NEGATION IN THE EHUGBO DIALECT OF IGBO

Nancy Obinna N.

Department of Languages
Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana,
Afikpo.

Abstract

This study focuses on negation in the Ehugbo dialect of Igbo. Every language has a way of showing that an assertion is not true; the Igbo language is not an exception. A language can utilize more than one negative morpheme in its negative expression which may differ depending on the negative construction. This research seeks to identify the negative marking strategies employed in Ehugbo dialect of Igbo. The study is anchored on the Basic Linguistic Theory espoused by Dixon (1997) to describe negation in the dialect and to bring out the features that make the dialect unique and different from other dialects of Igbo. The different affirmative and negative constructions in the dialect are explored using the Emenanjo (1978) classifications of Igbo negation which include: the indicative, the progressive, the perfective, future, the unfulfilled and imperative. Some of these verb forms have sub-categories like the future simple, future immediate, and so on. Using oral interview method of data collection, relevant data have been sourced and purposeful sampling technique was also adopted to select Ehugbo informants, who are competent in the dialect and would offer relevant data. The informants selected were born and bred in Ehugbo communities and still reside there. The researcher being a native speaker of the dialect has also used her residual knowledge. The study observes that Ehugbo dialect has different negative strategies; that dialect is by affixation and tone. The role of this tone, especially, the high tone of the agreement prefixes and on the auxiliary verbs triggers negation in the different constructions.

Introduction

Negation is a transformation that involves the contradiction of a propositional content of a sentence. This feature is an important aspect of human communication which connotes denials, refusals and contradictions of truthful statement. (Altman, 1967). It is often achieved through the use of several operational transformation devices such as affixation, tone, melody and independent lexical item or items in different languages. It is also a universal feature realized by phonological and syntactic processes. Negation is a subject of variation across languages. That is why Emenanjo (1977), while providing insight into language, upholds that

language is not a mere fundamental aspect of culture, but rather, the very vehicle for vocal expression and propagation of that particular culture.

Negation, a distinct speech act from the affirmative, is an area of interest which has attracted scholarly interest. To form negative sentences, different languages have different patterns depending on the grammar of the language. Generally, there are patterns that are universal in natural languages. For example, auxiliary verbs are used to form negative with affixes attached to them.

Every language has its own syntactic, semantic and morphological devices of expressing negation. It is a universal linguistic phenomenon, one of the most basic elements in human mind that makes it an indispensible part of natural languages which are tools for human thoughts. Every statement that involves negative particles is called negative statement. One sentence can be the negation or denial of another. Thus, negation is the process of making a sentence negative usually by adding a negative particle within the structure.

Every language has some devices at its disposal to reverse the truth value of a sentence. The Igbo language, which the dialect understudies belongs to, is not an exception. The Igbo language is also rich in verbs, and most affixes apply to verbs alone. Igbo negation is affixed- laden in nature and that is why the general negative marker in Igbo is the verbal suffix '–ghi', which can be attached to all types of verbs because it is only verbs that can accept affixes in Igbo, both inflectional and extensional verbs (Obiamalu, 2013). The dialect under study only accepts the verbal suffix is *'-gị'* instead of *'-ghị'* which is available in standard Igbo and can also be affixed to verbs in the dialect.

Each language exists in a number of varieties which is used by different social and regional groups and these varieties used are referred to as dialects. This research work investigates negation in Ehugbo dialect to complement the efforts of other researchers who

have studied negation in various dialects of Igbo and for researchers who have done some works in the dialect except for negation which the study is set to address.

It is possible for a language to utilize more than one negative morpheme in its negative expressions. In such cases, the structural and functional domain of the negative morphemes may differ depending on the negative construction types or transformations. Moreover, people have speculated much on negation, but it is observed that it has not been fully researched on to the extent of noting the negatives in Ehugbo dialect, that is to say that much has not been done on negation especially as it concerns Ehugbo dialect of Igbo.

Therefore, this work is an attempt at a descriptive analysis of negation in Ehugbo dialect of Igbo; including its mode of operation as well as the roles of tone in its expression, thereby contributing to the Igbo dialectology.

The dialect under study is spoken in Afikpo North Local Government Area is located in the southern part of Ebonyi State. Linguistically, Afikpo is a cultural Igbo group of the Kwa sub- family of Niger Congo family of languages. Ehugbo dialect is classified as belonging to Waawa Igbo (Ikekonwu 1986).

The role of tone cannot be too stressed in differentiating meanings of some words with similar morphological shapes. However, many conventions have been established in regards to tone marking but, this work adopts the tonal convention proposed by Green and Igwe (1963), which leaves the high tone unmarked and low tones marked with grave accent [!] and down step marked with the macron [-].

Literature Review

Crystal (2008:323) in his view about negation describes it as a process or construction in grammatical and semantic analysis which typically expresses the contradiction of some or all of a sentence meaning. This simply implies that it denies the fact of or, an opposition to something.

Tone plays a vital linguistic role in negative construction especially in languages of West Africa. According to Bond (2006), tone may be used as the only method of distinguishing negatives from other constructions. He supports his assertion with examples from Eleme culled from Obele (1998:235).

1a).   É-dé-dé o̱fí   b)   e – de – de ofi

       3S Rfut -eat mango   3s – Rneg – eat mango

       'He will eat mango   "he does not usually eat mango"

2a).   é – bé – bé o̱bé   2b)   e –be – be obe

       3S – Rfut – fight fight   3s –Rneg- fight fight

       'He will fight'   "he does not usually fight"

From the above examples, it shows that tone bears a usually high communication lead in the expression of negation. This is seen in the second syllable reduplicated verb. The Ikwere language as investigated by Weje & Alerechi (2010:4) utilizes tonal changes in the negative expression of the habitual verb form. The habitual verb form in Ikwere seems to undergo on morphological change, rather than the tone of the verb. In a situation where pronouns occur, the tone generally becomes low. This observation is evident in the following examples:

3a).   Éwû ke̱ga̱ a̱bī   b).   Éwû kégā a̱bī
       3s v- share money   3s v- share neg money
       'Goats share money'   Goats do not share money'
4a).   Wéné gbágá égbé   4b).   Wéné gbága̱ égbé
       3s Dur- Nom- shoots kites   3s Dur- Non- Neg shoots kites
       'Wene shoots at kites'   'Wene does not shoot at kites'
              (Source: Weje and Alerechi 2010:4)

From the examples, Waje & Alerechi conclude that negations in habitual constructions are expressed on the basis of tonal alternation alone. This tonal alternation is realized on the second syllable of the verbs involved in the affirmative and negation constructions.

The Igbo language as a tonal language is marked for tone which the dialect under study is not an exception. On this notion, Emenanjo (1978:11) states that" tone language is one which makes use of pitch of a voice to show differences in meaning of a word or utterance". A successful description of negation entails a discussion of its tonal pattern.

Obiamalu (2006:31) reasoning along this line, Miestamo (2006:32), asserts that there can be negation without negators. This is illustrated with Igbo personal names that carry negative meaning without the usual negative suffix – *ghi.*

8. For instance, Ifeanyighichukwu is rendered as Ifeanyichukwu (Nothing is too difficult for God).

9. Amaghinna is rendered as Amanna (father is not known).

10. Amaghiechi rendered as Amaechi (Nobody knows tomorrow).

11. Amaghiuche rendered as Amuche(Nobody knows the mind of God)

(Nos. 10 and 11 examples are mine)

(Obiamalu 2008:350) also explores the tone pattern of negative interrogative constructions in contrast to their affirmative antonyms. He gives the following examples from Nnewi dialect of Igbo.

12a). Ọ̀ yà- èli nnī?
    3s Aux Nom-eat food?
    'Will s/ he eat food?'

12b). Ọ yā -eli nnī?
    3s Aux neg Nom-eat food
    'Will s/ he not eat food?'

13a). Ọ yà- èli nnī
    3s Aux Nom-eat food
    'S/he will eat.'

13b). Ọ̀ ya-eli nnī
    3s Aux neg Nom – eat food
    'S/he will not eat'

Obiamalu (2013) aptly identifies the two negation strategies used in the Igbo language through: affixation and tonal prosody. He further states that negation in Igbo is uses affix in nature and is marked in Standard Igbo with the general negative marker, *'-ghi'* with no inherent tone.

Theoretical Framework

The framework of Basic Linguistic Theory espoused by Dixon (1997) is to treat language description and the postulation of general properties of human language. This theory, as presented by Dixon, postulates that in writing the grammar of a language, alternative analysis must be examined and the most appropriately, selected. In the same way, the theory does not ignore any feature in the language, but treats a feature as equally important as the next feature which brings out the features that are both universal and those that make the language unique and different from other languages. Dixon (1997) further explains that the Basic Linguistic Theory is most widely employed in language description, particularly in grammatical descriptions of languages, and that this framework has assumed most of work in linguistic typology.

The theory emphasizes the need to describe every language in its own terms. The Basic Linguistic Theory is a culmination of the framework that has slowly developed overtime as linguists have learned how better to describe languages, given the benefits of the theory in a discussion of traditional grammar.

Methodology

The two major sources of data used in this research are: the primary and secondary sources. The former is drawn from various Igbo grammar books, seminar papers, articles, etc. while the latter is from the competent speakers of Ehugbo dialect sampled from the chosen communities in the villages.

The sampling technique employed in this study is the purposive sampling technique whereby the researcher sampled nine (9) respondents based on their characteristics which would address the research objective. Hence, the respondents selected for the study are the elderly and educated natives, male and female who are very conversant in the dialect and could translate them from the English.

In an attempt to study this topic, the researcher has used a research population that is divided into two: six (6) men and three (3) women who fall within the age range 60 – 70 years, mainly from the villages of the chosen communities. The oral interview of affirmative and negative sentences in English language was administered to the nine (9) competent and the native speakers of the dialect, who could offer the needed data for this study. Justification for the number of respondents is based on the descriptive nature of the study. It is also a direct interview aimed at a chosen sample, which were able to interpret the affirmative and negative sentences and as well respond in the dialect. Thus, the useful data generated with a tape recorder were later analyzed.

The work adopts simple descriptive method of analysis, which is emphasized in the Basic Linguistic Theory of Dixon 1997 that is most widely employed in language description. In line with this, Emenanjo (1978)'s classification of negation in the Igbo language forms the structural framework used for the analysis.

Negative Marking Strategies in Ehugbo Dialect of Igbo

The data analysis is based on the negation of such constructions as: negation in perfective tense construction, future tense construction, imperative (prohibitive) construction, simple indicative tense construction, etc. It does so with the aim of arriving at some conclusion about negative marking strategies obtained in Ehugbo dialect of Igbo as well as the tonal features; we also will present and analyze the collected data, stating the different constructions and their negative variants.

The Indicative: This type of verb form simply describes a fact. It is marked in the Igbo language with the rV suffix in the affirmative and is replaced in the negative form with the negative marker *'-ghi'*. However, in the dialect under study, the negative marker or element is *'-gi'/gu'* in free variation. It is always on the high tone. Sometimes, the negative element *'-*

gi' is borne by an agreement prefix *'-e/-a'* which comes as a prefix to the verb root or the agreement prefix *'-a'* attached to an auxiliary verb element *'di'* which is prefixed to the negative marker, as seen in the following examples:

14a).   Ijẹọma dị̀ ọmọlọma   b.)   Ijẹọma adị̣gị ọmọlọma
Ijẹọma be-beautiful-rV beauty   Ijẹọma AGR. AUX be beautiful-NEG beauty
'Ijẹọma is beautiful'   'Ijẹọma is not beautiful'

15a).   Emeka bφ nwokē   b).   Emeka abụgụ nwokē
        Emeka be. (INDIC) man   Emeka AGR.be (INDIC) NEG man
        'Emeka is a man'   'Emeka is not a man'

16a).   Ị̀ chọ̀rφ m   b).   Ị̀ chọgụ m
        2s want-rV me   2s want-NEG-me
        'You want me'   'You do not want me'

17a).   φbe chàrị̀ acha   b).   φbe achagi acha
        Pear ripe-rV INDIC ripe   Pear AGR-ripe-NEG ripe
        'The pear is not ripe'   'The pear is not ripe'

The analysis shows that in Ehugbo dialect, rV is replaced with the negative ,marker *'gi'* or

'gu' depending on the NP and it may contain an agreement prefix, *'-a'*.

Moreover, the NP that takes *'gụ'* is the one that has the agreement prefix, '-a' affixed to the verbs as seen in example 16b, and second person singular or plural as the case may be as seen in the example 17b. That is to say, it is not only the NP that affects the negative markers in the dialect; sometimes the agreement prefix does, depending on the context used as we have seen in the above examples. Sometimes too, the third person singular '- β' takes *'gụ'* the dialect. For example: O choru m   O chogu m
        3s want –rV me   3s want -NEG- me
        'He/she wants me'   'He/she does not want me'
        Apart from all these, other NPs take *'gi'* in the dialect/.

The Progressive tense

This type of verb form describes present action that is still ongoing or is yet to be completed

at the moment of speaking. It is marked by an auxiliary low tone in the affirmative, while the

negative form is marked by suffix marker in different auxiliaries *'nọ', 'na'* and *'nị'* prefixed

to the different negative markers *'ga', 'go'* and *'gi'* available in the dialect. They can be

replaced in the negative with *'ga', 'go'* and *'gi'* in free variation. The tone pattern is high

when it goes with an agreement prefix *'-e/-a'* which is attached to the *'-na'* auxiliary verb.

However, all these depend on the NP of the construction. That is to say that the nature of the

NP is such that the NP has a way of affecting the negative marker, hence, the examples

sighted.

18a). Uju nà- azφ ọkụkọ   b).   Uju anàga azφ ọkụkọ
       Uju DUR-NOM-rear chicken   Uju AGR-DUR.NEG-NOM-rear chicken
       'Uju is rearing chicken'   'Uju is not rearing chicken'
19a). Anyị na-akō ṅkàsị   b).   Anyi anaga akọ nkàsị
       1p DUR-NOM-sow cocoyam   1p AGR-DUR.NEG NOM-sow cocoyam
       'We are sowing cocoyam'   'We are not sowing cocoyam'
20a). Ọ nọ̀ su ekφ   b).   Ọ nọgβ sụ ekφ
       3s DUR wash cloth   3s DUR NRG wash clothes
       '(S)he is washing clothes'   '(S)he is not washing clothes'
21a). Ị nị de ihē   b).   Ị nigi de ihē
       2s DUR-write something   2s DUR- NOM-write something
       'You are writing something'   'You are not writing something'

From the analysis above, it is observed that the negative elements *'nị/nọ'* which tonal feature

is high, is dependent on singular subject which is always a pronoun.

The Perfective Form of the Verb

This type of verb form refers to concluded action whose impact is still felt in the present. The

perfective marker bears the auxiliary '*-wo'* which comes after the verb in the affirmative, but

bears the negative elements of auxiliaries or particles, *'ko',* *'ka'* and *'ki'* with the agreement

prefix, depending on the subject which does not go with the 3rd person singular,*'-o'.* For

example:

22a). Emeka azàwβ ulβ   b).   Emeka aka zagị ulβ
       Emeka AGR-swept-perf house   Emeka AGR-AUX-NEG sweep perf house
       'Emeka has swept the house'   'Emeka has not swept the house'
23a). I riwo nrī   b).   I ki rigi nrī
       2s eat-perf food   2s AUX-NEG eat food
       'You have eaten'   'You have not eaten'
24a). Anyị a- sụ- wo ekφ   b).   Anyị a- ka a – sụ – gụ ekφ
       1p AGR-wash – perf clothes   1p AGR-AUX.NEG NOM-wash clothes
       'We have washed clothes'   'We have not washed clothes'

The Future Verb Form

This type of verb form expresses an action that is yet to happen and it has different sub-

categories; that will be considered as well. These sub-categories include: the future simple,

the future immediate, future progressive, future perfective and the future progressive perfective.

The Future Simple Verb Form

This verb form simply expresses a future occurrence that has not yet begun and is marked by *'je','ja'* and *'jo'* auxiliaries verbs; they come before the verb root in the affirmative but has its negative equivalents replaced with negative elements *'mi', 'mo'* and *'ma'*. For example:

25a). Mīnī je ezβ echī
Rain FUT-NOM-fall tomorrow.
'Rain will fall tomorrow.'

b). Mīnī ama- gị ezβ echī
Rain AGR –AUX-NEG fall tomorrow.
'Rain will not fall tomorrow.'

26a). O jo mī e
3s FUT-do it
'S/he will do it'

b). O mo- go mī e
3s AUX-FUT-NEG do it
S/he will not do it'

27a). Ì jị rụ ọrụ
2s AUX-FUT do work
'You will work'

b). Ì mị- gị rụ ọrụ
2s AUX-FUT-NEG do work
'You will not work'

Observe from the examples above, that the dialect has negative marking elements different from what is found in the affirmative forms. The negative particles in the examples above are *'mi', 'mo'* and *'ma'* which go with an agreement and are attached to the future tense markers, *'gi', 'go'* and *'ga'*, depending on the NP. Observe also that 'ma' goes with agreement prefix.'-a' as we see in the example number 25b. Generally, the future markers in the affirmative constructions are completely deleted in their negatives.

Future Immediate Verb Form

This expresses an action that is about to begin. In the dialect, this type of construction is marked by future verb marker, 'zφrφ' which attracts suffix marker to the verb root in the affirmative as seen in the examples below:

28a). Anwū chọ zφrφ ị-chā
Sun ANT-about to-shine Sun
'Sun is about to shine'

b). Anwū aka cho-fu-gu i-chā
AGR.AUX about NEG to-shine
'Sun is not about to shine'

29a). Unφ chọ-zφrφ ị-sū ekφ
2p ANT.about to-wash clothes
'You are about to wash clothes'

b). Unφ aka chọ fu-gu ị-sū ekφ
2p AGR.AUX about NEG to-wash clothes
'You are about to wash clothes'

From the above examples, observe that the negation starts with the high tone agreement prefix, *'-a'* which also makes the tone of the auxiliary verb, '*cho'* high.

The Future Progressive Verb Form

This is a complex form used to express a habitual action. It is also the verb form that expresses action that is repeated. In the dialect under study, it bears the future marker. *'-mà'* followed by the auxiliary *'-nà'* in the affirmative, while in the negated counterparts, it bears the agreement prefix *'-a'* attached to the future marker *'-mà'* followed by the future negative marker *'-ga'* and a durative, *'-nà'* as we see in the examples below:

30a).Anyị mà na à-gụ ekwụkwọ
  1p ANT- DUR –NOM- study books

          b).Anyị a mā-ga na a- gụ ekwụkwọ
          1p AGR-ANT-NEG DUR.NOM-study books

'We will be (hab) studying'
        'We will not be (hab) studying'

31a).Amaka mà na a-zà ulβ
Amaka ANT-DUR NOM-sweep house

        b).Amaka a mā-ga na a-zà ulβ
    Amaka AGR-ANT-NEG DUR NOM-sweep house

'Amaka will be sweeping the house'
        'Amaka will not be sweeping the house'

From the analysis above, the dialect portrays the auxiliary negative marker, *'mà'* which occurs with the agreement prefix, *'-a'*. Notice also that the auxiliary, *'mà'* is low tone in the affirmative, but the tonal feature becomes step in the negative variant in the dialect.

The Future Perfective Verb Form

This sub-category shows an action that is usually completed always in the future. In the affirmative, it goes with the high tone auxiliary, je/ja in free variation with the perfective marker, 'wo' whose tonal feature is high, but in its negative variant, it has the agreement prefix *'-a/-e'* attached to the auxiliary *'ma'* followed by the future marker. *'ga'*. For example:

32a).Emeka je edewo ekwụkwọ
    Emeka ANT-NOM-write-perf book

        b).Emeka ama-ga ka edewo ekwụkwọ
        Emeka AGR -AUX-NEG ANT- NOM-write book

    'Emeka must have written the book'
        'Emeka must not have written the book'

33a). Unφ ja a-sụwo ekù
2p ANT-NOM-wash-perf cloth

        b).Unφ ama-ga ka sụwo ekù
        2p AGR- AUX-NEG ANT-NOM-wash clothes

'You must have washed the clothes
        'You must not have washed clothes'

The Unfulfilled Progressive Verb Form

This type of verb form expresses action that is yet to be performed or already fulfilled. In the dialect under study, it goes with the auxiliary 'kwesiri' in the affirmative, but in the negative, the agreement prefix *'-e'* is prefixed to it while the last two syllables change to *'gi'* as seen in the examples below:

34a). Emeka kwΠsìrì nà o-chute –je mīnī   b).Emeka ekwesigi na o-chute –je mīnī

     EmekaAUX-be-DUR NOM-fetch-to-be(ing)water   Emeka AGR AUX-be NEG DUR

                                      NOM-fetch-to-be(ing) water

    'Emeka should be fetching water'   'Emeka should not be fetching water'

From the analysis above, we notice that there is a progressive element or marker, *'je'* in the dialect which has high tone and an agreement prefix *'-e'* which triggers off negation in these constructions.

The Imperative Verb Form

This type of verb form gives command or order. It also has some sub-categories which include the following: the simple, the progressive and the unfulfilled imperative. It has no NP.

The Simple Imperative Verb Form

This verb form expresses simple order that must be carried out. In the dialect under study, the negative bears an agreement prefix'-e/-a' which are negative indicators or initiators which triggers off the negative in the constructions as seen in the examples below:

35a).	Sù̀- a Πwù̀wù̀ Cut-OVS grass 'Cut grasses'	b).	A-Sū- kwa Πwù̀wù̀ AGR-cut-NEG grass 'Don't cut grasses'
36a).	Sì-e ye Cook- OVS it 'Cook it'	b).	E-si – kwe e AGR-cook-NEG it 'Don't cook it'
37a).	Gbφ- e ye Kill-OVS it 'Kill it'	b).	E – gbu kwe e AGR-kill-NEG it 'Don't kill it'

Observe from the analysis above that *'kwe* and *kwa'* are negative imperative markers in the dialect. They occur in free variation and have a high tone feature.

The Imperative Progressive

This type of verb form uses the progressive auxiliary, *'kà/kΠ'* in complementary distribution, followed by the verb root and then the high tone *'je'* which is also a progressive element in the affirmative, while in the negative counterpart, it is realized by an agreement prefix *'-e/-a'* before the verb root and a negative progressive element *'si'* and then, the negative imperative marker *'kwe* and *kwa'* as the case may be. For example:

38a). Kà zàje   b).   Azà sị̀ kwà
      DUR-sweep-be(ing) AGR   DUR-sweep-be(ing) NEG
      'Be sweeping'   'Don't stop sweeping'
39a). KΠ deje   b).   Ede sikwe
      DUR-write-be(ing) AGR   DUR-write-be(ing) NEG
      'Be writing'   'Don't be writing'

In the dialect, the imperative negative markers are *'kwe* and *kwa'*, the negative progressive elements are *'je'* and *'si'* as the case may be; and two auxiliaries, *'ka* and *ke'* which are durative markers and on the low tone. Observe also that there is tonal alternation of the main verbs, the tone is high in the affirmative is low while it changes to high tone in the negative constructions**.**

The Imperative Unfulfilled Form of the Verb

This is another complex verb form. It has all the features of the imperative with the unfulfilled marker. In the dialect under study, it has no comparison with the affirmation. It is realized by *'A-ka' /'E-ke'* in which its tonal feature is high as seen in the examples below:

40).   E- ke e-de kwe   42).   E- ke e-gbu kwe
       AGR-ANT NOM (yet) write NEG   AGR-ANT Nom (yet) kill NEG
       'Don't write yet'   'Don't kill yet'
41).   E- ke e-je kwe   43).   E- ke e-wu kwe
       AGR-ANT NOM (yet) go NEG   AGR-ANT NOM (yet) cook
                                               NEG
       'Don't go yet'   'Don't cook yet'

Conclusion

We can see from the analysis above of the dialect; the dialect is first analysed in its own terms in line with the tenets of Basic Linguistic Theory, which tends to bring to bear by way of description, the various unique and universal features of the dialect. Therefore, this work is pure descriptive study as it treated negation in Ehugbo dialect of Igbo by way of description.

This work has investigated the processes employed in the derivation of negative constructions in Ehugbo dialect. The high tone negative marker '*gị'* has been identified as a general negative marker. Other negative strategies have also been identified which are used in the analysis of this work. These negative strategies do not strictly occur in a specific position in the sentence. They can vary depending on the type of sentence construction.

The different negative markers identified in this work are analysed as particles considering the fact that they perform no other function other than the function of negating an affirmative sentence or construction which the research work seeks to address.

Again, one striking thing about Ehugbo dialect is the fact that the different auxiliary verbs used in the analysis influence the negative markers in the sentences and they also vary depending on their various subjects.

Furthermore, it was discovered that tone constitutes an integral part of negation especially as it concerns the dialect under study; hence, a full description of negation in Ehugbo dialect will entail a discussion of its tonal pattern.

Finally, this study places Ehugbo dialect among the other dialects or languages that exhibit features of syntactic negation by use of particles. The use of particles in the expression of negation observed in the dialect under study agrees with the view of Dahl (1979) that most languages of the world exhibit either morphological or syntactic negation. In syntactic negation, particles or auxiliaries are involved. In the case of Ehugbo, particles are

used as negation markers. Therefore, by implication, Ehugbo dialect of Igbo exhibits the syntactic type of negation.

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