

*ARIDON (Nos. 2 & 3, 2022, 273 –287)*

## **SYNTHESIZING URHOB0 DIALECTS FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUIVALENT TRANSLATION**

**Agbogun Matthew Adigu**

**and**

**Eyankuaire Moses Darah**

### **Abstract**

This paper examines the speech forms in Urhobo, with the aim of identifying the different dialects in the language. It probes the effects of plentitude dialects in Translation Studies and Translation Practices. The study takes as a starting point the different speech forms spoken in each Urhobo kingdom and local government area. This is based on existing assumptions that each kingdom in Urhobo speaks a distinct dialect. Data for the study were elicited through primary and secondary methods as well as participant-observation. The data were examined using theory of social dialect variation (Kroch, 1978) and persistence theory (Kortmann, 2006). The paper observes that there are multiple dialects in Urhobo. This constitutes a problem in teaching and learning the language. This problem also culminates in the translator's pursuit of semantic equivalence observable in the existing literature. The study therefore argues in support of language documentation and a consensus dialect to protect the lects from endangerment.

**Key words:** Dialect, Documentation, Endangerment, Orthography, Translation Studies.

### **1. Introduction**

Historical and anthropological research reveal that Urhobo people are culturally and linguistically related to the Bini (Benin), Esan , Ora and other Edo groups. In fact, most oral traditions hold that the Urhobo people migrated from Edo territory. Accounting for the reason of their migration from Benin kingdom, Ojaide (2007) asserts that the tyranny of Bini kings and the struggle for land in time past constitute some of the major causes why the people moved southward about the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Cf Otite, 2011). The Urhobo people are united, not only by ties of ethnicity and culture but also other salient geographical features of the territory which they occupy as their homeland (Aweto & Igben, 2003, Jike & Ogege (2007).

According to Onokerhoraye (1980), Urhobo nation occupies a land space of about 2,000 square miles and lies roughly within latitude 6<sup>0</sup> and 5<sup>0</sup> North of the equatorial and longitude 5<sup>0</sup>, 40 and 6<sup>0</sup> 25 East of the Greenwich Meridian. It is surrounded on the South by the Ijaw, Itsekiri to the

Southwest, the Isoko to the East, the Ukwani to the Northeast and the Edo (the Binis) to the North (Ukere, 1991). Presently, the Urhobo people constitute one of the major ethnic nationalities found predominantly in Delta State, Nigeria and partly in Bayelsa State (Mowarin, 2007) and Ondo State (Otite, 1979). The Urhobo groups in Delta State spread across ten Local Government Areas. These are Ethiope-East, Ethiope-West, Okpe, Sapele, Udu, Ughelli North, Ughelli South, Uvwie, parts of Warri South and Patani. As noted by Darah (2014) however, linguists recognize Okpe and Uvwie as distinct languages within the Urhobo nation, a situation which suggests that dialects in Urhobo may not always correspond to various sub-cultural segments or kingdoms/clans. The Urhobo people constitute the fifth largest ethnic group in Nigeria after Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo and Izon (Ijaw) (Otite, 1980 and Mowarin, 2007).

The term “Urhobo” refers to the language, culture and people of Urhoboland. As a language, it belongs to the Edoid cluster of the Kwa group of the Niger-Congo family of African languages (Darah, 2014). It is a tone language, dynamic in nature and serves as a repository of the cultural norms, belief system and practices of the people. On the exact number of dialects spoken in Urhoboland Aziza (2007), notes that Urhobo has fifteen dialects, most of which are highly mutually intelligible. However, both Agbarho and Agbon dialects may not be significantly different from each other, they are preferred as the written dialects in Urhobo literature. However, instances of authors adopting different dialects in their writings may be noted in the literature. For instance, in Biakolo’s *Wonderful Child* (Biakolo, 2008), words like *agware*, *mi yerawa* (assembly, I salute you), *ikobi* (farm), *udo* (mortar), etc which are terms in the author’s dialect of Ughievwen can be found, as against the standard *egware*, *mi yerowa*, *eghwa* and *urho* respectively. Thus, author’s preference are often found in many writings; a situation which requires standardization if the development of the language must be achieved.

The work is organized into five sections. Section one introduces the discourse; Section two presents definitions of some of the operational words on which the discourse revolves; Section three presents a discussion of the research methodology adopted in the collection and analysis of the data; Section four focuses on data presentation; while Section five presents the findings of the study as well as concluding note and recommendations.

## **2.0 Definition of Terms**

This section draws attention to explicating language as an umbrella term of the research before proceeding to define other operational terms like dialect, translation and equivalence in translation studies.

## 2.1 Language and Dialects

Language is a universal phenomenon used on daily basis for conveying verbal and written emotions yet linguists have not come to terms on an acceptable definition. It is pertinent to undermine the preconceived idea that everybody already knows the meaning of language and thus there is no need defining it. There is an obvious need for it but every definition put in place reflects the profession of the authority defining it. However, one definition generally accepted across professions is that proposed by *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary* (1980), in which language is defined as:

...a variety of speech or words and idioms, esp. that of a nation: mode of expression: Diction or manner of expressing thought or feeling: an artificial system of signs and symbols, with rules for forming intelligible communications, for use in e.g. a computer: a national branch of one of the religious and military orders, e.g. the hospitallers.

This excerpt points to the various media through which language is expressed and the forms in which messages are transmitted. Moreover, the *Oxford Advanced Dictionary of Current English* (1982), defines language as a human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, feelings and desires by means of a system of sound and symbol. Substantiating further on the constituents of language Adebayo (1995), observes that language consists of at least three subsystems of habits: those by which sounds are organized, that is phonology; those by which experiences are organized, that is the syntax of the language; and those by which sounds and meanings are linked, that is the semantics of the language. All the discussions about language above are apt to what Mondin (1991), cited by Nnaemedo (2011), regards as a general concept which does not suffice to have culture as a generic base common to all concepts of language.

Aigbodioh and Igbafen (2004), citing Roman Jakobson in T. A. Sebeok (ed.) (1960), sum up the functions and uses of language as follows: firstly, it is a means of expressing personal feelings and emotions. Secondly, it is a means of issuing commands and directives like giving orders, making request, pleas, and praying. It is also used to ask questions, the interrogative function of language. It also has an indicative function because it is employed to make references and claims about the world (the cognitive function). It is also said to have poetic or aesthetic function. Thus, it is sometimes used to show forth the beauty of language itself. Based on the above functions performed by language in contemporary society, Onose (2009) maintains that one of the greatest things that can happen to a people is to deprive or rob them of their language.

Based on the definitions and functions of language enunciated above, the meaning of dialect becomes explicit. According to the *Oxford Advanced Dictionary of Current English* (1982), dialect is a language spoken in one area with grammar, words and pronunciation that may be different from other form(s) of the same language. This brings to fore the universality of every spoken language of the world.

## 2.2 Translation and Equivalence

A theoretical definition of translation seems useful at this point. According to Newmark (1981), translating is a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written and / or statement in one language by the same message and / or statement in another language. He stresses further that translation per se is written, and anything rendered orally is interpretation. There is the conviction that whether written or oral, translation involves two different languages: the Source Language (SL) and the Target Language (TL). Furthermore, the language and meaning of TL should be same as the SL. To achieve sameness in translation studies, the translator must have linguistic competence in both the SL and TL.

The veracity of translation and notion of semantic equivalence (sameness) to this research is anchored on their ability to foster literary productions in Urhobo literature - a social phenomenon with language as its medium of expression. For instance, an author's work is fixed in time and space and, so, it fulfils the expectations of the community to which it belongs (Uhuegbu, 2009). At the current level of Urhobo studies, literary texts in Urhobo are not easy to come by. As such, translation being a branch of applied linguistics, is a relevant discipline in straightening the *raison d'être* of this paper. Ebiringa (2009) notes that:

translation develops an individual intellectually, skillfully and morally. It educates, entertains, informs and influences, thus creating awareness of all types of local, national and international events. Translation unites nations politically, culturally (and) technologically (p. 64).

## 3.0 Research Methodology

This study employs data elicited through interview, participant observation and secondary sources. The interview method involved written assignment through random selection of one hundred (100) informants. The informants are students of Linguistics and Urhobo at the Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. These students were selected based on their local government of origin and their being adjudged knowledgeable and fluent speakers by the researchers who are teachers of the

language. This is to allow for a representative sample of all the areas in which the language is spoken. Twenty (20) words comprising nouns, verbs and adjectives were selected in English for the informants to translate into Urhobo. The participant's observation method was achieved through the researchers' attendance at social and political gatherings over a period of two years, running from March 2016 to May 2018. During this period, we also embarked on verification of recorded data with a view to ascertaining their verisimilitude through visits to resourceful linguists and orators in Urhoboland. The secondary sources consulted for this study include literary texts, grammar books, Urhobo Bible and hymn books.

The data were examined using two frameworks. These are theory of social dialect variation (Kroch, 1978) and persistence theory (Kortmann, 2006). Recently, advances in sociolinguistics have been most evident in the study of co-variation between social content and the soundpattern in any given speech community.

In the second theory, the theorist argues that variants of a morphosyntactic variable are not only determined by the linguistic content in which words are used but wholesomely dependent on the speaker, the audience, and other psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic factors. Consequently, variation in exponence of variables is not only formal, but functional and related to language in use.

#### 4.0 Presentation of Data and Analysis

In this section, lexical samples from different Urhobo kingdoms are presented in a tabular form for the purpose of comparison, bearing in mind their geographical proximity.

**Table 1: Lexical samples from Agbon, Oruarivie-Abraka and Umiaghwa-Abraka Kingdoms in Ethiope East**

S/N	Gloss	Agbon	Oruarivie-Abraka	Umiaghwa-Abraka
1.	Air (n.)	Avwovwo	Avwovwo	Avwovwo
2.	Long (n.)	Ogrogro	Ogloglo	Ogloglo
3.	Bad (adj)	Umiovwo	Oblabla	Oblabla
4.	Brother (n.)	Oniovo	Omoni	Omoni
5.	Bottle (n.)	Qgo	Qgo	Qgo
6.	Broom (n.)	Uhwerhe	Eghan	Eghan
7.	Cock (n.)	Ogborhuani	Okokoroko	Okokoroko
8.	Cold (adj)	Qfofo	Qfofo	Qfofo
9	Friend (n.)	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan

10.	Gain (v.)	Erere	Elele	Elele
11.	Grind (v.)	Nọ	Lọ	Lọ
12.	Labour (n.)	Owian	Iruo	Iruo
13.	Hot (adj.)	Qrhorha	Qlola	Qlola
14.	Pepper (n.)	Irhibo	Irhibo	Irhibo
15.	Sleep (n.)	Ovwerhe	Omele	Omele
16.	Movement (n.)	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan
17.	Swim (v.)	Rherhe	Lele	Lele
18.	Truth (n.)	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota
19.	Woman (n.)	Aye	Aye	Aye
20.	Man (n.)	Qshare	Qshale	Qshale

The table above presents the words from Agbon, Oruarivie-Abraka and Umiaghwa-Abraka, which are the three kingdoms in Ethiope East local government area. The 20-item words show some dialectal distinction between Agbon on the one hand and Oruarivie-Abraka and Umiaghwa on the other hand. The table clearly reveals that there is no significant difference as all 20 items presented are the same for both Oruarivie-Abraka and Umiaghwa-Abraka. The reason(s) could be attributed to their common historical origin and their being geographically contiguous. Both were created from the now defunct Abraka kingdom in 2009, and these factors perhaps explain their common cultural heritage and dialectal similitude.

The above is however different when either Oruarivie-Abraka or Umiaghwa-Abraka is compared with Agbon. One of the main significant differences between Abraka and Agbon is the use of the lateral approximant [l] in Abraka, while Agbon speakers use [r]. Thus, speakers in the former kingdoms pronounce “Long” as “Ogloglo” while those in the latter kingdom pronounce the same word as “Ogrogro.”. Other examples are “Oblabla vs Obrabra”, “Elele vs Erere”, “Qlola vs Qrhorha” and many others. Implicitly, there are two distinct dialects spoken in Ethiope East Local Government Area. These are Agbon and Abraka dialects.

**Table 2: Lexical samples from Idjerhe, Mosogar & Oghara in Ethiope West**

S/N	Gloss	Idjerhe	Mosogar	Oghara
1.	Air (n.)	Odju	Odju	Odju
2.	Long (n.)	Ogloglo	Ogrogro	Ogrogro

3.	Bad (n.)	Omioma	Qbrabra	Qbrabra
4.	Brother (n.)	Oniɔvo	Oniɔvo	Oniɔvo
5.	Bottle (n.)	Ogo	Ogo	Ogo
6.	Broom (n.)	Eghan	Aghan	Aghan
7.	Cock (n.)	Ogborhane	Ogborhuane	Ogborhuane
8.	Cold (adj)	Odjidjiro	Odjidjiro	Odjidjiro
9	Friend (n.)	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan
10.	Gain (v.)	Elele	Erere	Erere
11.	Grind (v.)	Nɔ	Lɔ	Lɔ
12.	Labour (n.)	Owian	Owian	Owian
13.	Hot (adj.)	Qtuabɔ	Qtuabɔ	Qtuabɔ
14.	Pepper (n.)	Irhibo	Odjadja	Odjadja
15.	Sleep (n.)	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe
16.	Movement (n.)	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan
17.	Swim (v.)	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe
18.	Truth (n.)	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota
19.	Woman (n.)	Aye	Aye	Aye
20.	Man (n.)	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare

A critical look at the data in Table 2 above reveals significant differences in the speech forms spoken in Idjerhe and Oghara kingdoms. The use of the lateral approximant in the Abraka case noted in Table 1 can also be observed in the speech form spoken in Idjerhe, as shown in item (10) “Elele” gain. However, there are lexical differences between Idjerhe and Abraka as well. Similarities in some items between the three kingdoms in Ethiope West are possibly as a result of their migration story. According to Otite (2011), these kingdoms share one ancestral father, which is Agbarha in Ughelli North LGA where they all migrated to form the present kingdoms. Initially, the local government was made up of Idjerhe and Oghara kingdoms before Mosogar was carved out of Idjerhe kingdom by the Delta State Government in 2006. Ekeh (2008) describes this division as a bizarre incident of 2006 in which Delta State Government sought to split an Urhobo sub-cultural unit into two while all previous Nigerian Governments had respected the integrity of each of the twenty-two (sic) units of Urhobo culture. However, the argument in this study is that only Idjerhe and Oghara are the dialects spoken in Ethiope West.

**Table 3: Lexical samples Agbarho, Agbarha-Otor, Ewreni, Ogor, Orogun, Ughelli and Ughwerun in Ughelli North**

S/ N	Gloss	Agbarho	Agbarha— Otor	Ewreni	Ogor	Orogun	Ughelli	Ughwerun
1.	Air (n.)	Aphopho	Odju	Odju	Odju	Odju	Odju	Odju
2.	Long (n.)	Ogrogro	Ogrogro	Ogrogro	Ogrogro	Ogrogro	Ogrogro	Ogrogro
3.	Bad (n.)	Umiovwo	Qbrabra	Qbrabra	Qbrabra	Qbrabra	Qbrabra	Qbrabra
4.	Brother (n.)	Omoni	Oniovo	Oniovo	Oniovo	Oniovo	Oniovo	Oniovo
5.	Bottle (n.)	Ogo	Ogo	Ogo	Ogo	Ogo	Ogo	Ogo
6.	Broom (n.)	Aghan	Aghan	Aghan	Aghan	Aghan	Aghan	Aghan
7.	Cock (n.)	Okokorok o	Okokoroko	Okokorok o	Okokorok o	Okokorok o	Okokorok o	Okokorok o
8.	Cold (adj)	Qfofo	Odjidjiri	Odjidjiri	Odjidjiri	Odjidjiri	Odjidjiri	Odjidjiri
9	Friend (n.)	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan
10	Gain (v.)	Erere	Erere	Erere	Erere	Erere	Erere	Erere
.								
11	Grind (v.)	Nq	Nq	Nq	Nq	Nq	Nq	Nq
.								
12	Labour (n.)	Iruo	Owian	Owian	Owian	Owian	Owian	Owian
.								
13	Hot (adj.)	Ototorhe	Ototorhe	Orhororo	Orhororo	Otototorhe	Ototorhe	Ototorhe
.								
14	Pepper (n.)	Irhibo	Irhibo	Irhibo	Irhibo	Irhibo	Irhibo	Irhibo
.								
15	Sleep (n.)	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe
.								
16	Movement	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan



.	(n.)							
17	Swim (v.)	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe
.								
18	Truth (n.)	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota
.								
19	Woman (n.)	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye
.								
20	Man (n.)	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare
.								

Table 3 presents data from the seven kingdoms in Ughelli North Local Government Area. It may be observed from the table that there are no significant difference in the speech forms spoken in Agbarha-Otor, Ogor, Orogun and Ughelli. From migration and historical perspectives, Agbarha-Otor, Ogor, Orogun and Ughelli belong to the Oghwoghwa family lineage (Erivwo, 2003). This explains why there is no variation in their speech form. However, Agbarho, Ewreni and Ughwerun kingdoms differ in a number of items. Accordingly, it can be argued that there are four (4) dialects spoken in Ughelli North Local Government Area. These are Oghwoghwa, Agbarho, Ewreni and Ughwerun dialects.

**Table 4: Lexical samples from Arhavwarię, Eghwu, Eֆhron-Otor, Okparabe, Olomu and Ughievwen in Ughelli South**

S/ N	Gloss	Arhavwarię n	Eghwu	Eֆhron- Otor	Okparabe	Olomu	Ughievwen
1.	Air (n.)	Odju	Odju	Odju	Odju	Odju	Odju
2.	Long (n.)	Ogrogro	Ogrogro	Ogrogro	Ogrogro	Ogro	Qphoho
3.	Bad (n.)	Qbrabra	Qbrabra	Qbrabra	Qbrabra	Qbrabra	Omiomiov wn
4.	Brother (n.)	Oniqovo	Oniqovo	Oniqovo	Oniqovo	Oniqovo	Ivwiniqoshar e

5.	Bottle (n.)	Qo	Qo	Qo	Qo	Qo	Ulolo
6.	Broom (n.)	Aghan	Aghan	Aghan	Aghan	Aghan	Eghan
7.	Cock (n.)	Okokoroko	Okokorok o	Okokoroko	Okokoroko	Okokorok o	Qhokpa
8.	Cold (adj)	Odjidjiro	Odjidjiro	Odjidjiro	Odjidjiro	Odjidjiro	Ogrogro
9	Friend (n.)	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugbeyan	Ugboshan
10.	Gain (v.)	Erere	Erere	Erere	Erere	Erere	Erere
11.	Grind (v.)	Lq	Lq	Lq	Lq	Lq	lq
12.	Labour (n.)	Owian	Owian	Owian	Owian	Owian	Owien
13.	Hot (adj.)	Qtotorhe	Qtotorhe	Qtotorhe	Qtotorhe	Qtotorhe	Qtuabo
14.	Pepper (n.)	Qdjadja	Qdjadja	Qdjadja	Qdjadja	Qdjadja	Iisibo
15.	Sleep (n.)	Ovwerę	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhe	Ovwerhen
16.	Movement (n.)	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan	Oyan	Oshan
17.	Swim (v.)	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhe	Rherhen
18.	Truth (n.)	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota	Uyota	Oshota
19.	Woman (n.)	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aye	Aje
20.	Man (n.)	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare	Qshare

Data from the six kingdoms in Ughelli South are presented in Table 4. It is observed that Ughievwen dialect differs from those spoken in the other kingdoms. For instance, while the other five kingdoms use *Odju* for “air” Ughievwen uses *Ophopho*. This is also the case with item nos 12, 19 and 20 in the Table. Olomu, on the other hand, differs from Arhavwarien, Eghwu, Ephron-Otor and Okparabe in only one item (See number 2). Although the kingdoms have somewhat distinct migratory history, but they seem not to have the case of submission in their dialects because arguably *they are* Urhobo *but a* distinct dialects in *their* own right. Therefore, four dialects are found to be spoken in Ughelli South Local Government Area viz: Eghwu, Ephro-oto (mixed-dialects), Olomu and Ughievwen dialects.

**Table 5: Lexical samples from Udu, Uvwie and Okpe**

S/N	Gloss	Udu	Uvwie	Okpe
1.	Air (n.)	Aphopho	Avwẹvwẹ	Aphẹrẹ
2.	Long (n.)	Ogregren	Ucheriri	Orhierhi
3.	Bad (n.)	Umiovwo	Unurene	Obiomuru
4.	Brother (n.)	Ivwionihiare	Omunye	Omizu
5.	Bottle (n.)	Ulolo	Ololo	Ololo
6.	Broom (n.)	Eghan	Ukpere	Aghan
7.	Cock (n.)	Ohokpa	Oho okpa	Ogberhuane
8.	Cold (adj)	Ogrogro	Ugregrẹ	Ofofo
9.	Friend (n.)	Ugbehian	Ugbeyan	Ugbayan
10.	Gain (v.)	Erere	Erere	Erere
11.	Grind (v.)	Lọ	Lọ	Lọ
12.	Labour (n.)	Iruo	Iruo	Owian
13.	Hot (adj.)	Otuatuabo	Ato	Odjedjere
14.	Pepper (n.)	Isibo	Ihibo	Ihibo
15.	Sleep (n.)	Ovwerhe	Omerhe	Omerhe
16.	Movement (n.)	Ohian	Eshamu	Onya
17.	Swim (v.)	Rherhen	Rherhe	Rherhe
18.	Truth (n.)	Uhiota	Ureme	Urhumemro
19.	Woman (n.)	Aje	Are	Amase
20.	Man (n.)	Ohiare	Orohwa	Ohworhare

Udu, Uvwie and Okpe kingdoms are located in three different local government areas. However, they all share common boundaries. From the table above, they all speak different lects. For instance, the Udu word for air is *ophopho*, long is *ugregren* and bad is *umiovwo*. In Uvwie, it is *ugregren*, *ucheriri* and *orhierhi* respectively, while in Okpe, it is *umiovwo*, *unurene* and *obiomuru* respectively. The differences in these dialects make them peculiar languages within Urhoboland.

**Table 6: Lexical samples from Agbarha-Ame and Okere in Warri South**

S/N	Gloss	Agbarha-Ame	Okere
1.\	Air (n.)	Odju	Odju
2.	Long (n.)	Ogrogro	Ogrogro
3.	Bad (n.)	<b>Umiovwo</b>	<b>Umiovwo</b>
4.	Brother (n.)	<b>Omoni</b>	<b>Omoni</b>
5.	Bottle (n.)	<b>Qgo</b>	<b>Qgo</b>
6.	Broom (n.)	<b>Aghan</b>	<b>Aghan</b>
7.	Cock (n.)	<b>Qhokpa</b>	<b>Qhokpa</b>
8.	Cold (adj)	<b>Odjidjio</b>	<b>Odjidjio</b>
9	Friend (n.)	<b>Ugbeyan</b>	<b>Ugbeyan</b>
10.	Gain (v.)	<b>Erere</b>	<b>Erere</b>
11.	Grind (v.)	<b>Lq</b>	<b>Lq</b>
12.	Labour (n.)	<b>Owian</b>	<b>Owian</b>
13.	Hot (adj.)	<b>Qtuatuabo</b>	<b>Qtuatuabo</b>
14.	Pepper (n.)	<b>Qdjadja</b>	<b>Qdjadja</b>
15.	Sleep (n.)	<b>Ovwerhe</b>	<b>Ovwerhe</b>
16.	Movement (n.)	<b>Oyan</b>	<b>Oyan</b>
17.	Swim (v.)	<b>Rherhe</b>	<b>Rherhe</b>
18.	Truth (n.)	<b>Uyota</b>	<b>Uyota</b>
19.	Woman (n.)	<b>Aye</b>	<b>Aye</b>
20.	Man (n.)	<b>Qshare</b>	<b>Qshare</b>

In this table, it is crucial to ascertain the exact dialects spoken in Agbarha-Ame and Okere kingdoms – both located in Warri South Local Government Area of Delta State. On that note, the study revealed that both kingdoms speak the same dialect because no significant differences exist either in words or in their speech patterns.

## 5.0 Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation

All data presented for discussion and analyses in this research give credence to our findings. Based on Onyima (2014), emic (insiders's) and etic (outsider's) points of view, the findings holistically reveal that hybridization is a hallmark of every language and this is noticeable in its literature, teaching and learning. It also substantiates Aziza's (2007) claim that there are fifteen dialects in

Urhoboland, and previous arguments that Okpe and Uvwie dialects are distinct languages within Urhobo nation (Omamor, 1976; Elugbe, 1989; Darah, 2014). It is noted in the study that the linguistic distance between some dialects is such that both speakers and listeners are to be extraordinarily attentive to understand one another. Other findings from the study are:

- that Agbon and Agbarho dialects still stand the test of time in Urhobo written literature throughout the twenty-four kingdoms of Urhoboland,
- that dialect-mixing is still prevalent in Urhobo written literature, its teaching and learning,
- that semantic equivalence in translation could be attainable through a consensus dialect and orthography by Urhobo élites and creative writers,
- In Nigeria, if the *National Policy on Education* (2004), which insists on indigenous language as language of instruction in the first three years of primary school education must be attainable, the underlying objective should be pursued without dialectical encumbrances,
- that language documentation shall go a long way in solving the proliferation of dialects in Urhoboland.

In conclusion, all arguments advanced and prioritized for discussion in this study are aimed at proffering workable solutions to delist Urhobo from endangered languages, and perhaps from total extinction. Viewed from the respondents' responses to the various research data and participant observation points of view, we may conclude that Urhobo is faced with serious dialectical problems.

Also important is the fact that Urhobo, like other Edoid languages of the Niger-Congo groupings, is a tone language. Consequently, linguistic harmony throughout the twenty-four kingdoms shall no doubt enhance common orthography, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century globalization and etymological pursuit for inclusion of new words in the language lexicon and their digital sustainability.

Most researchers and language planners have established that Nigerian languages such as Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba which are held in high esteem today as national languages have suffered similar linguistic fate, especially dialectal criticism, in the past before attaining their present status. The Urhobo case is therefore not peculiar or insurmountable. It is therefore necessary that awareness campaign by stakeholders and language conferences on the need for a common dialect in Urhoboland will help to salvage the dialectal crisis. Given that most written literature in Urhobo employ the Agbarho dialect, this should be adopted by all writers, and in all teachings and learning

of the language throughout the twenty-four kingdoms. Howbeit, attention should be given to the dialects as well to avoid losing some lects.

## References

- Adebayo, A.G. (1995). Modern European and Nigerian Languages in Contact. In Kola Owolabi (ed.), *Language in Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Ayo Bamgbose*, Ibadan: Group Publishers, pp. 230 – 236.
- Aigbodioh, J.A. and M. L. Igbafe. (2004). *Philosophy of Language from an African Perspective*. Ekpoma: A. Inno Printing Press.
- Aweto, A.O. and J. L. Igben. (2003). Geography of Urhoboland. In Onigu Otite (Ed.), *The Urhobo People*. Ibadan: Shaneson C. I. Limited, pp. 11-20.
- Aweto, A.O. (2005). Outline geography of Urhoboland. In P. Ekeh (Ed.), *Studies in Urhobo Culture*. Lagos and New York: Urhobo Historical Society, pp. 683-698.
- Aziza, R. (2007). Urhobo Phonology. In Ore Yusuf (Ed.), *Basic Linguistics for Nigerian Languages Teachers*. Port-Harcourt: M. & J. Grand Orbit Communications Ltd and Emhai Press, pp. 273-289.
- Biakolo, A. (1993). *Wonderful Child*. Ibadan: Famsod Ind. Printers.
- Macdonald, A. M. (1980). *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Darah, G.G. (2014). Discourse on National Identity and Resistance in the Popular Music of the Urhobo People of the Niger Delta. *ARIDON: The International Journal of Urhobo Studies* 1: 53 – 77.
- Ebiringa, C.I. (2009). L'Enseignement de la Traduction et de l'Interprétation dans les Universités Nigérianes. In Uhuegbu & Nwanjoku (Eds.), *JOTRANS: Journal of Translation Studies* 1: 59 – 81.
- Ekeh, P.P. (2008). On the Matter of Clans and Kingdoms in Urhobo History and Culture. A lecture at an Assembly of Urhobo Community, Abuja, Nigeria, Organised by the Urhobo Historical Society on Saturday, April 26.
- Eriwo, S. U. (2006). *Oto re eta: A Dictionary of Urhobo Words with Proverbs and Pithy Sayings*. Benin-City: Ambik Press.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2004). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Hornby, A. S. (2005). *The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*. (7<sup>th</sup> edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Jike, D.V. and S.O. Ogege (2007). Linguistics Correlates of “salvation” in Urhobo Religious Cosmogony. In T. Ojaide & R. O. Aziza (eds.), *The Urhobo Language Today*. Lagos: Malthouse, pp. 119-126.
- Kroc, A. S. (1978). Toward a Theory of Social Variation. *Language in Society* 7: 17-36.
- Mowarin, M. (2007). Urhobo Gospel Music. In T. Ojaide & R. O. Aziza (eds.), *The Urhobo Language Today*. Lagos: Malthouse, pp. 127-132.
- Newmark, P. (1981). *Approaches to Translation*. London: Perganum
- Nnaemedo, B.C. (2011). A. J. Ayer at the service of African languages: an Africanization of Linguistic Analysis. *Association for promoting Nigerian Languages and Culture* 13(1): 57-64.
- Ojaide, T. (2007). Urhobo Proverbs and Axioms. In T. Ojaide & R. O. Aziza (eds.), *The Urhobo Languages Today*. Lagos: Malthouse, pp. 113-118.
- Onigu, O. (1979). Rural Migrants as Catalysts in Rural Development: The Urhobo in Ondo State, Nigeria. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 49(3): 226-234.
- Onigu, O. (ed). (2011). *The Urhobo People* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Ibadan: Gold Press Limited.
- Onose, I.J. (2009). Urhobo and English on the path of modernization in Nigeria. *International Journal of creativity and technical development* (1-3): 133- 152.
- Onyima, B.N. (2014). Local Economy and Health: Potato Production and its Implication for Rural Repopulation in Agadama, Delta State, Nigeria. *ARIDON: The International Journal of Urhobo Studies* 1: 1 – 21.
- Uhuegbu, A.R. (2009). Perspective for Translation in African Literature. *JOTRANS: Journal of Translation Studies* 1: 38 - 47
- Ukere, A. O., (1991). *Urhobo-English Dictionary*. Benin-City: Ilupeju Press Ltd.