
A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Traditional Marriage Terms in Awgbu-Igbo

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Received: 19 March 2024

Accepted: 06 June 2024

Published: 20 July 2024

Abstract: *This research is a sociolinguistic analysis of traditional marriage terms in Awgbu, an Igbo-speaking community in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study, which adopts a qualitative research design, aims to gain insights into the social, cultural and linguistic changes in Awgbu-Igbo regarding traditional marriage terms. For data collection, indigenous Awgbu older men and women from the five villages in Awgbu who are knowledgeable in traditional marriage practices of Awgbu were interviewed using traditional marriage list of Awgbu. Traditional marriage terms, consisting of 40 terms, were collected from their responses. The theoretical framework for data analysis is J.R. Firth's (1957) and Fillmore (1984) Lexical Semantics Theory. The findings from this research show that traditional marriage terms have socio-cultural significance in Awgbu. These terms have also changed due to globalisation, modernisation, and Christianity. Such changes involve the eradication of the *ìgbānmíí* ceremony and *inēnē únò* rites due to globalisation. Also, the use of *òbènè* (calabash), *ìtòtù* (ceramic pot) and *ìkómíí/mmányá* (traditional cups) are now replaced with gallons, plastic and breakable cups. Likewise, the practice of *égwùtìrìmmónwú* which involves dance and music performance is no longer feasible, signaling the loss of an exciting Awgbu culture.*

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Marriage Terms, Traditional Marriage, Awgbu Community, Igbo.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics studies the relationship between language and society (Johansson 2006). It examines how language varies across social groups, reflects social identities, and shapes



social interactions. It also studies how language is used to express cultural inclination and language's roles in society. Language and culture, as significant sociolinguistic components, cannot be taken away from society (Yule, 1957). Edwards (2013), therefore, defines sociolinguistics as “the study of the relationships between language and society, and how language is used to construct and maintain social identities, and the social functions that language fulfils.”

Analysing traditional marriage terms, the focus of this discussion, provides insights into a community's social, cultural and linguistic changes. This research focuses on sociolinguistic aspects of traditional marriage terms in Awgbu-Igbo. Labels (2008) identifies three types of marriage: traditional, court, and white. White marriage is done in churches (Christians) and mosques (Muslims). Court marriage is done under the law of the State. Traditional marriage, the commonest in Nigeria, is performed within the confines of the tradition of the communities involved.

Awgbu is in Orumba North Local Government Area, Anambra State, Southeast Nigeria. Awgbu belongs to Inland West Igbo dialect cluster (Ikekeonwu, 1987). Its population in 2006 was 120,000. It shares boundaries at the west with Agulū and Mbaukwu; to the east with Ndikelionwu, Omoghō, and Awa; in the north with Umawulu and Amaetiti; and in the south with Amaokpala and Nanka. Awgbu indigenes are descendants of Ezekanunu who had six sons from five wives. Traditionally, inheritances were shared according to mothers; based on this, Awgbu has five villages: Agbiligba, Enugwu-Nanka, Ifite, Amako, Umudala, Ubaha, and Eti-Nanka.

This research sociolinguistically analyses traditional marriage terms in Awgbu-Igbo. It investigates the socio-cultural significance of these terms, their relationship with Awgbu culture, changes/evolution in their use over time, and language's role in fostering cultural identity/heritage.

2. RELATED WORKS

In traditional marriage ceremonies, language plays a crucial role in expressing commitments, values, and identity. For Umezinwa (2018), Igba-Nkwu marriage ceremony is the traditional marriage for the South-Eastern Nigerians. It involves the union of two parents, two extended families and two villages. The paper examines language use and its socio-cultural effects among Igbo-speaking Nigerians. The findings were that varieties exist in Igba-Nkwu ceremony, and these varieties influence linguistic and paralinguistic choices which, when uttered and performed, solidify and establish the marriage union.

Solomon-Etefia (2016) studies the linguistic imports of the traditional marriage event Iku Aka N'uzo (Knocking-on-the-Door) among the Awgbu-Igbo. The pragma-semiotic study shows that the ceremony is performed in historically-driven circumstances, and is defined by practices of questioning, denials, reports, and responses that portray cultural, comedic, and pretentious themes. According to the study, the symbols, like kolanuts, palm-wine, sheep, and the word 'hunger', are significant; communication is of importance in the event. Similarly, Orji and Muogbo's (2018) research is on documentation of Igbo traditional marriage terminology. The paper documents and describes thirty terms.



Study by Friday-Otun and Nwosu (2015) note that greetings are essential for contacts and interactions. The study deploys interactional sociolinguistic theory in explaining that sociolinguistic variables accounting for greetings in Igbo, Yoruba and Nigerian English - age (respect), time, number of persons being greeted, occasions, and contexts - determine the choice, nature, and function of greetings in varying degrees.

From the above review, it is evident that there are limited studies on the sociolinguistic analysis of traditional marriage terms in Awgbu-Igbo. This study, therefore, contributes to the existing body of knowledge in sociolinguistics, and studies on traditional marriage terms in Igbo land.

Theoretical Framework

The adopted theory for the study is Lexical Semantics by Firth (1957) and Fillmore (1984). Lexical semantics deals with word meanings and relationships. J.R. Firth's enormous contribution is on collocations and the contexts in which words are used. Charles J. Fillmore's is on Frame Semantics, and Case Grammar Theory. Their ideas have had a lasting impact on the study of meaning and how words are used within specific linguistic and cognitive contexts/frames. These linguists have provided insights into how words acquire meaning and interact in contexts.

Lexical semantics is guided by foundational principles that collectively enhance the understanding of word meanings. Conceptual structure ventures into the mental representation of word meanings, unveiling the underlying structures of associated concepts. Fillmore's Frame Semantics (1984) adds another layer by suggesting that words are best understood within the conceptual frames or scenarios they evoke.

Lexical decomposition breaks down complex word meanings into simpler components, enabling a more detailed analysis. Lexical semantics can play a significant role in analysing traditional marriage terms by helping us understand the nuances of the term in various contexts, hence its adoption as the theoretical framework for this study.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a qualitative research design. Data, which are audio recorded, are gathered through interviews and focus group discussions with some members of Awgbu community. The interviews provide insights into traditional marriage terms' cultural meanings and social dynamics. The list of items for traditional marriage in Awgbu is used for data collection. Structured questions for eliciting more information/data from the consultants on traditional marriage terms in Awgbu are also used. The consultants, got through stratified sampling technique, has 10 participants (6 males and 4 females), with 2 consultants from each of the 5 Awgbu villages. They comprise elders, community leaders, and individuals with knowledge and experience in traditional marriage practices. Data items are tone-marked using the convention that marks all three distinctive tones in Igbo: high tone with acute accent [´], low tone with grave accent [˘], and downstep tone with macron [¯].

Structured questions that aid data collection on traditional marriage terms in Awgbu are used to elicit information from the correspondents. Questions like: Are you familiar with traditional marriage terms in Awgbu? If yes, can you provide examples of traditional

marriage terms or phrases used in Awgbu ceremonies? How often are traditional marriage terms used in Awgbu ceremonies today? What is the significance of these terms in Awgbu culture? Have you noticed any variations or changes in the usage of traditional marriage terms over the years? If yes, please describe them. Is there anything else you would like to share about traditional marriage terms in Awgbu? These questions that speak to the study guide the researchers in eliciting information from the respondents.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Preamble

The list of traditional marriage terms presented for analysis shows the stages, people, activities, monetary commitments, gifts, and items used during traditional marriage ceremony in Awgbu. It contains a number of nominal and verbal elements. The terms can, therefore, be classified into nominal and verbal categories. Nominal category has 26 items: ónyémbé, ójī, ánwúrù, égóízāòkù, éḡḡòḡnínánídí, éwúúmùnnà, éḡwùitìrìmmònwú, ísíanwúrù, ònénmūrū ònwá, ònámūrū ònwá, úmūādá, úmùnnà, úmùàḡbòḡhòbìà, úmùòkóròbìà, ànùànú, òkúkò/ònnékwú, ákánchà, ànàrà, òḡwò, jí, òmányáòkū, òkwùénū, òmányá ná-ábà n'ányá, òmányá àdìḡhí ábà n'ányá, éḡóísínwáànyì, íḡḡòfó. The nominal category is further sub-divided into two: terms for people, and terms for items. Terms for people are ónyémbé, ònénmūrū ònwá, ònámūrū ònwá, úmūādá, úmùnnà, úmùàḡbòḡhòbìà, úmùòkóròbìà, ànùànú. Terms for items are ójī, ánwúrù, égóízāòkù, éḡḡòḡnínánídí, éwúúmùnnà, éḡwùitìrìmmònwú, ísíanwúrù, òkúkò/ònnékwú, ákánchà, ànàrà, òḡwò, jí, òmányáòkū, òkwùénū, òmányá ná-ábà n'ányá, òmányá àdìḡhí ábà n'ányá, éḡóísínwáànyì, íḡḡòfó.

Terms in verbal category are íchònwáànyì, òkūáká, òtūḡḡò, òmēḡḡò, òtáíyíḡḡò/òfòḡḡnìḡwùḡwù, òḡèbè/òtēūhíé, òzòàkpà, òḡbāmmí/òḡbāmmányá, òḡbānyēmmányá, òjūàsè, ònénéùlò, òbūnyēmmányá, òḡbūéwúúmùnnà, òsìjìúmùnnà.

4.2 Socio-Cultural Significance of the Terms

As Firth (1957) and Fillmore (1984) posit, lexical semantics is essential for understanding the meaning and significance of words and phrases. Their approach to lexical semantics, which focuses on the meaning of words in context, is especially relevant for analysing the socio-cultural significance of traditional marriage terms in Awgbu-Igbo.

Terms for Activities before Traditional Marriage

Here, we present and analyse six terms used in preparation for traditional marriage ceremonies. Using the data from various interviewees on pre-traditional marriage terms in Awgbu, items 1, íchònwáànyì, and 2, òjūàsè, are regarded as the first steps before traditional marriage in Awgbu. In 1, a man mature enough for marriage looks for and finds a female partner. Traditionally, this can be done by either the man or the man's family. In 2, both families make inquiries about each other, and about the man or woman. For instance, the man enquires about the lady's family to know if the lady is from a good family which has no history of suicide, murder, bad diseases like madness, premature death, leprosy, and epilepsy; also, enquiries are made about the lady's past and present lifestyle. Such enquiries are also made by the lady and her family. Item 3, òkūáká, involves the step to be taken by the man,

accompanied by a friend or relative, and, possibly, the middleman. It is at this stage that the families of the intending couple complete enquiries about their families.

Item 4, *ínénéúìò*, ‘observing the (new) home/family’, is a process whereby the bride-to-be stays with the groom’s family to know about the family. This is done when the lady has accepted the proposal from the man. The lady is meant to stay with the family for four days (*ótù ízù*) or a bit more and monitor the family to know if she can cope in the family or not. After four days, if she accepts the family, then she would accept and use the gifts given to her by the groom-to-be, father-in-law, mother-in-law, co-wives, and every member of the family. However, if she detests the family, she would keep the gifts because her people would return them to the man through the middleman. During the *ínénéúìò* period, there is no intercourse between the intending couple, and the lady is expected to still be pure (a virgin) till the bride price is paid.

Item 5, *ísòèbè/ítēūhíé*, is a traditional ceremony and a kind of beauty pageant, where all the mature ladies of the community are given special treatment or set apart for enjoyment. While on this, they are well fed with enough fish, meat, and balanced diet and given much room for relaxation. Their bodies are well taken care of and painted with *úfíó* (camwood). After that, they go to the village market to showcase themselves before the community men searching for wives. This practice ensures that the skin of the already engaged ladies glows on the day of their traditional marriage. Item 6, *ígbānmíí* ‘carrying/gathering of drinks together’, is a traditional practice that mandates all the men from the bride’s kindred to give the family kegs of palm-wine a day before the traditional marriage ceremony. This palm-wine is consumed by everyone who comes for the traditional marriage, and it is always sufficient because the men bring it in large quantities, as palm-wine is among the resources Awgbu is blessed with.

Terms for People during Traditional Marriage

Seven terms depicting the people given gifts in Awgbu traditional marriage are presented and analysed. Item 1, *ínémūrū ínwá*, denotes the mother of the bride. If the biological mother of the bride is no more, the term could be used for the woman playing the mother role or the bride’s sister, especially the first daughter (*àdānnē*). Item 2, *ínāmūrú ínwá*, means the biological father of the bride, or the man playing the father role in her life, such as the uncle or the bride’s brother, especially the first son (*díókpará*). Item 3, *úmūādá*, represents the daughters of the kindred that are married. They are presented with a gift in appreciation for their good behaviour which the bride emulates. Item 4, *úmùnnà*, comprises all the men of the kindred, while Item 5, *úmùàgbóghòbìà*, and Item 6, *úmùòkóróbìà*, refer to all unmarried females and males of the kindred respectively, from 12 years. The girls are compensated for their companion that would leave them while the boys receive the gift for the protection they accorded their sister against danger and bad boys.

Item 7, *ónyémbé*, is the middleman, the intermediary between the two families. He is involved in every stage of the marriage. He functions after the ceremony in advising the couple and settling their misunderstandings. If the couple later desires a divorce, the bride price is returned through him. For these responsibilities, the middleman receives the neck of the goat/cow, yam, tobacco, and some kolanuts used for the traditional marriage. Item 8, *ànùànù*, refers to all the women married into the bride’s kindred. They receive their gift as well.



Terms for Monetary Commitments during Traditional Marriage

We present four terms showing the socio-cultural significance of the monetary commitments made by the groom during the traditional marriage ceremony in Awgbu. Item 1, *égoísínwáànyì*, is the money paid as bride price to the father-in-law or father-figure of the bride. The payment is preceded by negotiations and followed by prayers. This is the most significant monetary commitment made during the traditional marriage ceremony, as without it, the marriage is not formalised.

Item 2, *égoízāòkù*, is the money given to the mother of the bride in appreciation for her nurturing her daughter to the age of marriage. Item 3, *égoízòàkpà*, the money given to the ladies from the bride's clan, is to compensate for taking one of them away from them. Item 4, *égoòñínáńdí*, is a custom whereby the groom gives the bride's mother some money, since they are related by marriage, and she is expected to provide hospitality for his family when they visit, though his family is expected to do same for the bride's family. The monetary gift ensures that both families can dine and wine together.

Terms for Activities during Traditional Marriage

Here, we discuss the traditional marriage terms that capture activities carried out during traditional marriage. Item 1, *ítùńgò* 'bride price negotiation', is performed by 10 elderly men, 5 from the groom's side and 5 from the bride's side. First, they pray with kolanut, break and eat it. Then, the bride's father or her father-figure gives her a drink in a cup to show them her would-be husband. When she takes the drink from her father, it signifies her acceptance of the man to be her husband. She sips it and gives it to her man, who drinks it. Both, holding their hands, return the cup, together with money from her husband. They kneel for blessings from her father, after which the bride leaves immediately. When she must have left, they proceed to negotiate the amount to be paid as bride price. Traditionally, this negotiation is done using sticks or goat's droppings.

The man pays the negotiated amount, as Awgbu people believe that '*mbe adìghì akò be ogo*', meaning that the lady's price can never be fully paid. For instance, if the father-in-law says that the daughter's bride price is ₦20,000 (twenty thousand naira), they can negotiate and agree on ₦15,000 (fifteen thousand naira), and that is what the groom pays. Item 2, *ímēégò*, involves payment of the agreed amount to the bride's father as bride price. Some fathers give some money back to their in-laws as a gesture of love. The bride's status contributes significantly in determining the bride price. For instance, the bride price of a university graduate is higher than that of a Senior Secondary Certificate holder.

Item 3, *ítáíyíógò/òfòdìńgwùgwù*, oath-taking during the traditional marriage, involves the union of a few persons from both sides (bride/groom). They take an oath that they would expose every evil plan by anyone against the in-law. This is done using kolanut, which is shared afterwards and eaten by all the participants in the oat-taking. It is believed that should anyone go contrary to this covenant, evil would befall such person. Item 4, *ízòàkpà*, 'bag dragging' is done by the *úmāádá*, married ladies of the bride's clan. During *ízòàkpà*, they stop their sister's bag from being taken away by her husband's people, feigning that they are terribly grieved that their beloved sister is leaving them. In this show of love and grief, their in-law consoles them with money.

Item 5, *ìgbānyēmńmánya*, involves the bride's father giving her a drink, *ńkwúénū* 'up-wine', that she and her husband would drink together as a public testimony of their togetherness. This drink signifies his approval of the union. Item 6, *ìbūnyēmńmánya*, is when the bride shows the invitees the man she has agreed to spend the rest of her life with. She does this by kneeling before him to give him the drink, and the groom reciprocates by drinking it and putting some cash inside the cup. Both then go to the bride's father with the cup and kneel before him for his blessings. Item 7, *ìgōófó*, is the prayers and good wishes the bride's father makes for her daughter and son-in-law. He prays for them and blesses their union before everyone in the traditional marriage ceremony.

Terms for Items Used During Traditional Marriage

We analyse the terms for the 13 items used for traditional marriage. Item 1, *ójí* 'kolanut', is among the most essential items. It is used by the bride's family to welcome their in-law. It is also used in *ìgōófó*, that is, offering prayers to *Chí-Úkwú* 'the Almighty God' and the other gods of the land in thanksgiving for preserving their daughter and son to the age of marriage and pray to them to bless, preserve and protect them in their married life. Items 2 and 4, *ánwúrù/ùtábà* '(ground) tobacco' and *ísíānwúrù* 'heads of tobacco', respectively, are shared into two; one for the bride's father and the other for his *ùmùnnà* - the men of his kindred. They can either consume it as snuff or cigarette or sell it to make money. Item 3, *éwúùmùnnà*, is the goat given to the kindred by their in-law. They cook it with yams the day after the ceremony and enjoy the delicacy with left over palm-wine and *ńmányaókū* 'hot drink' (Item 12), in thanksgiving to God for the successful marriage ceremony of their daughter.

Items 5 and 6 are '*ńmánya ná-ábà n'anya*' and '*ńmánya ādighí ábà n'anya*', the alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks respectively. These drinks are shared among the *ùmùnnà* - the men of his kindred; *ńnémūrū ńwá* - the bride's mother; *ńnāmūrū ńwá* - the bride's father; *ùmùàgbòghòbìà* - unmarried girls/ladies from the bride's kindred; and *ùmùòkóròbìà* - boys/unmarried men from the bride's kindred. Alcoholic drinks are consumed mainly by men, while most women prefer non-alcoholic drinks. Some people of certain Christian denomination give non-alcoholic drinks to everyone, regardless of gender, though this action might be rebuffed by the *ùmùnnà* (the men of his kindred). Item 7, *òkúkò/ńnékwú*, comprises cock given to *ùmùòkóròbìà* (boys/unmarried men from the bride's kindred) to appreciate them for the protection they gave to the bride, their sister, prior to her marriage. A cock is also given to the boys that play the masquerade music, *égwùtìrìmmónwú*. The hen signifies fertility. Unlike the cocks, which are used in preparing delicious dishes after the marriage ceremony, the hen is taken to the bride's new home and preserved to produce chicks.

Item 8, *ákánchà* 'bar soap', is one of the gifts *ùmūādá* and *ànùànú* receive from their in-law. It is given to them to show appreciation for them for bathing and caring for the girl child, the bride, at her tender age. Its significance in Awgbu tradition is for cleanliness, beautification and purification. Item 9, *ánàrà* 'garden egg', signifies acceptance and can be used for prayer. Item 10, *ńgwò* 'palm wine', usually presented in 4-gallon jars, signifies prosperity and long-lasting progress in life.

Yam 'jí', Item 11, is presented by the groom. The many tubers of yam are shared into two; one for the bride's father and one for the men of the kindred (úmùnnà). The úmùnnà cook theirs with the goat given to them. In Awgbu traditional marriage, only 2 gallons of ñkwùénū 'up-wine', item 13, are required. One gallon is meant for the father of the bride, while the other is a special drink reserved for use in two very important events in the ceremony: during bride price negotiation, and at the event when the bride's father gives a cup of it to his daughter for her to show the people whom her husband is. The showing of the groom by the bride climaxes the ceremony.

Terms for Post Traditional Marriage Activities

Three terms for the activities done after the traditional marriage ceremony are discussed here. Item 1, égwùtìrìmmónwù, refers to when all the young male children from the bride's clan go to their in-law's house with their masquerade music the evening after all the rites of the traditional marriage have been completed. One of their songs: 'òyòóyò nwá ímā, í tìrì m̀m̀m̀m̀wù' (the village beauty, you have put on masquerade's attire), depicts getting married as assuming a new status. After the music and dances, their in-law gives them yam and cock which they cook and eat that night. Items 2, ígbūéwúúm̀m̀m̀nà, and 3, ís̀j̀j̀m̀m̀nà, involve the bride's kindred killing their goat, and cooking their yams respectively. The goat's neck belongs to the middleman.

4.3 Changes in Traditional Marriage Terms

As culture evolves, linguistic expressions related to marriage adopt new social norms, leading to changes in the use and meaning of marriage terms in Awgbu. Eziaku and Ilechukwu (2016) have noted that Christianity, urbanization, and globalisation exert both positive and negative impacts on traditional marriage practices in Igbo culture. The areas impacted include:

Ígbānm̀j̀j̀ or Ígbānm̀m̀nyá: Ígbānm̀j̀j̀ ceremony in Awgbu, involving bringing many kegs of palm-wine during traditional marriage, has been eradicated due to the inability of the people to drink much of the palm-wine - ñkwùénū and ñgwò - leading to waste. The community has resorted to mineral, malt, stout, and beer. This is to ensure that excess drinks are not wasted. One jar of palm-wine is equivalent to two cartons of Malta Guinness brand of malt drink. This substitution profits the family. Inasmuch as avoiding waste is commendable, the truth remains that palm-wine and up-wine are healthier drinks. In some families that belong to certain Christian denomination, palm-wine and up-wine, which were the basic drinks in traditional marriage ceremony in the olden days, are now substituted with non-alcoholic drinks. This is as a result of Christianity.

List: In the olden days, lists were not used during traditional marriage ceremonies. However, urbanization has brought the adoption of a modern way as seen in urban areas. List is now common in Igbo, including Awgbu. It helps the groom to plan himself, as he already knows all the requirements for the ceremony.

Ínēnē ́nò: Ínēnē ́nò gives the bride an opportunity to know more about the husband-to-be and his family. It is no longer in practice, as many young people get married without going to the village to perform the necessary rites. Some even get pregnant before marriage. This is not an Awgbu culture, but an instance of the influence of globalisation, where young people emulate Western cultures. The ill effect of jettisoning this noble practice is more incidents of divorce.

Kolanuts: Kolanuts, ójĩ, were used to pray to Chí-Úkwú ‘the Almighty God’ and the ancestors, ́ndĩchìè. The brides’ fathers thank God and their forefathers and pray for the couple. Today in few of certain Christian denomination, kolanuts are no longer used for prayers due to the influence of Christianity. To them, praying through ́ndĩchìè is idolatry.

Folk Music: Urbanization, Christianity, globalisation and modernity have driven away the traditional folk music used during traditional marriage in Awgbu. Nowadays, recorded music and live bands have taken over. This way, Igbo culture is fast losing its folk music.

Palm-wine Containers and Cups: Òbènè (calabash), and itóòtù (ceramic pot), traditional palm-wine containers, are no longer in use. Gallons have replaced them, to the detriment of the health of the users. Also, traditional palm-wine cups (íkómmíí/́m̀m̀nyá) are now substituted with plastic cups. This spells the imminent loss of these valuable materials in Igbo culture.

Empathy: Performing a traditional marriage puts financial burden on the groom. Awgbu community realises this and sets a practice in motion where every man in the groom’s kindred empathises with him by bringing jars of palm-wine to be taken to the bride’s family. Although Christianity supports gestures of love, urbanization, globalisation and modernity have given it a death blow in Awgbu.

Fanfare: The common practice today is for the bride to make fanfare of showing the people her husband while dancing around with a cup of palm-wine. This modern introduction makes the ceremony more interesting and thought-provoking.

Égwùtìrìmmónwù: In the olden days, the boys from the bride’s family visit their in-law with dance and music after the traditional marriage, to congratulate him. This is égwùtìrìmmónwù. As many ladies get married to men from different communities, states, and tribes, and mounting insecurity, égwùtìrìmmónwù is no longer feasible; yet signaling the loss of another interesting aspect of the culture of the Awgbu people.

5. CONCLUSION

It is observed that the traditional marriage terms in Awgbu-Igbo have socio-cultural implications, and some of these terms are changing as a result of factors like urbanization, Christianity, globalization, and modernity. This shows that language is not static, but rather constantly evolving and changing in response to social and cultural influences. Using lexical



semantics for data analysis, we are able to see how language is used in the context of Awgbu-Igbo traditional marriage, and how it reflects and shapes the Awgbu culture and identity. This study creates a gap in research. Further investigations could focus on the cultural contexts of Awgbu-Igbo, examining its traditions, and values to better understand how they shape the use of traditional marriage terms. Research could also look at how language contact and borrowing have influenced traditional marriage terms in Awgbu-Igbo in order to help us understand how the Awgbu-Igbo language variety has been shaped by its interactions with other dialects, languages and cultures. Research could also consider a documentation of traditional marriage terms in Awgbu.

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