A GRAMMATICAL INVESTIGATION OF POSSESSIVE CASES IN ENGLISH AND OKPAMERI

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Abstract

Possessive cases are words that indicate or show possession. Hence, "hers", "her" and "Ojo's" are some examples of possessive cases. These possessive cases indicate grammatical property of language. The usage of these cases in utterance varies in languages. Hence, they variations often pose problem to ESL learners. Predicating on Contrastive Analysis Theory, the study generated Okpameri data from oral sources and participatory observation of the researchers in natural setting. English data were got from the English grammar texts. The areas of investigation were Possessive Pronouns, Possessive Adjectives and Possessive Nouns. From the findings, the two languages under study are grammatically marked for possessive cases with reference to 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular and plural numbers. However, the usage of these cases differs. While English is gender sensitive, this is not so in Okpameri language as Okpameri resorts to using uni-gender to indicate possession. Okpameri possessive pronouns and adjectives have different morphological forms representing persons (e.g 1st person singular). Not all forms of possessive cases are capable of co-occuring with every noun. While Okpameri distinguishes between subject and complement possessive cases, this is not so in English. The study, therefore, suggests that language teachers, particularly, English language experts should adopt systematic approach to the teaching of possessive cases as this will further broaden the Okpameri ESL learners' knowledge on how to use the English possessive cases.

Keywords: English, Okpameri, Possessive, Pronouns, Possessive Adjectives, Possessive Nouns.

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Introduction

Possessive cases are words that indicate or show ownership. In the English grammar, some nouns, pronouns or adjectives indicate ownership. They are referred to as possessive cases. The underlined words in the following expressions: "Ojo's car", "My house", "It is theirs" are examples of possessive cases. When a possessive case performs the function of a noun, such a word, is classified as possessive noun. A possessive case becomes a possessive pronoun when the word indicating ownership performs the function of a pronoun. The underlined word in this phrase – "her book" performs the function of an adjective, hence, a possessive adjective because the word – "her" has indicated ownership.

This paper, therefore, tends to examine possessive "noun", "pronoun" and "adjective" of English and Okpameri, so as to identify areas of similarities and differences. This will enable the researchers predict the likely problem(s) Okpameri ESL learners may encounter in the course of using English possessive cases. Upon prediction, useful suggestions given will definitely go a long way in improving the teaching of the English possessive cases. Hence, the study expands and further expounds the frontier of knowledge for scholars who may be interested in the further study of the Okpameri as much work on Okpameri language, and particularly, its grammar has not been well researched on. It is therefore expedient to briefly shed light on the histo-linguistic and socio-cultural background of Okpameri.

A Brief Histo-Linguistic and Socio-Cultural Background of Okpameri

According to Elugbe's classification (1989:26), Okpameri language belongs to Edoid language family. In his submission, all the Edoid languages (such as the Okpameri language) that have generic resemblance must have descended from a common proto-language as it were and of which each had later emerged as a distinct language over a long period of time. The linguistic affinity among the Okpameri is one of the greatest evidence of their oneness as a people. This explains why the word "Okpameri" means "we are one". Ekharo *et. al.* (2007) citing Hakeem (2003) classify the Okpameri community as belonging to North-Western Edoid who had retained their Edoid language and speak a heavily accented variety of Yoruba as a second language. Okpameri is located in Akoko Edo Local Government Area of Edo State. The communities that make up Okpameri are located in almost all the constituencies in the local government. The following communities are in Akoko-Edo North Constituency: "Lampese", "Bekuma", "Ibillo", "Imoga", "Ekpesa", "Ekor", "the Ikirans", "the

Ugboshis"., "Aiyegunle" "Ogugu", and "Somorika" while communities like "Ojirami", "Dangbala", "Ojah", "Makeke", "Ekpe" are in Akoko Edo South constituency. Okpameri is a language widely spoken in the local government. It has population of about 62,000 (Omolaiye, 2013, p.15 citing 2006 population census in Edo State).

The natives are predominantly farmers. A sizable number of the female population are garri producers, while some trade with the nearby villages and towns of Ishua and Ikare (of Akoko in Ondo State) and Okene (Kogi State). Communities like Ugboshi, Ikiran, Ibillo, Ekpesa, Ekor, Lampese, Bekuma, Makeke and Ekpe fairly speak Yoruba and Ebira languages as the communities share boundaries with Yoruba and Ebira towns and villages. In a research of this nature, it is imperative to briefly discuss some related terms of possessive cases of the two languages under study as they will enhance the theoretical base of our discussion. The discussion thus begins with possessive pronouns.

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns are pronouns that indicate or show possession. Ojo (2011) describes possessive pronouns as pronouns that show possession or ownership between objects. The scholar presents the possessive pronouns thus:

Table 1

1st Person	Singular	Mine
	Plural	Ours
2nd Person	Singular	Yours
	Plural	Yours
3rd Person	Singular	His/hers/its
	Plural	Theirs

These Possessive pronouns usually combine genitive functions (marked by possessive morpheme(s) with pronominal function as either modifier, or adjective or as possessive pronouns functioning as subject complement (see Jimoh, 2010, p.141). By extension, Quirk, et al (1973), submit that possessive pronouns are extensively used with reference to parts of the body and personal belongings. Reflecting possessive pronouns with respect to their adjective and pronominal forms, Jimoh (2010, p.141) presents some of the examples thus:

Table 2

	Singular	Singular	Plural	Plural
	Adjective	Pronominal	Adjective	Pronominal
1st Person	My	Mine	Our	Ours
2nd Person	Your	Yours	Your	Yours
3rd Person	His/her/its	His/hers	Their	Theirs

For the avoidance of error of possessive pronoun usage, Ojo (2011:59) differentiates between it's and its. According to the scholar, "it's" is not a possessive pronoun but rather a contrast form of "it is". In a nutshell, words are referred to possessive pronouns when they are capable of replacing nouns in their genitive cases.

Possessive Adjectives

These are modifiers that show ownership. In order words, possessive adjectives perform the function of adjective. Examples are "my", "your", "his", "her", "our", "their" and its. It is expedient to mention here that determiners also perform the function of possessive adjective. Halliday (1961) identifies determiners as modifiers that usually come before a noun in a nominal group to perform the function of adjective. Some of the determiners indicate ownership or possession. Thus, they are also described as possessive adjective. The multi-functional traits of determiners pose problem to ESL learners as the determiners are sometimes wrongly used. An Attempt to solve this problem of usage, Ogundipe et al. (1983, p.6) demonstrate possessive pronoun and adjective cases in sentences thus:

Possessive Adjective	**Possessive Pronoun**
- This is my book.	This book is mine.
- This is your book.	This book is yours.
- This is his book.	This book is his.
- This is her book.	This book is hers.
- This is our book.	This book is ours.
- This is their book.	This book is theirs.

The above pairs of sentences have revealed "my", "your", "his", "her", "our", and "their" as possessive adjectives while possessive pronouns are "mine", "yours", "his", "hers", "ours" and "theirs" are possessive pronouns. It is imperative to mention here that possessive adjective form "his" is also used as possessive pronoun. It should not be confused with possessive pronoun as its (his) difference lies in usage. Therefore, possessive adjectives viz-a-viz their persons and numbers are presented below:

Table 3

Person	Number	Adjective
1st Person	Singular Plural	My Our
2nd Person	Singular Plural	Your Your
3rd Person	Singular Plural	His/her Their

Possessive Nouns

Just like every other possessive case, possessive nouns are also used to indicate or show possession or ownership with a noun genitive inflectional morpheme"s" or with apostrophe mark after a plural noun that ends with hissing sound or inflectional plural morpheme(s) (see Murphy, 2007: 29-30). Possessive nouns are formed by adding apostrophe mark to a noun (ownership) before morpheme"s" in nominal group like "Bola's bag", "Ayo's pen", "men's cars" etc, while "fathers' day", "mothers' day", "girls' school" etc. only need apostrophe mark at the end of a noun that indicates possession.

Murphy (2007) itemizes genitive nouns to include living things (e.g. tiger's den, pamela's beauty, president's car), personified objects (e.g Nigeria's leader, death's call), nouns denoting time/space/ weight (e.g A year's income, day's work, a month's salary, a week's programme), names of buildings such as church/house/school/college/ shop/hospital/ theatre (e.g. Ann's house, St. Paul's church, Oxford's University, Finger's ends, Mercy's sake, heart's content) and authorship/origin (e.g Keat's poety, father's love, Susan's speech, Nigeria's win, Diana's hall etc.). It must be stressed here that possessive nouns are only applicable to 3rd person numbers (both singular and plural) as we have in the following: "Tunde's bag" (3rd Person singular number), "The children's books" (3rd person plural number etc).

The Okpameri Possessive Cases

Just as English conceptually and functionally reflects possessive cases in its grammar, it is also reflected in the grammar of Okpameri. Possessive cases like ameh (my) and amenoh (mine) indicate possession when used in utterances. The Okpameri possessive cases also reflect or mark for numbers. Let us consider the possessive cases below:

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Okpameri Possessive Pronouns

As earlier stated, Okpameri language has possessive pronouns. Some of these pronouns are ameh (mine), cvbuc (yours), cvb[h (his/hers), emana (ours), cwash[(theirs), cvb[h (its) etc. It must be mentioned here that distinction is made in Okpameri language to reflect subject and object possessive pronouns. It must also be added that the possessive pronouns account for persons and numbers as they are presented below:

Table 4

Person	Number	Subject	Object
1st Person	Singular Plural	amẹnọh/ọmẹnọh/emenoh, (mine) amananọh/ẹmananọh/omananoh (ours)	Umenoh, emenoh, amenoh, omenoh (mine) Emananoh, umananoh, amananoh, omananoh (ours)
2nd Person	Singular Plural	avbuẹnọh/uvbuẹnọh/ovbuenoh (yours) euvbanọh/uvbanọh/avbuenoh (yours)	uvbuenoh, ovbuenoh, avbuenoh, evbuenoh (yours) auvbanoh, evbanoh, uuvbanoh, ouvbanoh (yours)
3rd Person	Singular Plural	evbọnọh/uvbọnọh/avbọnọh/ọvbọnọh (his/hers/its) ashọnọh/ewashọnọh/uwashọnọh, ọwashọnọh (theirs)	Avbonoh, evbonoh, ovbonoh, uvbonoh (his/hers/its) Ewashonoh, uashonoh, aashonoh, ashonoh (theirs)

The table above has revealed the sub-forms of possessive pronouns.

Okpameri Possessive Adjectives

Some of the Okpameri possessive adjectives are "amch"/"[mch"/ "umch"/"cmch" (my), "amama"/"umana"/"emana"/"omana" (our), "avb[h"/"[vb[h", "cvb[h" "uvb[h" (his/hers), etc. consider 1st person singular number in the following:

- Ukpo o̱me̱h
- (Housemy) — my house
- Ikhama   e̱me̱h
  (Head   my) — my head
- Eguo   a̱me̱h
  (shirt   my) — my shirt
- Usha   u̱me̱h
  (tree   my) — my tree

The noun phrases above have revealed a change in the initial vowels of 1st person singular possessive adjectives. This is caused by a noun co-occuring with the possessive adjectives. In essence, not all Okpameri nouns can co-occur with all sub-forms of possessive adjective. The same thing applies to other Okpameri possessive adjectives (2nd and 3rd persons). See the table below.

Table 5

Person	Number	Possessive adjective
1st Person	Singular	a̱me̱h/u̱me̱h/o̱me̱h/e̱me̱h (my)
	Plural	a̱mana/u̱mana/e̱mana/o̱mana (our)
2nd Person	Singular	a̱vbue̱h, u̱vbue̱h, e̱vbue̱h, o̱vbue̱ (your)
	Plural	a̱uvba/o̱uvba/u̱uvba/e̱uuba (your)
3rd Person	Singular	e̱vbo̱h/o̱vbo̱h/u̱vbo̱h/a̱ubo̱h (his/her/its)
	Plural	e̱washo̱, u̱washo̱, o̱asho a̱asho (their)

Worthy of note is that, possessive adjective is also used as possessive pronoun in Okpameri language when stative verbs are used. Let us consider the following from English perspective.

English: Mine is good
Okpameri: Emeh   ishemi (Emeh - possessive adjective functioning as possessive pronoun in subjective case.

English: This is mine
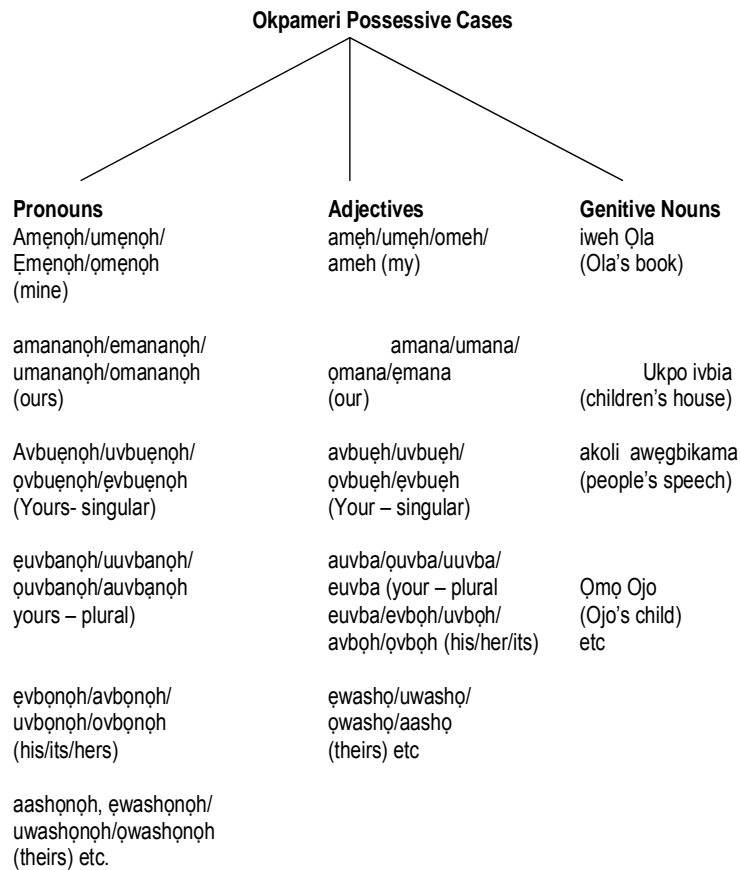Okpameri: Cmch khc (Emeh - possessive adjective functioning as possessive pronoun in objective case).

Possessive Nouns
Okpameri language conceptually accounts for possessive nouns (nouns that indicate possession). However, its possessive nouns are

not morphologically marked. The possessive nouns therefore account for only 3rd person. Some of these below reflect the above submission:

- Ọhanakọ   ivbia
  (day   children) ———— children's day (3rd person)
- Ukpo   ishamẹh
  (house   father my) ———— my father's house (3rd person)
- Ikpo   ẹgbikhama
  (People   house) ———— people's houses (3rd person)

More of this are discussed at the level of comparative analysis. Some of the Okpameri possessive cases are therefore represented in a tree diagram thus:

Okpameri Possessive Cases

Pronouns
Amẹnọh/umẹnọh/
Ẹmẹnọh/ọmẹnọh
(mine)

amananọh/emananọh/
umananọh/omananọh
(ours)

Avbuẹnọh/uvbuẹnọh/
ọvbuẹnọh/ẹvbuẹnọh
(Yours- singular)

ẹuvbanọh/uuvbanọh/
ọuvbanọh/auvbạnọh
yours – plural)

ẹvbọnọh/avbọnọh/
uvbọnọh/ovbọnọh
(his/its/hers)

aashọnọh, ẹwashọnọh/
uwashọnọh/ọwashọnọh
(theirs) etc.

Adjectives
amẹh/umẹh/omeh/
ameh (my)

amana/umana/
ọmana/ẹmana
(our)

avbuẹh/uvbuẹh/
ọvbuẹh/ẹvbuẹh
(Your – singular)

auvba/ọuvba/uuvba/
euvba (your – plural)
euvba/evbọh/uvbọh/
avbọh/ọvbọh (his/her/its)

ẹwashọ/uwashọ/
ọwashọ/aashọ
(theirs) etc

Genitive Nouns
iweh Ọla
(Ola's book)

Ukpo ivbia
(children's house)

akoli awẹgbikama
(people's speech)

Ọmọ Ojo
(Ojo's child)
etc

Having briefly examined the structures and functions of adjective, It is expedient to also briefly examine some sociolinguistic concepts like "bilingualism" and "linguistic interference as they are the causal factors that sometimes constitute learning problem to ESL learners.

Bilingualism: According to Akindele and Adegbite (2005), Bilingualism is the use of two languages either by an individual or a speech community. In essence, bilingualism gives room for the existence of two languages in the repertoire of an individual or a speech community. Bilingualism could therefore, be simply described as the ability that an individual has to produce meaningful utterance in the other language. It is therefore possible for an individual to possess the ability of speaking two languages in a bilingual society. However, such and individual could be deficient in either of the two languages. The resultant effect of this deficiency could be technically described as Linguistic Error when a bilingual unconsciously transfers the structure of the language that he is more proficient in to the language that he is less proficient in.

Linguistics interference: Linguistic Interference, according to Omolaiye (2017), are those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occurs in the speech of a language user as a result of familiarity with more than one language. In his own perspective, Weinreich (1953) sees Linguistic Interference as the rearrangement of patterns that result from the introduction of foreign elements into the more highly structured domains of language. In essence, the local content is usually noticed in the speech of a bilingual in an attempt to speak target language. In a speech community where two languages co-exist, comparative study of such languages could be carried out so as to identify their area(s) of similarities and differences. Linguistic analyst or contrastivist thus predicts the likely problem area(s) for the natives in the context of L_2 usage.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Contrastive Analysis propounded by Lado (1957) and other works of James (1980), Ojo (1996), and Farinde and Ogunsiji (2010) who have further expanded and expounded the said theory. Di Pieto (1971) and James (1980) establish the fact that, Modern Contrastive Linguistics began with Lado's "Linguistics Across Culture" in 1957. Lado's work was given impetus by earlier works of Weinreinch (1953) on the linguistic integration of immigrants in the United State of America (Ojo 1996, Omolaiye, 2013). Contrastive Analysis remains a linguistic tool in the field of Second language learning. CA is henceforth employed in revealing what are needed and what are not needed in the context of Target Language (TL),

hence, an instrument used to identify the similarities and differences of the two languages contrasted. The differences in the two languages will enable contrastivists predict likely problem ESL learners may face in the course of learning the target language. It is expedient to mention here that, CA is more concerned with the differences that exist between languages than the similarities. James (1980:3) corroborates this when he describes CA as a linguistic enterprise aimed at producing contrastive two-valued typologies in that, a pair of language is found on the assumption that language can be compared.

Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching (1990, p.141) identifies two types of CA – Theoretical and Applied CA. While Theoretical CA has to do with the production of extensive account of the differences between the languages contrasted, Applied CA is concerned with a reliable prediction of the learner's difficulties (James, 1980: 181:7). Contrastive Analysis, like Error Analysis and Translation Theory, is a form of interlingual study in which two languages are involved. Therefore, CA deals with issues that arise in the process of learning a second language after the bases of the first language (L_1) has been acquired. The sole aim of contrastive linguistic study is to provide appropriate methods of language teaching. In the light of this, features of language structure revealed in CA may suggest modification which could be further modified in the light of future experiences thereby improving on the finer grading of learner's difficulties. The systematic approach to CA therefore, is to do a descriptive study of the two languages under study individually, and subsequently juxtapose them for areas of similarities and differences thereby predicting problem areas and perhaps postulating a hierarchy of difficulties on the basis of assumption that some problems are likely to constitute more difficulties hoping that this, would help in enhancing teaching methodology. Thus, CA aims of reducing (if not totally eliminating) the perceived difficulties of learning the English possessive cases and expressing the Okpameri terms (Okpameri possessive cases) in English.

The claim of CA hypothesis therefore, is that the principle barrier to second language acquisition is the interference of the L_1 system with the L_2 system in that a scientific structural analysis of the two languages in question would yield a taxonomy of linguistic contrast between them which in turn would enable linguists and language teachers predict the problem area(s) a learner would encounter. Lado (1957:267) submits that where the language patterns are similar in the two languages contrasted, learners of the TL would find language relatively easy, because the "inputs" they are now exposed to are not new to them. On the other hand, where the language patterns of the TL and the MT differ, the learning of the TL would be relatively difficult.

The difficulties usually predicted by CA cannot be well handled without recourse to Error Analysis (EA), as EA deals with the actual errors committed by ESL learners. Therefore, it is not out of point to submit that CA and EA are related in that, no contrastivist has ever really predicted solely on the basis of the CA, but has to be relied on his or on teacher's knowledge of errors already committed. In summary, James (1980) describes CA as being prognostic while EA as being diagnostic. Hence, CA and EA are linguistic tools used to analyze L_1 learning problems. To this end, it is imperative to briefly examine some sociolinguistic terms like "bilingualism" and "interference" as they are the causal factors that sometimes constitute learning problem to ESL learners.

Data Base of Study

In generating Okpameri possessive cases data for analysis, two methods were adopted viz-a-viz oral interview and participatory observation. Secondary data were got from the works of Omolaiye (2013, 2015, 2016 and 2017). Twenty informants including male and female who are between the age bracket of 60 and 85 years and who are also native speakers of Okpameri language were interviewed. The researchers' intuitive knowledge in Okpameri language enhanced participatory observation in linguistic exchanges that involve the use of Okpameri possessive cases in a natural setting. Concerning the English data, the researchers made use of relevant literature obtained from library, relevant English grammar texts and internet sources.

Data Analysis

For the purpose of clarity of data presentation, possessive cases are classified under Pronoun, Adjective and Noun. Each of the possessive cases is further classified with respect to persons (1st person, 2nd person and 3rd person). English, being the target language is contrasted with Okpameri using samples of the data of the two languages. Ibillo variant of Okpameri language is used for analyzing Okpameri data. The analysis begins with possessive pronoun. The possessive cases of the two languages under study are underlined and this is followed immediately by "s" or "c" in bracket to indicate subject or complement in the sentences being contrasted. For the fact that Okpameri language has morphological distinction between subject and complement (in possessive pronoun and adjective), this study therefore identifies subject and complements of the two languages in the tables.

Possessive Pronoun

Possessive pronoun is sub-tabulated under 1st person, 2nd person and 3rd person. Each of them is considered in line with singular and plural numbers. The sub-tables under possessive pronoun are, therefore, presented thus:

Table 6: 1st Person

Singular Number		Plural Number	
English	**Okpameri**	**English**	**Okpameri**
Mine(s) is tall.	Umeh(s) ushẹ.	Ours is nice(s).	Emana(s) ishemi.
Mine(s) is complete.	Emeh(s) izho.	Ours(s) is good.	Umana(s) ushemi.
Mine(s) is good.	Omeh(s) Oshemi.	Ours(s) has come.	Omana(s) Ọzhi vbọ.
Mine(s) is correct.	Ameh(s) abozho.	Ours(s) is big.	Amana(s) akhọhi.
This is mine (c).	Unọh umẹnọh (c).	These are ours (c).	Enọh emananọh (c).
That is mine (c)	Umọh emenoh(c).	House is ours(c).	Ukpo umananoh (c).
This shirt is mine(c).	Eguo anọh Amenoh(c).	That chance is ours(c).	Asha mọh asha mananoh (c).
This child is mine (c).	Ọmọ nọh Omẹnọh (c).	That is ours (c).	Ọmọ Omananọh (c)

Table 7: 2nd Person

Singular Number		Plural Number	
English	**Okpameri**	**English**	**Okpameri**
Yours(s) is clean.	Uvbẹh(s) ufulẹma.	Yours(s) are nice.	Euvba(s) ishemi.
Yours(s) is okay.	Uvbueh(s) ubọzhọ.	Yours(s) is here.	Ouvba(s) Ọzhianọh.
Yours(s) are heavy.	Evbueh(s) ekhọ.	Yours(s) are dark.	Auvba(s) ichiwa.
Yours(s) are short.	Evbueh(s) ikheke.	Yours(s) is important.	Uuvha(s) kikpatachi.
This is yours(c).	Unọh uvbuenoh(c).	This is yours(c).	Enọh euvbanọh(c).
This bag is yours(s).	Akpo anọh Avbuenoh(c).	Those are yours(c).	Emoh euuvbananoh
These are yours(c).	Ẹnọh evbuẹnọh(c).	That chance is yours(c).	Asha mọh auvbanọh(s).
This child is yours(c).	Ọmọ nọh ọvbuẹnọh(c).	This tree is yours(c).	Asha usha nọh uuvbanahon(c).

Table 8: 3rd Person

Singular Number		Plural Number	
English	**Okpameri**	**English**	**Okpameri**
His(s) is far.	Uvhoh(s) l'uzhęli.	Theirs (s) is close.	Ewashǫ(s) ebai.
Hers(s) is there.	Vboh(s) l'iziasha.	Theirs(s) is good.	Uwashǫ(s) ushemi.
His(s) is full.	Avboh(s) l'amǫh.	Their(s) is here.	Uwashǫ(s) uzianǫh.
Hers(s) has come.	Ovboh(s) l'Ǫzhi.	Theirs (s) is fine.	Uwashǫ(s) ubǫzhǫ.
This is his(c).	Ǫnǫh Ovbonǫh(c).	The child is theirs (c).	Ǫmǫ weni aashonǫh(c).
That is hers(c).	Ęmǫh ęvbonǫh(c).	This is theirs (c).	Enǫh uwashonǫh (c).
That house is his(c).	Ukpo mǫh uvbonǫh(c).	That is theirs (c).	Umǫh uwashonǫh(s).
Water is hers(c).	Amę avbonǫh(c).	The land is theirs(c).	Ękę węni ashonǫh (c).

Contrastive Statement

The two languages (English and Okpameri) as revealed in the three tables above account for persons and numbers. While Okpameri morphologically distinguishes between subject and complement (both in singular and plural numbers) English does not have such distinction in its grammar. The English possessive pronouns are rather used as subjects or complements depending on the usage. For instance, the English possessive pronoun "mine" in table (6) is used as subjects and complements in the sentences contrasted. The same thing applies to "ours". It is also noted that English 1st person singular subject and singular complement – "mine" and "ours" respectively are used at different grammatical environment. However, this is not so in Okpameri language as Okpameri 1st person singular and plural possessive pronouns have more than one form. For instance, "umeh"/"emeh"/ "omeh"/"ameh" (mine) is used in line with the word that follows the possessive pronoun.

The English 2nd person possessive pronoun "yours" is used as singular and plural. This is not so in Okpameri grammar as Okpameri distinguishes between 2nd person singular and plural possessive pronouns in table (7). The language also distinguishes between its subject and complement, viz-a-vis its pronoun forms which are usually occasioned by the words that precede the pronouns. For instance, it is incorrect to render expression like "eòuvba oòshemi" (yours is good) instead of "cuvba [shemi" (yours is good). The initial letter "e" in euvba (yours) must co-occur with the initial "i" in ishemi (is good) to enhance grammaticality in Okpameri language.

As presented in table (8) above, English marks for possessive pronoun gender (his and hers). This is not so in Okpameri grammar as Okpameri resorts to using uni-gender for 3rd person singular possessive pronouns. While Okpameri distinguishes between subject and complement (possessive pronouns), as revealed under singular number in table (8), English resorts to using "his/her/its" as subject or

complement depending on the usage. The two languages account for plural possessive pronouns. However, while Okpameri distinguishes between subject and complement plural possessive pronouns, English resorts to using "theirs" as plural subject/object possessive pronouns. For instance, "easho" (theirs) and ewashonoh (theirs) are subject and complement plural possessive pronouns respectively in Okpameri language. The likely problem the Okpameri users of English would encounter is how to use the appropriate possessive gender pronouns in English expression as the Okpameri ESL learners may tend to say: "This is hers" (female) instead of "This is hers" since such distinction (his and hers) is absent in the grammar of Okpameri.

Possessive Adjective

Just as possessive pronouns account for persons (1st, 2nd and 3rd) and numbers (singular and plural), possessive adjectives are also used to reflect persons and numbers. Hence, the two languages under study (English and Okpameri) grammatically account for possessive adjectives as these are represented thus:

Table 9: 1st Person

Singular Number		Plural Number	
English	**Okpameri**	**English**	**Okpameri**
My(s) book is here.	Iweh emeh(s) izianoh.	Our(s) yam is here.	Oviẹ omana(s) ozianoh.
My(s) house is mighty.	Ukpo umeh(s) ukhohi.	Our(s) bus has gone.	Imoto emana(s) iwaha vbo.
My(s) cap is fine.	Ewhu ameh(s) ishemi.	Our(s) job is okay.	Akanya amona(s) ishemi.
My(s) husband is there.	Ọhọzi omeh(s) oziasha.	Our(s) family is large.	Ukpo umana(s) ukohi.
This is my(c) bag.	Enọh akpọ amenoh(c).	He is our(s) man.	Onyoh omananoh(c).
He is my(c) friend.	Ocha omenoho(c).	She is our(c) father.	Isha omananoh(c).
It is my(c) farm.	Umẹ l'umenoh(c).	It is our(c) land.	Eke emananoh(c).
It is my(c) riches	Ekhọhi emenoh(c).	It is our(c) tree.	Usha umananoh(c).

Table 10: 2nd Person

Singular Number		Plural Number	
English	Okpameri	English	Okpameri
Your(s) time has come. Your(s) water is ready. Your(s) leg is long. Your(s) child is crying. This is your(c) chair. It is your(c) biro. Ola is your(c) man. That is your(c) work.	Eshe evbueh(s) izhi vbo. Ame avbueh(s) ijeh vbo. Ukpati uvbueh(s) uzheli. Omo ovbueh(s) o ovie. Eta evbuenoh(c) keno. Ibairo evbuenoh (c). Ola ki ohozhoi ovbueh(c). Akanya avbueh(c) kamo.	Your(s) work is great. Your(s) food is ready. Your(s) own is clean. Your(s) books are here. Ayo is your (c) teacher. It is your(c) period. He is your(c) child. It is your(s) land.	Akanya auvba(s) akhohi Eminare auvba(s) eubieh vbo Uuvba(s) ufulema Iweh euvba(s) izi anoh Ayo ki itisha euvbanoh((c) Eshe uuvbanoh (c) Omo uuvbanoh(c) Eke euvbanoh(c)

Table 11: 3rd Person

Plural Number		Singular Number	
English	Okpameri	English	Okpameri
heir(s) job is good. heir(s) presentation is ad. heir(s) food is nice. heir(s) room is neat. hat is their(c) class. his is their(c) school. hese are their(c) shirts. hose are their(c) fathers.	Akanya asho(s) ishemi. Akoli asho(s) eshe.. Eminare asho(s) eshemi. Egukpo asho(s) efulema. Emoh ki ikilasi ashonoh(c). Enoh ki isikulu ashonoh(c). Enoh Iguo ashonoh(c). Ibohozi moh, isha ashonohi(c).	His(s) pen is here. Her(s) face looks nice. It(s) tail is long. Her(s) mouth is wide. Tola is her(c) friend. It is his(c) bag. Esther is her(c) mother. This is his(c) house.	Pen evboh(s) izianoh. Ilo evboh(s) li-ishemi. Ishu uvboh(s) uzheli. Unu uvboh(s) lu-uvboti Tola ko ocha ovboh(c). Akpo avbonoh(c). Esther ko olo ovboh(c). Ukpo noh Uvbonoh (c).

Contrastive Statement

The two languages have identified persons and numbers in their grammars. In the table above, 1st person singular possessive adjective in English and Okpameri are "my" and emeh/umeh/omeh while their plural numbers are "our" and emana/umana/omana/amana. Okpameri distinguishes between subject and complement possessive adjective. However, this is alien in English grammar. While English possessive pronoun and possessive adjective have different morphological form and different function, this is not so in Okpameri. Okpameri learners of English may be confronted with the use of possessive pronoun and possessive adjective. English language has possessive cases like hers, her and his, his as possessive pronoun and adjective feminine and masculine genders respectively. These gender distinctions are

alien to the grammar of Okpameri. Rather, Okpameri language speakers resorts to using uni-gender. Hence, Okpameri ESL learners may tend to render English expression like: "Her (male student) pen is here" instead of "His pen is here". Okpameri ESL learners may also be confronted with the appropriate use of "my" and "mine" as Okpameri language has the same morphological form for possessive pronoun and possessive adjective.

The study has also revealed pronoun and adjective persons of the two languages. While English has single morphological form of possessive pronoun and possessive adjective with respect to persons (1st, 2nd and 3rd), Okpameri has more than one morphological form. For instance, English has just only "mine" as 1st person singular possessive pronoun. This is not so in the grammar of Okpameri as Okpameri 1st person possessive singular pronoun could either be "omeh, "emeh", "umeh" or "ameh" (mine), depending on the noun that co-occurs with any of them. By implication, the appropriate use of the Okpameri possessive pronoun or adjective is solely determined by the grammatical environment such a possessive or adjective form is being used. The study has also revealed subject and object possessive pronoun and adjective cases. While Okpameri distinguishes between subject and object possessive pronoun and adjective, English uses same form as subject and object. In essence, English does not differentiate its subject from its object in terms of form. Hence, possessive pronoun-"mine" could be used as subject or object in a sentence depending on the grammatical environment it occurs. Sentences like: "mine is "happiness" and "happiness is mine" are a good examples. As in the case of Okpameri expression like "ovboh k'onoh" (hers is this) and "onoh ovbonoh" (this is hers) has revealed the use of "ovboh" (hers) as subject and "ovbonoh" (hers) as complement. This may not pose serious problem to Okpameri users of English since Okpameri is not the target language. In view of the CA hypothesis, the two languages under study have possessive cases (pronoun, adjective and noun). In essence, the two languages account for possessive pronouns, adjectives and nouns with emphasis on persons (1st, 2nd and 3rd) and numbers (singular and plural).

Possessive Nouns/Genitive Case

Nouns showing or indicating possession or ownership are referred to as possessive nouns or genitive cases. Possessive nouns only manifest in 3rd person (in singular and plural number) in English and Okpameri. Since the two languages do not reflect for subject and complement in 3rd person, it is therefore not necessary to indicate this on the table. The possessive nouns of the two languages under study are therefore presented thus:

Table 13: Possessive Nouns

English	Okpameri
Ola's goat	Izili Ola
Farmer's yam	Ovie Oyumeh
Girls' room	Egukpo ivbozha
People's house	Ukpo igbikhama
Segun's father's house	Ukpo Isha Segun
Brother's wife	Ozha orio
Children's day	Ohanako ivbia
The man's child	Omo ohozio oeni

Contrastive Statement

In the table above, the two languages (English and Okpameri) account for possessive noun. The major difference between English and Okpameri genitive cases as revealed in the table above is the area of morphological realization. While English genitive case is morphologically marked, Okpameri words are not inflected for possessive case. Also, while English genitive cases are pre-modifiers, Okpameri nouns, indicating possession function as post-modifiers. The non-inflection (morpheme's') to indicate genitive case in Okpameri language may pose problem to the Okpameri ESL learners as they may render expressions like "my father's house", "Tunji's bag" "peoples' bank" as "my father house", "Tunji bag", "people bank" respectively. The Okpameri ESL learners may also find it difficult to differentiate between a word performing the function of adjective and a word functioning as genitive case. Thus, Okpameri ESL learners may likely find it difficult to differentiate between the meaning of "lady bicycle" from lady's bicycle since Okpameri language does not differentiate this in its grammatical structure.

Findings and Discussions

This study has revealed areas of similarities and differences of the two languages (English and Okpameri). The similarities of the two languages have revealed grammar universality. The study has revealed English and Okpameri possessive cases. However, the grammatical structure of the two languages differs. The lexis and of course, possessive cases of every language is culture-bound. This is why Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (1921) submits that each language creates its own world view and therefore its own meaning. Thus, culture plays significant roles in language structure. The study has also revealed the likely problem Okpameri learners of English will encounter in the course of using the word "my" because, Okpameri language has the

same morphological form used as possessive pronoun as well as possessive adjective. For instance, the Okpameri possessive subject pronouns "ameh" (mine) is also used as possessive adjective as revealed in tables (7) and (10). The likely problem Okpameri ESL learners may encounter is the in appropriate use of "mine" and "my". Okpameri ESL learners may therefore erroneously render expression like "Mine is there" as "My is there".

One noticeable difference between the two languages contrasted is the Adjectival Phrase Structure. While the possessive adjective comes first before the noun in English, the possessive adjective in Okpameri language is followed by the noun it qualifies. The difference in structure of the two languages could be traced to culture because the lexis or grammar of every language is culture-bound. This is why, Whorf-Hypothesis (1921) submits that each language creates its own world and therefore its own meaning. Thus, culture plays significant roles in language structure. The two languages have revealed grammar universality. However, possesses cases of the two languages differ in terms of gender cases. For instance, while genitive case is morphologically marked in English, this is not so in Okpameri. Okpameri learners of English may be confronted with the appropriate use of gender possessive pronoun or adjective. The study therefore suggests that language teachers, particularly, the English experts should concentrate more on the areas of differences in the teaching and learning of the English possessive cases.

Implications for Pedagogy

The comparative study of English and Okpameri possessive cases has some implications for the teaching and learning of English as a second language. In view of the fact that languages do come in contact, the teaching and learning of the second language (English) should be given consideration. Hence, the identified implications are highlighted below: Okpameri ESL learners should be exposed to the grammar of the two languages under study because the grammatical structure or features of any language is usually characterized by the culture of the language. In view of the above, learners should be exposed to the culture of the two languages because the lexical items or elements of a particular language are regarded as carriers of the culture that produces the language. In the same manner, the literature component of English and Okpameri language teaching programmes should be emphasized as literature is the practical use of language. Hence, language teachers should be encouraged to also teach the aspect of literature in our school system.

The teaching of cases and particularly, "possessive cases" should be handled using practical and systematic approach. In essence, language experts should be acquainted with full knowledge of possessive cases (pronoun, adjective and noun) of the two languages as this will enable teaching and learning should be more demonstrative, effective and productive. In order to enhance maximum efficiency and effectiveness in teaching the possessive cases, standard, adequate, and relevant instructional materials as well as conducive environment for learning be provided for easy accessibility. English language curriculum of every level of education should be made dynamic as this will enable language teachers develop new approaches in teaching of possessive cases. On a final note, the study has revealed variations in the way different language communities make us of their language to engage with the world in distinctive manner. This is evident in this study. Possessive cases are therefore seen as being culture-bound and a good understanding of them demands familiarity with the cultures that produce them. In view of the above, possessive cases of the languages should be handled by language experts in the context of ESL as this will assist learners in studying the possessive cases of the two languages.

Conclusion

Contrastive analysts usually embark on comparing two languages (particularly, the indigenous and the foreign or target languages) in order to identify area(s) of differences and predict the likely problem the second language learners may be confronted with, hence provides the methods or approaches for language teaching. Features of the language structure revealed in comparative study may reveal area of modifications in the school curriculum, and this will definitely be further modified in the light of future experiences as it may enhance a finer grading of learners' learning problem(s). This study has therefore revealed the variations in the structure and usage of possessive cases of the two languages contrasted. These variations have reflected the culturally important features of how possessive cases are used to enhance grammaticality. Thus, acknowledgement of universal grammatical features is internal to the culture in which it operates and its usage has reflected on those variations that are important to its culture.

This study has also revealed the variations in the way different languages communities are caused by their languages to engage with the world in the distinctive perceptive manner. For instance, while English has possessive gender pronoun and adjective, (hers, his and her, his respectively), Okpameri does not have. Since possessive cases

are more culture-bound and a good understanding of possessive cases demands familiarity with the culture that produces them, language teachers are therefore advised to come up with practical demonstration of these possessive cases in the second language being learnt. Hence, dynamism and innovativeness on the part of the language experts are called for in order to make use of adequate teaching and learning materials. By so doing, the perceived difficulties of learning the English possessive cases and expressing the Okpameri possessive cases in English will be minimized.

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