-eje' is the antecedent while ọ bja is the consequent,

8a) Há bja, anyị gà-ejé (If they come, we shall go)

b) I rịọ ha, ha gà-ekwé ('If you beg them, they will agree')

In the examples 18 (a & b), it is observed that mà as a conjunction is used to generate two types of constructions - coordinate and subordinate constructions. However, in the subordinate constructions, mà functions differently in the types of NP sentential complements. In Nwachukwu (1982: 57), he uses numerals to distinguish the various complements identifying the types of constructions associated with each.

Má with high tone translated as 'in order to' or 'so that' is used to introduce subjunctive constructions in the dialect. Such constructions are concerned with unrealised meanings. Má, standing as 'that' is specifically used for purpose constructions. In the purpose constructions, the verbs contained in the matrix clause may not always be purposive verbs but the underlying meaning of such clauses will always show up such verbs. Moreover, there is a cause-effect relationship between the two clauses. As such, má now signals the expected consequence of what was said in the matrix sentence.

19a) Ọ gùrụ égwu má a gbaa ya àgbá (S/he sang song so that it will be danced)

b) Ó shiri nri má ó rie (Cooked in order to eat)

The Disyllabic Conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo

Disyllabic conjunction is another set of conjunctions used in linking sentences in the Nsukka-Ideke Igbo and standard Igbo. This set of conjunction unlike the monosyllabic ones, is never used in joining words or phrases; rather, they are used only in joining sentences. In sentences of unequal rank, two clauses only enter into the relationship of subordination, whereas for sentences of equal rank, more than two clauses can be linked together by way of the disyllabic conjunctions, and at times, by way of monosyllabic conjunctions as in:

20. Ọ sịkwara tẹtẹ (tẹ) ó nyèrè ya égbò (He/she said also that he/she gave him/her money)

The morphemic structure of most of the disyllabic conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo just like the standard Igbo, is consonant – vowel, consonant-vowel (hereafter CV CV). The disyllabic conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo are as following: (i) tẹtẹ (ii) ńtẹx (iii) mà ọ ọbụgụ ọ ọbụgụ (iv) ọbụgụ (v) nẹkwe ma. These conjunctions have their specific English equivalent unlike the monosyllabic ones, which vary. This quality (specific English equivalents) makes them unable to vary in meaning from context to context.

Use of tẹtẹ

Tẹtẹ is one of the disyllabic conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo. It functions as a subordinator and it is translated in English as 'also that'

- 21a) Q sɪkwara tɛnɛ (tɛ) ɔ dʊɣu ɔyɪ (He/she said also that it was not good)
 b) Àdà chètenu Óbì tɛnɛ ó sò (Ada reminded Obi also that he is inclusive)

Use of nɛkwa mà

Nɛkwa mà, a disyllabic conjunction, is used in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo to link two nouns of equal rank in a sentence. It is translated in English as ‘and also’.

- 22a) Gùtɛ̀ jì nɛkwa mà abala (Harvest yams and also water yams)
 b) Vùtɛ̀ oche nɛkwa ma tɛ̀bùru (Bring chair and also table)

The conjunction ‘nɛkwa mà’, as it is used in the dialect in-question, shows that the suffix ‘ma’ is not optionally used. It must be used together with ‘nɛkwa’ to mean ‘and also’. Contrastively, the use of ‘nà’, in ‘kama na’ and ‘maka na’ in standard Igbo is very optional except when it (nà), as in maka (na), connects an independent clause to a phrase, then the nà is obligatorily deleted.

Use of Ntɛ̀ɣu

Ntɛ̀ɣu is used to join sentences in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo. It has its English translation as ‘otherwise’. It is used to state what the result would be if something did not happen or if the situation were different. It functions as a subordinator.

- 23a) Bɪaa pàrx nri gɪ ntɛ̀ɣu m̀ pàara rie (Come and carry your food otherwise I will carry it and eat)
 b) Jée kùmé ɹraa ntɛ̀ɣu m̀ pɪa gɪ ihe (Go and sleep otherwise I will beat you)

Ntɛ̀ɣu can also be used in the dialect to mean ‘or’ in English. When so used, it offers the choice of comparing between two items or offers, as in:

- 24a) Kùmé Jɔn ntɛ̀ɣu Pɛ̀ta (Call John or Peter) | b) Wètɛ̀ ɹmà ntɛ̀ɣu ɔɣu (Bring matchet or hoe)

Ntɛ̀ɣu at times, is used interchangeably with ‘ɔdʊɣu’ in the dialect to mean the same ‘or’ in English.

- 25a) Gòtɛ̀nu m ɛ̀kwà ɔdʊɣu àkpukpɔ ɹkwu (Buy for me dress or shoe)
 b) Jée hòmé ɹrurue ɔdʊɣu hichéme ɹlɔ (Go and weed or scrub house)

Use of mà ɔ bʊɣu... ɔ bʊrʊ

Mà ɔ bʊɣu ... ɔ bʊrʊ is one of the disyllabic conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo. They are used in conjoining nouns and NPs in a construction. They function as correlation. They are translated in English as ‘either ... or’. They move always in pairs. Examples:

- 26a) Mà ɔ bʊɣu Eké ɔ bʊrʊ Órie (Either it is Eke or it is Orie.)
 b) Mà ɔ bʊɣu nwa nya ɔ bʊrʊ nwánne enye (Either he is his child or he is his relation.)

Use of q bʊɣu

Q bʊɣu is used in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo to introduce a subjunctive sentence. The associated speaker’s attitude is non-declarative (embedded). It is translated in English as ‘neither’.

27a) Q bʊɣu Èmeká bɪara n̄ke ú jì abụ Uchè	b). Q bʊɣu Àdà n̄ke ó jì abụ Ùjú
It is neither Emeka nor is it Uche that came	It is neither A da nor is it Uju

The foregoing analysis of conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo indicates that, trying to categorise the conjunctions functionally is very problematic. Some of the disyllabic conjunctions such as nɛkwa mà, ‘màna’ and ‘kámà’ also serve as coordinator while mà ɔ bʊɣu... ɔ bʊrʊ function as correlator. The disyllabic conjunctions in the Nsukka-Ideke Igbo unlike some disyllabic conjunctions in standard Igbo, do not behave like adverbials. That is, they do not have freedom of mobility, which characterises some disyllabic conjunctions in Igbo. Again, the monosyllabic conjunctions function as subordinators, and can be fronted mostly for emphasis. Mà, a monosyllabic conjunction, functions as a coordinator, subordinator and as a correlator.

Characteristics of Nsukka-Ideke Igbo Conjunctions

The conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo just like the conjunctions in standard Igbo, are grouped into monosyllabic and disyllabic conjunctions, morphologically. However, this grouping is blocked functionally as a result of some over-lapping as evident in the Nsukka-Ideke conjunctions and Igbo conjunctions at large. The disyllabic conjunction that functions in both coordinator and subordinate constructions in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo, is *nekwa ma* just like *kama* in standard Igbo. Apart from the conjunction *nekwa ma*, which functions as a coordinator and subordinator, and *ma ọ bụgu... ọ bụrụ* that function as a correlator, other disyllabic conjunctions in the dialect function as subordinating conjunctions.

The use of suffix *ma* in *nekwa ma* in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo, is not optional, unlike the use of *na* in *kama na* and *maka na* in standard Igbo, that is very optional, except when it (*na*), connects an independent clause to a phrase, then the *na* is obligatorily deleted. It (*ma*) must be used together with *nekwa* to mean 'and also'.

The initial position of the subordinating conjunction is mostly occupied by the temporal clause like *tenę* as in.

28a) *Tenę há dàrà n'ulé abụgụ ihe ọhụ* (That they failed in their examination is not a news). When so used, it is translated in English as 'that'. If it occupies final position, it reduces comprehensibility to an extent.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Findings

This research work has explored conjunction in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo. The findings of this work give impetus and validity to the Igbo conjunctions. It has been discovered that there is a tonal variation on the conjunction *ma*, a monosyllabic conjunction in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo. *Ma* in Nsukka-Ideke Igbo, is realised with two different tones to mean two different things as well. The first form of realising the conjunction *ma* is with a low tone *ma*, as it is also realised in the standard Igbo. When so realised, its function in the dialect in-question is same with how it functions in the standard Igbo. Also, its English translation is same. However, when *ma* bears high tone, that is the second form of realising *ma*, its meaning varies, and it is translated in English as 'in order to' or 'so that'. It is used to introduce subjunctive constructions. Such constructions are concerned with unrealised meanings (see example 19).

Findings reveal that conjunctions in standard Igbo are never found at the utterance or word final position, but it is found in Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo, though, it is not all the identified conjunctions in the dialect. It is only one of the monosyllabic conjunctions in the dialect – *tè* as in example 12(b).

It is observed that languages, as well as dialects have a lot in common, but we must equally be aware that there are parametric variations despite this acclaimed common core. For example, the clear-cut distinction between subordinating and coordinating conjunction which might be regarded as a language universal phenomenon does not hold true for Igbo language and the dialect under consideration as well. This distinction between coordinating and subordinating conjunctions is well established in the Indo-European languages. This, however, suggest that the classification is not a simple straightforward dichotomy between subordinating and coordinating conjunctions. Rather, it depicts that Igbo language in general (including dialects) has a genius of its own, which any analyst must approach in his/her analysis with no presuppositions; from his/her knowledge of English. However, it has been discovered that conjunctions are structurally necessary in forming sentences, and are described as semantically empty in isolation.

Conclusion

In this study, we have tried to establish aspects of conjunction in Igbo with reference to Nsukka-Ideke Igbo. Our discussion on the conjunction reveals that without the conjunction in sentences, comprehensibility of such sentences would have been very difficult if not impossible. This is because human speech always involves the joining of lexical items or sentences in order to ensure comprehensibility. Again, no language can exist with all its words or sentences in isolation. This work has actually made very insightful contribution in the literature of Igbo conjunctions by discussing conjunctions in Nsukka-Ideke dialect of Igbo. We hope that this research work will stimulate further research into this aspect of Igbo syntax – conjunction in the Igbo syntax. We conclude by saying that human speech without conjunctions or connectives is just like building a house without cement.

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