

## A PHONOLOGICAL STUDY OF IGBO-ENGLISH DICTIONARIES

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### Abstract

*Dictionary is a language tool which serves as a guide to both learners and native speakers of the language. This paper aims at ascertaining the phonological components of the selected Igbo dictionaries. Four Igbo-English dictionaries are selected for this paper which are; English-Igbo Dictionary by Michael Echeruo (2001), Dictionary of Ònìchà Igbo by Kay Williamson (1972), Igbo-English Dictionary by Egemba, I. (1999), and OGAM/IGBO VCV DICTIONARY by Catherine Acholonu (2007). The paper adopts descriptive approach in its analysis. It is observed that three dictionaries paid attention to tone marking, whereas one did not; all the dictionaries neglected phonetic/phonemic transcription, and three dictionaries paid attention to diacritic marks, whereas one did not. It is concluded that phonological components ought to be part of a dictionary to aid the learners of the language.*

**Keywords:** dictionary, phonological, Igbo-English, tone, diacritic, transcription

### 1.0 Introduction

Dictionary is an entity that rings in the minds of people whenever words and their meaning are mentioned. We could then say that dictionary is basically a collection of words, their meaning and other additional information. Considering the definition in the Oxford English Dictionary which defines a dictionary as a "book dealing with the individual words of a language (or certain specified class of them) so as to set forth their orthography, pronunciation, signification and use, their synonyms, derivation and history, or at least some of these facts, for convenience of reference the words are arranged in some stated order, now in most languages, alphabetical, and in larger dictionaries the information given is illustrated by quotations from literature". One of the components of the above definition "arranged in some stated order.... alphabetical" has been extended to cover other reference books giving information of different types in alphabetical order and the term dictionary can "apply quite loosely to any reference work arranged by words or names" (Malkiel, 1967).

Historically, dictionary is the most widely known and used reference book. This is so, because almost every household possesses a dictionary and school children are taught to use a dictionary to help them understand the meaning and use of words and pursuing independent studies. The word 'dictionary' is derived from the medieval Latin word 'dictionarium' - a collection of words which originates from the term 'diction' meaning 'a mode of expression'. A dictionary generally deals with the collection of general words either of a language or of special terms of a particular subject. It normally defines terms and gives their alternate meaning, usage, etc. in the same vein, some dictionaries give derivation and history of words top with the words arranged in some definite order, usually alphabetical. Summarily, a dictionary focuses on words, their meaning and uses; by the effective use of linguistic apparatus such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, etc.

All languages in the world make use of sound during speech and these sounds of a particular language operate in a way for the formation of words and sentences. Trubetzkoy (1939), sees phonology as the way sound function within a given language or across languages to encode meaning. The word phonology comes from ancient Greek /pwuń/ /phōnē/ which means ‘voice or sound’ and the suffix ‘logy’ known as ‘logos’ which means ‘word or speech’. The history of phonology may be traced back to the Sanskrit grammar composed by Panini in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. For many linguists, during this period phonology belonged to theoretical linguistics. Although, establishing the phonological system of a language is an application of theoretical principle to analysis of phonetic evidence. There are certain phonological processes which are perceived in words and sentences and such can be seen in the Igbo language. These phonological processes illustrate how speech sounds of a language come together to form words in that language. According to Eme, Anagbogu and Mbah (2001), phonology is concerned with the exploitation of speech sounds to make meaningful contrast. At such, pronunciation, tone, transcription, etc. become paramount.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the extent of which the selected Igbo-English dictionaries adhere to the phonological patterns, and to direct on the way forward on creating adequate dictionary in Igbo language. This paper adopts qualitative research design, which according to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), are designed to provide the researcher a means of understanding a phenomenon by observing or interacting with the participants of the study and also interested in exploring and/or explaining phenomenon as they occur in the natural setting.

The data for this paper will be obtained from the secondary source. The paper will be based in the selected 4 Igbo-English dictionaries which the researcher has native speaker knowledge. All available data were collected from consultation with the English-Igbo Dictionary by Michael Echeruo (2001), Dictionary of Ònìchà Igbo by Kay Williamson (1972), Igbo-English Dictionary by Egemba, I. (1999), and OGAM/IGBO VCV DICTIONARY by Catherine Acholonu (2007). Each phonological component of dictionaries would be extracted from the four dictionaries for analysis. This paper uses the cluster and purposive sampling techniques; whereas the former states that the entire population is divided into sections or clusters to represent the population, the latter states that it is a method formed by the discretion of the researcher by considering the purpose of the study, along with the understanding of the target audience. The data will be presented in columns based on classification and also included the English equivalent of the Igbo dictionary items. Hence, the words from the selected existing Igbo dictionaries will be presented and analyzed simultaneously which will help for clarity and easy detection of the deficiencies of each dictionary in line with the real phonological components of a dictionary. This paper explores the theory of the modern functional theory of lexicography developed at the Center for Lexicography, Aarhus University (Bergenholtz and Tarp, 1995, 2003; Nielsen, 2008) which presents a systemic theoretic framework for lexicographic research and practice, whose thrust lies with the concept of functions of dictionaries.

## **2.0 Review of Related Literature**

As dictionary gains its full definition through the various classifications and types, it's noteworthy that its general definition is connected to the compilation of words with their meanings, in addition to its alphabetical arrangement and other linguistic or cultural elements attached to it.

### **2.1 Dictionary Types and Classifications**

It is not gainsaying that dictionaries have typology and hence these have classifications according to many criteria. Srivastava and Gupta (1968) discuss the types of dictionaries as thus; Encyclopaedic and Linguistic Dictionaries, Historical and Etymological Dictionaries, Special Dictionaries, learners' dictionaries, general dictionaries, etc.

In the same vein, they discuss the basis of the formal aspects of the lexical units in a dictionary which are;

- (a) Spelling or orthographical dictionaries,
- (b) Pronouncing dictionaries,

- (c) Word formation dictionaries (including dictionaries of roots, verbs etc.),
- (d) Dictionaries of homonyms,
- (e) Dictionaries of paronyms,
- (f) Grammatical dictionaries,
- (g) Reverse dictionaries
- (h) Dictionaries of abbreviations, acronyms etc.

For the purpose of this paper, we will discuss the General Dictionaries. When we talk about general dictionary, we mean the one that covers the total language. It is noteworthy that the dictionary of any size may be a general dictionary. It contains words from all spheres of human activities and all areas of the life of the speakers of the language. Mahendran (2017) classifies the general dictionary criteria into four groups according to the purpose, size, volume and user's age.

- a) According to Purpose (This is further divided in to Prescriptive and Descriptive)
- b) According to Size (This is further divided in to unabridged and Semi-abridged)
- c) According to Volume (This is further divided in to Single volume and Multi volume)
- d) According to User's Age (This is further divided in to Adult, Junior and Children)

However, according to Mahendran (2017), the general dictionaries are of two types:

- (a) Academic or normative dictionary,
- (b) Referential or overall descriptive dictionary.

The academic dictionary gives the lexical stock of the standard language. The purpose of this dictionary is to present the language as it is expected to be and stop it from going into decay. This means that it has a focus on the future usage of the language. The selection of entries in these dictionaries is done from the works of the creative writers, may be both earlier and contemporary, literature of science, arts etc., newspapers, magazines and other materials which are considered representative of the standard language. These dictionaries do not contain words of local or regional variation; as such words are included in the dictionaries only when they have been used by some writers and have been standardized in the language. Also, archaic and obsolete words used by creative writers are also included in them. Different types of dictionaries including dictionaries of technical terms, grammatical dictionary, the spelling dictionary etc., come under this group.

On the other hand, the referential or overall descriptive dictionary does not have any normative aim. The word stock of this dictionary is selected from different heterogeneous speech groups. The corpus includes not only literary texts but also oral literature. It contains words of regional, social and stylistic variations. In the words of Shcherba (1995), a reference dictionary is "one behind which does not lie any unified language consciousness. The collected words may belong to heterogeneous speech groups of different periods and which do not in the least form a system".

Dictionaries classification can also be viewed from being a monolingual (or explanatory), bilingual and multilingual.

#### **a. Monolingual dictionary**

In a monolingual dictionary, both the entry words and their definitions or meanings are given in the same language. This type of dictionary can also be called explanatory dictionaries, even though the latter term has assumed a special signification. The term monolingual refers to the language only irrespective of the information given in it. These dictionaries (monolingual) are meant for the native speakers and "the target set for creating Explanatory Dictionary aims at native speakers with a view to explain one or the other lexical items which might be half known or totally unknown to them" (Srivastava, 1968 in Mahendran, 2017).

**b. Bilingual dictionary**

Secondly, in the words of Mahendran (2017), a bilingual dictionary, as contrasted to a monolingual dictionary, deals with two languages. This entails that the lexical units of one language are defined or explained in another language. The language whose lexical units are defined is the source language and the language used to define these units is target language. In other words, the source language is the language of the entry word and the target language is the language of the translation, equivalent or meaning of the entry word.

**c. Multilingual Dictionaries**

In the same vein, another type of useful material for translation is known as multilingual or polyglot dictionaries because they give equivalent words in three or more languages. Even though the arrangement of entries in the polyglot dictionaries have not been standardized, as they are arranged alphabetically by the main language with the equivalent words in the other language, covered in a tabular form.

**2.1.1 Uses/functions of Dictionary**

Beyond the definitions and views about dictionaries by scholars, it is noteworthy that the uses or functions of dictionaries be x-rayed. However, the use of every dictionary is centered on its typology as has been discussed in the earlier part of this research. Generally, dictionaries are used to verify pronunciation, spellings, meanings or usages of words, etc. (Whittaker, 1966). But specifically, we will discuss the uses based on the dictionary types by Whittaker (1966).

General language dictionaries are usually used for four broad purposes such as,

- i) a quick reference tool
- ii) a language standardizer
- iii) a language recorder and
- iv) a vocabulary builder

**i) Dictionary as quick reference tool**

Viewing the function of a dictionary as quick reference tool, they act as they are often consulted to verify spelling, syllabication, hyphenation, pronunciation and meaning of a word. Also, they provide further information about the origin, part of speech and usage of a word. In addition to this, they may also include abbreviations and acronyms, tables of weights, measures, currencies of various countries etc. Moreso, some dictionary, record specialized information by giving homonyms, synonyms and antonyms of entries.

**ii) Dictionary as a language standardizer**

In eighteenth century, it was common to compile prescriptive dictionaries to standardize the spelling, pronunciation, meaning and usage of words. Standardization has been accepted as one of the objectives of lexicography even in the twentieth century. But the difference lies in the methods of compilation. In the eighteenth century, standardization was based on the opinions and judgments of the compilers alone whereas now, it is achieved by gathering the evidence from carefully scrutinized inventory of words from the recorded sources of the language and the usage of the speakers. This helps in elimination of variation in spellings and usage of the words. iii). **Dictionary as a language recorder**

General unabridged dictionaries such as Oxford English Dictionary act as a language recorder, as it traces the developmental trends of the language by recording etymological details of the words, their history, origin and derivation. Thereby, it generates historical records of the changes undergone in the meanings and usages of the words from time to time.

**iv). Dictionary builds vocabulary**

The systematic and regular use of dictionary clears doubts regarding the spelling, meaning and usage of words. It enriches the word power by helping in building proper vocabulary and ensuring accurate sense of words in context.

## **2.2 Phonology**

As identified the components of a dictionary which include; pronunciation, lexemes, etc., it is noteworthy that tone and intonation will play roles in tone and intonation languages respectively. In line with this paper, with the intention of x-raying the Igbo-English dictionaries using the phonological parameters, we will discuss the necessary phonological elements relevant to this paper such as tone, transcription, diacritics, etc. As the consideration is a general language dictionary, the phonemic transcription will be considered strictly with the use of IPA sound symbols.

### **2.2.1 Tone**

Eme, et al (2001) is of the view that tone language is one which uses tone first to give meaning to a lexical items which and secondly to differentiate semantic items which may otherwise appear similar in forms. They went further to explain in that tone is seen as a feature realized on the syllable in tone languages. A tonal language makes use of use of tone in differentiating between two or more identical items. There are some certain words in a language which may be morphologically identical but the tonal elements can completely cause a change in the meaning of the words. Tone is usually realized on the vowel of the syllable or on any other syllabic element. Hyamn (2006) points out that a tone language can be defined as a language in which an indication of pitch enters into the lexical realization of at least some morphemes. The tones are linked with vowel units in a way that the first tone of a lexical item is linked with the second vowel unit and association rightwards from that point Clement and Ford (1979). Igbo language has three tone as the high tone, low tone and downstep tone. Eme and Odinye (2008) mentioned that the tone bearing units are vowels and also syllabic nasals.

### **2.2.2 Transcription**

When we talk about transcription as a phonological element, we refer to the use of phonetic symbol to represent a word in a letter form. This entails that there are special symbols for the letters of the language. These symbols are derived for International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). In the words of, Eme et al (2001), there are two types of transcription; phonetic and phonemic transcriptions. Whereas phonetic deals with the totality of the perceived sounds, the phonemic deals solely with distinctive sounds. Phonetic is enclosed with square bracket [ ], whereas the phonemic is enclosed with slant lines / /.

## **2.3 Empirical Review**

Gouws (2004) in his paper entitled, “Monolingual and Bilingual Learners' Dictionaries”, investigates the issues arising from monolingual and bilingual dictionaries from the perspectives of usability to the learners. He emphasizes that the both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries could be used for different functions as the type of dictionary needed for a specific consultation procedure should not be focused on bilingual or monolingual but rather on text production or text reception. Having discussed some stumbling blocks or limitation of focusing on dictionary typology such as typological variations, etc., Gouws states the need for a much stronger function-based dictionary classification. Hence, concludes that general and blunt typological classifications should be avoided in favour of a stronger function based approach.

In their article, Ranalli, and Nurmukhadev (2014) discuss learners' dictionaries, its origination and corpus revolution. Aside the paper dictionaries which are currently in used, there are variations on, and the Digital Turn in, Learner Dictionaries which the author point to as welcomed development to enhance learners' skills. In their findings, some of the recent variations on the learner dictionary include: firstly, bilingualized or “semi-bilingual” dictionaries, which in addition to typical entry components also include L1 translation equivalents opposite the English headword; secondly bilingual learner dictionaries, which provide L1 definitions, L1 and L2 examples, and usage notes primarily in the L1; thirdly, “onomosiological” dictionaries designed to support encoding, such as the Longman Language Activator, in which entries are organized around semantic themes rather than alphabetized wordforms – so that a learner who knows the

word careful can learn about related items such as thorough, meticulous, and conscientious; and special interest dictionaries focusing on pronunciation, British or American culture, idioms, and collocations.

## 2.4 Summary of the Literature Review

From the reviewed literature, the concept of dictionary, its types and criteria for classifications were examined. The types like; Encyclopaedic and Linguistic Dictionaries, Historical and Etymological Dictionaries, Special Dictionaries, learners' dictionaries, general dictionaries, etc.

In the same vein, we discuss the basis of the formal aspects of the lexical units in a dictionary which are; Spelling or orthographical dictionaries, Pronouncing dictionaries, Word formation dictionaries, etc. following, the functions of dictionary. In the same vein, phonology with its components as it regards the current paper was discussed such as tone, transcription, etc. However, the impacts of some scholars on the subject matter were critically examined to find the gap to be filled by this paper.

## 3.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

This paper presents instances from the selected dictionaries for its analysis. The data are picked randomly from the dictionaries for illustration.

	English-Igbo Dictionary (Michael Echeruo) 2001	OGAM/IGBO VCV DICTIONARY (Catherine Acholonu) 2007
	<p><b>afõ</b> <i>n</i> [HH] 'belly; stomach; abdomen; entrails; intestines; also womb - afo ukwu == pot-belly; afo anu = entrails ora slaughtered animal; <sup>2</sup>womb - nwa afo ya = a child of her womb; afo ime = pregnancy; -'condition affecting the stomach - afo na-agba ya = he has a running stomach. var. aho; abu.</p> <p><b>afõ</b> <i>n</i> [HH] tube; tyre; any inner tubing made from rubber or similar material- afo moto = motortyres; afõ taya = tyre tube. *A meaning derived by analogy with "afo" = stomach, intestines.</p> <p><b>afõ</b> <i>n</i> [HL] year.,</p> <p><b>Afõ</b> <i>n</i> [LL] third day of the 4-day Igbo week; 'market that holds on Afo day; 'personal name. var. ahõ. *Afo ukwu =main Afo market/day; Afonta =minor Afo market/day.</p> <p><b>afõ ime</b> <i>n</i> [HH HH] pregnancy - 0 bu afo ime = she is pregnant; Lit: she is carrying a pregnancy.</p> <p><b>afõ nta</b> <i>n</i> [HH HL] small intestines; entrails. afo obata <i>n</i> [HH LLL] (Onica) dysentery; inflammation of the bowels followed by severe diarrhea. var. afo obara.</p> <p><b>afõ obara</b> <i>n</i> [HH LLL] (Owere) dysentery; severe diarrhea. var. afoobala.</p>	<p>6. Afe - Dress</p> <p>67. A fi (ko) - When ... is crumbled</p> <p>68. Afo - Belly/ Stomach; year - Orlu dialect</p> <p>69. A fu - When one sees {transitive} ...</p> <p>70. Efe - Flying; dress; spare time</p> <p>09. Iba - Fever; the process of entering</p> <p>10.lbe - PatrHineage; paternal relatives</p> <p>11. Ibi - Swelling ofthe scrotum</p> <p>12. Ibo - (Another spelling for 'Igbo'), accusing falsely, placing (a load) on ...</p> <p>13. Ibu - Fat; the process of carrying</p> <p>14. Oba – Barn</p> <p>94. Igo - Buying; offering to ,propitiating (a god)</p> <p>95. Igu - Counting; palm trond</p> <p>96. Oga - It will, he will, she will</p> <p>97. Oge - Time; when</p> <p>98. Ogo -In-Iaw; kindness; gracious</p> <p>99. Ogu - Fight; battle; stick; Divine Justice</p>
	igwe <i>n</i> [HH] sky; heavens.	121. Aja - Sand; offering made to a god

	<p>Igwe <i>n</i> [HH] name of the Sky God.          Igwe <i>n</i> [HL] a title of honour.          igwe <i>n</i> [HL] 'machine; engine;  <sup>2</sup>bicycle. igwe <i>n</i> [HL] metal; iron.          igwe <i>n</i> [HL] bullet.          igwe <i>n</i> [LL] crowd; multitude.          igwe aga <i>n</i> [HL HH] pig-iron ore; light          iron made from single process molten          iron ore.          igwe ehi <i>n</i> [LL HH] herd of cows.          igwu <i>n</i> [HH] flea; louse.          igwugwu <i>n</i> [LHH] sand. var. uzuzu.          igwurube <i>n</i> [LLLL] swarm of locusts;          a variety of the grasshopper. var.          igurube; igulube; igube.</p>	<p>122. Aji -- Hair; a kind of Big tree          123. Ajo -- Evil (adjective),          124. A ju -- When one refuses (transitive) ...          125. Eje--Going          126. Eji Holding on to          127. Eju - Snail          128. Ija - To Hide          129. Ije - To go; walk; gait          130. Iji - To hold; you are holding          131. Ijo -- To be ugly          132. Iju -- To be plentiful; you are full of          133. Oja - Flute          134. Oje -- He who goes ...          135. Oji - Kola-nut; Staff of spiritual authority;          black; dark; tree with large trunk          136. Ojoo – Ugly</p>
Dictionary of Ònìchà Igbo (Kay Williamson) 1972		
aghùghò , awùwò	N	guile; deceitfulness; cunning; double
	-ghò aghù ghò	be tricky, cunning, fond of setting persons against one another (such activity usually being done underground); carry on double-dealing:
agwa agwaā	n.	homesickness; nostalgia
àgwà 1.	n.	beans; Lima bean ( <i>Phaseolus lunatus</i> Linn.)
	àgwà ocha	cowpea ( <i>Vigna unguiculata</i> Walp.)
	fùlìfù àgwà	pod of beans
àgwà 2.	n.	Colour
	-tù àgwà	be spotted, variegated in colour:
àgwà 3.	n.	manners; behaviour:
agwọ	n.	snake (generic)
agwò	n.	A. raffia
Agwù, Agù.	n.	an alùṣì, or class of alùṣì, of ambivalent character, the spirit of afa divination. Agwù possesses those who are called to serve as ndị dibià, the signs of a vocation being absentmindedness, disorientation, and the like:
Igbo-English Dictionary by Egemba, I. (1999)		
<p><b>abọ</b> n. cane basket with long, rectangular wooden base (see ùkpà 1 (ont) abọ àjà basket of sacrificial offerings; abọ ùwà load of misfortune; extreme suffering; misery; ib'ò abọ to lift a loaded basket on to someone's head; to help someone lift and carry a loaded basket; ìkpà abọ to make a basket; ivū abọ to carry basket.</p> <p><b>àbọ</b> n. (a) piece of communal land; (b) fallow land; land recently farmed; (c) plantation; grove (e.g. of oil palm, cassava, raffia palm) àbọ jìgbọ cassava plantation, grove; àbọ ngwò raffia palm grove àbọ nkwū oil palm plantation, grove; àbọ Ùmūūdà -Ùmūūdà communal land</p> <p><b>àbò</b> numeral; ordinal: second. Onye mbụ na onye àbò first person and the second person; naàbò the pair of you naàwò both; two together; pair. unù naàbò. both of you; the pair of you</p> <p><b>àbọki</b> n. Hausa man (from Hausa name for 'man')</p> <p><b>àbọlì</b> n. a kind of fried food made of flour, ground beans and other ingredients (by Hausa and</p>		

Yoruba women) <b>abọliri</b> adj... ( like àbọlì) round and soft; plump; fat
<b>òvọ</b> 1. n. person/thing that combs, rakes, scratches, digs up by scratching, exhumes (vọ 1.) <b>òvọ</b> 2. n. person/thing that makes things recur, stirs up things (vọ 2.) <b>òvọ</b> n. person/thing that pulls open or apart by pulling the edges of something (vọ) <b>òvù</b> 3. n. thing that is or becomes excessive <b>òvùghòvù</b> n. excessiveness; excess; adj. excessive, too much <b>òvùvọ</b> 1. n. (act, process, instance, possibility of) combing, raking, scratching, digging up. exhuming; exhumation <b>òvùvọ</b> 2. n. (act, process, instance, possibility of) recurring, exposing, fading, discolouring: making to recur, stirring up, making to fade; recurrence <b>òvùvọ</b> n. (act, process, instance, possibility of) pulling open or part <b>òvùvù</b> 1. n. (act, process, instance, possibility of) shouting, yelling, bawling, howling; shout: yell; bawl; howl <b>òvùvù</b> 2. n. (act, process, instance, possibility of) uprooting <b>òvùvù</b> 3. n. (act, instance, state, possibility of) becoming or being excessive

#### 4.0 Summary of the Findings and Conclusion

From the objective of this paper which include; examining the extent of phonological pattern followed by the selected English-Igbo dictionaries; and directing on the way forward on creating adequate dictionaries in Igbo language, few findings have been made.

Firstly, phonologically, under tone marking, the English-Igbo Dictionary by Michael Echeruo (2001), Dictionary of Ònìchà Igbo by Kay Williamson (1972), Igbo-English Dictionary by Egemba, I. (1999) paid attention to tone marking, whereas OGAM/IGBO VCV DICTIONARY by Catherine Acholonu (2007) does not give a perspective on tone marking which will help learners to pronounce the words. Tone is a distinguishing word factor in Igbo language as some words can have the same spelling but of different meaning, hence, be separated by the tone marking. This debunks the dictionaries to be classified as learners' dictionary as it doesn't possess the basic element of a language which is the sound segment.

Furthermore, phonetic and phonemic transcriptions which are basic component of learners' dictionary were absence in all the reviewed dictionaries. The transcriptions enable the speakers or learners of a language to accurately pronounce words of the language.

From the examined dictionaries, it was observed that English-Igbo Dictionary by Michael Echeruo (2001), Dictionary of Ònìchà Igbo by Kay Williamson (1972), Igbo-English Dictionary by Egemba, I. (1999) paid attention to diacritic marks which are paramount in Igbo orthography, whereas OGAM/IGBO VCV DICTIONARY by Catherine Acholonu (2007) doesn't attend to it.

#### 5.2 Conclusion

It is not gainsaying that the dictionary should be consulted not for looking up the meaning only, as this is the general or wider belief about dictionaries, rather it would also be seen as an authoritative source of language. This is because it can almost tell the user with every detail about other language aspects in addition to the meaning. Dictionaries shall be seen as the first pedagogical aid which the teacher should keep company in his teaching routine, as well as it should be a good resort for the learner as an authenticated learning source of linguistic knowledge. Hence, general dictionaries which is the bedrock of this research, points to the elements which distinguishes a dictionary from others, as it enables the learner of a language to easily get along with the new language. In the words of Béjoint (2010) who succinctly states that, in addition to a focus on the more frequent words and their more frequent meanings and on common



collocations and syntactic patterns of a dictionary, there are elements which he tagged “Big Five” as to be present in the dictionary which include; simplified definitions; attention to spoken as well as written patterns of usage; pronunciation information, given in the International Phonetic Alphabet; a generous use of examples; and front matter explaining how the dictionary should be used, particularly coding schemes. Following this, it can be concluded that out of the four Igbo-English dictionaries in view, three possess the majority requisite tenets of a dictionary except transcription, whereas one of the dictionaries OGAM/IGBO VCV DICTIONARY by Catherine Acholonu (2007) lacks the basic tenets of a dictionary.

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