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**ILORIN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY**  
**VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1, DECEMBER, 2013**

**LIST OF ARTICLES**

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                       |                                                                                                                                                                                           |                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <p>1. Occupational Hazards Management among the Commercial Motorcyclists in Ibadan, Nigeria<br/><b>Okunola, Rashidi Akanji; Lawal Musediq Olufemi and Temilola Olusegun Moses.....</b></p>        | <p><b>1-22</b></p>    | <p>8. Fighting Corruption with the Combined Weapons of Information Technology (IT), Forensic Accounting and Auditing<br/><b>Oladipupo, Adesina Olugoke and Omoye, Alade Sule.....</b></p> | <p><b>129-144</b></p> |
| <p>2. Hard Drug use and Criminal Tendencies among the Youths in Wukari Local Government area of Taraba State<br/><b>Luper, Viashima Veronica; Amali, Suleman Ilim and Moses Msughter.....</b></p> | <p><b>23-34</b></p>   | <p>9. Socio-Cultural Effects of Dialectal Shift: The Case of Igbomina Speakers in Idofian, Kwara State, Nigeria<br/><b>Adedayo, Motunrayo and Rafiu, Kamar Adewale.....</b></p>           | <p><b>145-160</b></p> |
| <p>3. An Appraisal of Power Sector Reform in Nigeria: The Imperative for Synergy<br/><b>Akume, Albert .....</b></p>                                                                               | <p><b>35-52</b></p>   | <p>10. Religion and the Nigerian Economy: A moral Maxim<br/><b>Akiti, Glory Alamu.....</b></p>                                                                                            | <p><b>161-176</b></p> |
| <p>4. The influence of Political Culture on Political Participation: The Nigerian Experience<br/><b>Bakare, Adebola Rafiu.....</b></p>                                                            | <p><b>53-70</b></p>   | <p>11. Corruption and Democratisation Hurdles in Nigeria: An Overview of the Fourth Republic<br/><b>Aliu, Fatima Omotayo and Zakariyau, Rauf Tunde.....</b></p>                           | <p><b>177-192</b></p> |
| <p>5. Dynamism of Nigerian Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector: The case of Igbomina Business Community in Lagos<br/><b>Ibiloye, Emmanuel .....</b></p>                                          | <p><b>71-96</b></p>   | <p>12. A Historical Survey of the Social Roles of the Mosque in the Nigerian Society<br/><b>Jawondo, Ibrahim AbdulGaniyu.....</b></p>                                                     | <p><b>193-208</b></p> |
| <p>6. The Trajectories of Cooperative Societies in Ibadan, South- Western Nigeria<br/><b>Olayinka Akanle; Omotara, Abidemi Folashade and Aduku Emmanuel Baba. ....</b></p>                        | <p><b>97-116</b></p>  | <p>13. After-Life in Islam and its Interpretation by <i>Boko Haram</i> Fundamentalists in Nigeria<br/><b>Nwosu, Patrick Uchenna .....</b></p>                                             | <p><b>209-218</b></p> |
| <p>7. The Social Significance of Kolanut in the Igbo Tradition.<br/><b>Nwosu, Florence; Muhammed Abubakar Yinusa; Raji Abdullateef and Abdulbaqi, Salihu Sakariya....</b></p>                     | <p><b>117-128</b></p> | <p>14. Religious Balancing as the Root of Acrimony in Nigeria<br/><b>Abdulrasheed Alada Muhammed.....</b></p>                                                                             | <p><b>219-232</b></p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                       | <p>15. State/Local Government Joint Account and the Challenges of Service Delivery in Kaduna and Gombe States of Nigeria (1999-2011)<br/><b>Bello, Matthew Funsho.....</b></p>            | <p><b>233-256</b></p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                       | <p>16. HIV/AIDS Epidemic and its Socio-Economic Effects in Africa<br/><b>Akor, Sunday Joseph.....</b></p>                                                                                 | <p><b>257-271</b></p> |

**SOCIO-CULTURAL EFFECTS OF DIALECTAL SHIFT: THE  
CASE OF IGBOMINA SPEAKERS IN IDOFIAN, KWARA STATE,  
NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*Language or dialect shift has become a social phenomenon. It is usually a situation whereby the speakers of one language or dialect volitionally abandon their language or dialect for another. It may also be through conquest, marriage, economy (job opportunities), etc. While language shift is most commonly observed and discussed by researchers, this study examines dialect shift and its attendant sociocultural effects on the affected speech community. This research focuses, in particular, on the Igbomina-speaking Idofian community in Kwara State, Nigeria. The research methodologies used are: questionnaire, interview and observation. Findings reveal that due to its proximity to Ilorin, the state capital, the Igbomina dialect spoken in Idofian has been overshadowed by the Ilorin dialect. Even though the two dialects are from the Yoruba stock, slight differences abound which make them unique in their own settlement or world.*

**Keywords:** Language, Culture, Dialect, Assimilation

**Introduction**

Language is a means or vehicle of communication, this same way dialect is. Dialects fulfil all the obligations of language. The point of departure, however, between dialect and language is seen in terms of standard, which is determined by a number of variables. In view of the seeming similarities between language and dialect, what affects language automatically affects dialect. For example, speakers of a language may shift to another language just as speakers of a dialect may consciously or unconsciously shift to another dialect if the variables that condition the situation are met.

Shift which is a process loss has been observed in languages and dialects across the world (Fakuade, 2003; Dada, 2005). Isoglossic shift

exhibits an interesting discourse because of the puzzles it manifests in the speakers. Dialect occupation occurs gradually in most cases, especially in the absence of wars, natural disasters, among others. The places that are susceptible to encroachment are the border towns and villages. Sometimes, the affected towns are not conscious of their dialect erosion and if they do, there could be little or nothing to stem the tide.

This study examines and discusses the sociocultural effects of dialect shift of Igbomina spoken in Idofian to the Ilorin dialect in Kwara State, Nigeria. Idofian is about 18km from Ilorin with Amóyò an intervening town. Amóyò is an Igbomina settlement though findings reveal that the Igbomina spoken in this town has been completely assimilated by the Ilorin dialect.

### **Historical and Geographical Background**

Igbomina (Igbonna) is one of the major sub-groups of Yoruba nation. Some other notable Yoruba sub-groups include the Aworí, Egba, Ife, Oyo, Ijebu, Ekiti, Ijesha, Ondo, Akoko, Ilaje, Ilorin, Ijumu, Yagba, Owe and Ibolo. While many of the dialects are mutually intelligible across Yoruba land, a few are esoteric in character and only admit into conversation those born into them or native speakers.

The Igbomina people occupy the north-eastern part of Yoruba land and over a million of other parts. About 88 % of this number live in the present Ifelodun, Irepodun and Isin local Government areas of Kwara State, while the remaining are found in Ila-Orangun and Ora area of Osun State.

Besides those under the Ila division, Igbomina land is more finely grouped into 16 administrative districts in Kwara State (Dada, 1985). These districts are Share, Omu-Aran, Ajase, Igbaja, Oro, Isin, Oro-Ago, Ile-Ire, Ora, Oke-Ode, Ola, Esie, Omupo, Idofian and Idofin.

There are other pockets of Igbomina-speaking towns and villages in some other districts of Kwara State. These include Apado in Iponrin district, Jeba in Lanwa district, Apa-Ole, Joromu, Fufu, etc in Akanbi district and Ogbondoroko in Afon districts. Going further by Dada's (1985) analysis, the Igbomina people are classified into two groups; the Igbomina Moye and Igbomina Mosan. The Moye group is concentrated in Oro-Ago, Ora, Oke-Ola, Oke-Ode, Idofin, Agunjin districts. The mosan group comprises districts such as Omu-Aran, Ajase, Igbaja, Isin, Oro, Share, Esie, Omupo, Idofian and Ila-Orangun.

Archaeological and linguistic evidence suggest that the Igbomina people may have predated the surrounding people except perhaps the Nupe and the Yagba. Igbomina land definitely predated the Oduduwa era as evidenced by oral traditions of royal and non-royal migrations from Oduduwa's Ile-Ife which met existing dynasties in place but displaced, subsumed or subjugated them. It appears that aside from more recent conflicts in the last two centuries, the Oyo, Ijesha, and the Ekiti may have in more ancient times, presumed the Igbomina, captured territory in the plains and restricted them to the more rugged and lower quality land of the Yoruba hills. The Igbomina, on the other hand, appear to have pressured the Nupe and the Yagba and taken territory away from them in places, but also losing territory to them in other places.

### **Brief History of the Dialect Location (Idofian)**

Idofian was founded in 1630 by a hunter (sode bi oro) who migrated from Oyo due to his thirst for hunting. He settled in the place which is presently the location of the Idofian palace from which the town developed. After a while, he was joined by a Fulani man called "Eshipo" and he settled beside "sode bi oro", the place he settled in is presently known as Ile Eshipo in Idofian. "Eshipo" was a fisherman by occupation and both "Eshipo" and "sode bi oro" nurtured the town together. Other people came but were not allowed to settle in the town, but on the outskirts. They grew to become the neighboring villages surrounding Idofian today.

The first king of Idofian was Oloye who reigned from (1630-1671). Other kings like Amotun, Keji, Atoyebi and Oyesoro reigned after Oloye till 1976 when the present Oludofian of Idofian, Adebayo Agboola Oyesoro took the staff of office and still holds the seat of power in the town. Phenomenon among these kings was Oyesoro who reigned for 84 yrs. The town has never experienced crises on kingship because of the steady and planned succession of power.

### **Language Shift**

Language shift is a process whereby a community (often a linguistic minority) gradually abandons its original language and shifts to another language. According to Bourdieu (1984), "an individual's knowledge of a language or several languages can be regarded as his/her linguistic market". If knowledge of a particular language or of a particular social or geographical

variety of language does not sell, we can expect this language to gradually lose its market share and this is basically what happens in the process of language shift.

The order of domains in which language shift occurs may differ for different individuals and different groups, but gradually over time the language of the wider society displaces the minority language. It is also to make clear what the rewards are by which the society in question motivates its minority members to stay bilingual or to shift to the majority language.

The above statement is the linguistic phenomenon found in Adamawa State, Nigeria, where Hausa has remained a lingua franca for different ethnic groups just as in other parts of Northern Nigeria. Thus, there has been a shift towards Hausa by almost every ethnic group in the North, including the Fulani. However, it has been discovered that in spite of the availability of Hausa as a medium of inter-ethnic communication among the various ethnic groups in Adamawa State, some ethnic groups such as Yungur, Mboi, Bata, Bura, Honna, Ganda, and Lala in Girai, Song, and Gombi Local Government Areas not only learn Fulfulde, they more often than not claim they are Fulani. This type of language shift is unusual, since these groups could already communicate with the Fulani in Hausa, a widely spoken language in these local government areas.

Another of this example can be found in Ilorin area of Kwara State, among the Fulani who resides in that part of the state, they have shifted from their language which is Fulfulde to the Yoruba dialect of the town. These people now speak the language even more fluently than the speakers.

Susan Gal's study of language shift in Oberwart (Austria) is a magnificent example of research along these lines (Gal, 1979). Oberwart (Felsőor in Hungarian) is a village in Burgenland, a province in the east of Austria, bordering Hungary. Oberwart was a small place, where peasants used Hungarian to interact with each other, and German with outsiders and strangers. However, as Oberwart grew and industry replaced farming as the main source of jobs, the function of German expanded. The use of German then becomes high in a broad language situation in Oberwart.

According to Gal, German was the language of the school, official transaction and economic advancement; it expressed formality and social distance. In the 1920s, Hungarian became a low language used in most homes and for friendly interaction between town's people, Hungarian was the language of solidarity used for social and affective function, soon it

became clear that to 'get on' meant learning German, and so knowledge of German became associated with social economic progress, speaking Hungarian was increasingly associated with pleasantness and was considered old-fashioned, young people began to speak German to their friends in pub, parents began to speak German instead of Hungarian to their children. In other words, the domains in which German was appropriate continued to expand and those where Hungarian was used contracted, soon God was one of the few addressees to whom young people still used Hungarian when they said their prayers or went to church. While at the time of Gal's stay in Oberwart, the use of German between age mates was quite common for children under fifteen (15) years.

According to a study done by the Belarusian government in 2009, 72% of Belarusians spoke Russian at home, while Belarusian is used by only 11.9% of Belarusians, 29.4% of Belarusian can write, speak and read Belarusian, while only 52% can read and speak it. Accordingly to the research, one out of ten Belarusian does not understand Belarusian. These show the shift from Belarusian to Russian.

The most recent language shift in China is the disappearance of Manchu language, when China was under Manchurian rule (Qing Dynasty). Manchu and Chinese had co-official status and the emperor heavily subsidized and promoted education in Manchu. However, learning Chinese was so essential to upward mobility and contact with no Manchu groups that even the Manchurian rulers began to prefer Chinese to Manchu. It is believed that the Qianlong Emperor and his successors though ethnically Manchurian were more proficient in Chinese than in Manchu. Several years, following the fall of the minority rule in the Republic of China in 1912, Manchurian people completely dropped their own language, today there are fewer than 100 proficient speakers of Manchu.

Calum Veltman (language shift in the United States 1983) has written extensively on the language shift process of a dozen minority language groups in the United States, based on a 1976 study prepared by the bureau of the census. Data show that rate of language shift has been rising for the past fifty years in the United States, immigrants with Spanish mother tongue are switching to English within two generations and in the absence of continuing immigration, the language would not survive more than two generations.



Quebecois French, widely spoken by French-Canadian immigrants in New England in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century has more or less disappeared from United States and has been replaced by English. A similar process occurred in Louisiana, a former French colon. This process has also been observed in Canada, outside of Quebec where the rates of shift for French minorities presage the disappearance. Meanwhile, in Quebec itself, the decline of French has been reversed, and given the high rate of emigration and substantial inter-marriage with French-Canadian, the French language has faced declined.

Tosi (1984) studied bilingualism and language shift among Italian immigrants in Bedford (Great Britain). The first generation immigrants generally use a local Italian dialect as the principal medium of communication within the family until school age. Their children mostly speak this dialect only occasionally switching to English and when there are several children in the household they often speak English among themselves, but English really gains influence when the children go to school and become more proficient in it.

### **Causes of Language Shift**

Language shift and death can happen for many reasons. Usually it is not possible to isolate a single cause as being responsible for language shift, rather a number of factors such as language death, disruption of the speech community, political and religion dominance, typically come into play. The wider social circumstances are also relevant, as none of the factors separately or together guarantees that language shift will occur. Nevertheless, across diverse cases certain factors which may include language death, natural disaster, political or religion factor and disruption of the speech community tend to recur.

It has been observed that *language death* in Africa typically seems to involve a shift not to the language of the former colonial powers, but to other indigenous languages, particularly national languages, due to the belief that they are of greater prestige. The indigenous languages play a major role in a shift to that language. In the present case, however, it is difficult to assign any role to prestige, except perhaps in a very restricted and qualified sense.

The shift identified for example, have not been to a language which is associated with *political dominance or a major religion dominance*, there is no rural-urban distortion, no dichotomy of traditional versus modern life or

association of the adopted language with education. They were simply languages which are at the right place at the right time.

*Disruption of the speech community*- physical or social separation of speakers so that there are fewer opportunities for interaction among them is a factor in language shift. This can come about in many different ways: decimation of the speech community, enforced settlement together with others who do not share the language, widespread dispersal of the community for employment and other reasons, influx of significant numbers of immigrants and separation of children from the adults.

The Nyulnyul (*Nyulnyul is an extinct Australian aboriginal dialect formerly spoken by the Nyulnyul people of Western Australia*) speech community was affected in almost all of these ways during the first 60 or 70 years of contact with the Europeans. First, it was significantly reduced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century through killings by unscrupulous Europeans and diseases they brought with them. With the establishment of the Beagle Bay Mission in Nyulnyul territory in 1890 began the arrival of Aborigines from outside, few of who spoke the language. When dormitories were established on the mission in the early twentieth century, Nyulnyu children were separated from their parents who they saw only at weekends. The use of Nyulnyu in the dormitories was forbidden.

Also relevant are *the number of speakers and their patterns of marriage*. The larger the speech community of a language, the better its chances of survival, and other things equal. But other things are not always equal because some languages have survived for a long time without large speech communities while others appear vulnerable even with many thousands of speakers.

*Attitudes to the languages can also be decisive*. Speakers might shift their speech habit in favour of a language enjoying higher status, especially if it is politically advantageous to do so, and attitude can be relevant in other ways as well. In some Australian Aboriginal communities, the traditional language has come to be regarded by speakers as too difficult for children and suitable only for adults, and in some cases last speakers have withheld their language from younger generations because they fear it will not be adequately valued.

*The symbol value of a language can also have a bearing*. In some instances the language of the colonizers is associated with the modern world and a desirable commodity, while the traditional language might be

associated with old ways of life no longer practised. The Nyulnyu situation is interesting in this regard as a result of missionary translation of religious materials, it seems that the association between Nyulnyu and traditional cultural practices was weakened, so that no longer was the language identified with traditional practices and as a result Nyulnyul is left with no positive symbolic value.

### **Consequences of Language Shift**

Language shift can be detrimental to the least part of the community associated with the language which is being lost. Sociolinguists such as Joshua Fisherman, Lily Wong Filmone and Jon Reyhner reported that language shift (*when it involves loss of the first language*) can lead to cultural disintegration and a variety of social problems including increase alcoholism, dysfunction and failures and can increase incidence of premature death. Others claim that language shift allows greater communication and integration of isolated groups previously unable to communicate, this could have a positive effect in the long term.

Ohiri-Aniche (1997) observes a tendency among many Nigerians to bring up their children as monolingual speakers of English language and report that this can lead to their children holding their heritage language in disdain and feeling ashamed of the language of their parents and grandparents. As a result of this, some Nigerians are said to feel neither fully European nor fully Nigerian.

### **Dialect/language Shift**

#### **Dialect**

Dialect usually refers to difference between language that has difference of vocabulary, grammar as well as pronunciation. Dialect is peculiar to a group of people and it is of much interest because of its social phenomenon. The members of any given community usually recognize the existence of dialect of a language by their behavior and by the way they talk about the language. Thus, a community can be called bi/multi-dialectal.

Dialect is a group of idiolects with a common core of similarities in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Dialect exists as a continuum in which adjacent dialects are mutually intelligible, yet with increasing isolation between non-contiguous dialects, difference may accumulate to the point of mutual intelligibility. For example in the Dutch- German speech community,

there is a contiguous area of intelligibility from Flanders to Schleswig and to Styria, but with Flemish and Styrian dialect mutually intelligible.

When a dialect is spoken by a large group of speakers of a language, it often acquires prestige, which leads to the development of a standard language. Dialects usually develop as a result of geographical, social, political or economic barriers between groups of people who speak the same language. Dialect refers to the shared speech patterns of a community (Gleason, 2005). A dialect is not to be confused with slang, which is determined by fashion, it is most often a temporary addition to vocabulary and is also differentiable from argot, which is a form of a language shared by people with a common profession or hobby (McDavid, 1971). Furthermore, a dialect is not just a standard form used irresponsibly, as dialects are guided by unique rules of pronunciation and sentence formation (Joseph, Love, & Taylor, 2001).

According to (Labov, 1972), dialects are formed by the perpetuation of speech patterns resulting from sustained linguistic interactions in communities that can be based on class, ethnicity, or region. The effect of geography on language has historically been the most profound that can lead to the perpetuation of speech pattern.

In actual usage, a language is a collection of dialects or rule-governed variation of a non-existent standard. Dialects usually differ in the frequency of use of certain structure rather than in the presence or absence of these structures. The ideal standard is rarely used except in formal writing, and the concept of a standard spoken language is practically myth. Each dialect share a common set of grammatical rules with the standard language. Thus, dialects of a language are theoretically mutually intelligible to all speakers of that language. No dialect is better than any other neither should a dialect be considered a deviant or inferior to a language. Also each dialect is a systematic rule system that should be viewed within its social context, Sociolinguists assume that a dialect is adequate to meet the demands of the speech community in which it is found. Like language, dialects evolve over time to meet the needs of the communities in which they are used.

A dialect refers to the characteristic pattern of words and word order (lexico-grammar) which is used by a group of speakers. The standard form of a language is an institutionally valued dialect, which has been selected by historic accident or by deliberate "language planning" by government. It is



just the form of the lexico-grammar of the variety as it could be written down, rather than its pattern pronunciation.

Dialects within a language are often localized geographically and we can speak of "dialect chains" where the shift from one dialect to the next is not sudden but between one town or country or state and the next. Instead, dialects merge and overlap across distances, even at national boundaries, speakers on either side of the border can sometimes understand each other's dialects. If dialects' chains complicate the dialect map, towns and cities, the migration of people into urban area can disrupt neat dialect division and the study of "urban dialectology" will only be achieved by the realization that there is social stratification in urban area on the basis of class.

If we consider the administrative boundary criteria between both areas, then this will be a social rather than a linguistic criteria, therefore there is no clear break between two neighboring or close dialects because all, the political and cultural factors seem to be more important in the use of dialects and language than linguistic criteria.

### Methodology

The methods of data collection used in this study are questionnaire, observation, statistical method (it is use to calculate the percentage of respondents to a questionnaire) and document analysis, which in short can be grouped into two categories (primary and secondary method of document analysis). Questionnaire data are derived from written or verbal questioning of respondents or some group of respondent.

### Document analysis

Document analysis has to do with reading of several books, articles, and other relevant materials so as to come up with a comprehensive write up. The reason for choosing this method of data collection is that it is thorough. This means that lots of information can be gathered and they will enable me gather new and exposed factors that are after fact research.

### Questionnaire

Part A of the questionnaire consists of questions about the respondent personal background (Age, Sex, Level of education, Nationality, State of origin, Hometown and Locality) and Part B consists of personal questions

relevant to the area of study (what is your native language? Do you speak any other language?, etc.

Questionnaires were personally distributed to the respondents with the help of a friend. However, out of 100 respondents, only 84 were duly filled and returned, and thus found useful for the research work. The decision to make use of questionnaire is to have complete and accurate information about the dialect spoken in the town (Idofian).

### Observation

This paper used *participant observation* which requires the interaction of the researcher with the respondents. In the course of administering the questionnaire, observation was being carried out alongside by engaging the respondent in a casual talk.

### Statistical method used

For the purpose of analyzing the information and data collected in this research, simple percentage will be used for the work and for descriptive analysis. A statistical method of analysis determines the level of significant relationship in the variables.

### Presentation of data

A total of 100 questionnaires was distributed for the purpose of this work while 84 questionnaires was however completed and returned.

The detail of the data collected is tabulated and analyzed below:

**Table 1: Age of speakers of the dialect**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25 and above	30	35.72%
20 - 25	18	21.4%
15 - 20	13	10.92%
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>68.04%</b>

Source: Authors' Field survey, 2013

Table 1 indicates that out of the 84 who responded, 30 of them between the ages of 25 and above speaks the dialect, which make up 35.72% of the respondent, 18 are between the ages of 20-25 which make up 21.45%, while 13 are between the ages 15-20 and they also constitute 10.92% of the

respondents. This indicates that majority of the respondents who speak the dialect are between the ages of 25 and above.

**Table 2: Sex of speakers**

S/N	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	46	54.8%
2	Female	12	14.28%
<b>Total</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>69.08%</b>

Source: Authors' Field survey, 2013

Table 2 indicates that out of the 84 who responded, 46 are male speakers which constitute 54.8% of the respondent, and 12 are female speakers which constitute 14.28% of the respondents. This indicates that majority of the speakers are male.

**Table 3: Level of education of speakers**

S/N	Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Non-formal	9	10.71%
2	Secondary	41	48.80%
3	Tertiary	11	13.09%
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>72.6%</b>

Source: Authors' Field survey, 2013

Table 3 indicates that out of the 84 who responded, 9 speakers does not have formal education which make up 10.71% of the respondents, 41 speakers have secondary education which make up 48.80% of the respondents, and 11 speakers have tertiary education which make up 13.09% of the respondents. In summary, the table indicates that the largest number of speakers only have a secondary level of education.

**Table 4: Distinction between speakers and Non-speakers**

S/N	Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
1	Speaker	60	71.42%
2	Non-speaker	24	28.57%
<b>Total</b>		<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 indicates that out of the 84 respondents, 60 are speakers of Igbomina dialect which make up 71.42% of the respondents and 24 are non-speakers which make up 28.57% of the respondents. These bring us to the conclusion that there are more speakers of the dialect (Igbomina) in the town (Idofian).

### Discussion of Findings

The data presented in the tables above shows that the greater number of respondents are speakers of Igbomina dialect, and the highest number falls within the range of 25 and above, and this is so because of the acclaimed civilization as most of the younger ones do not even know the dialect they speak, except for the few of them who had stayed long enough in the community. Those who had travelled far and near do not know the difference between a standard Yoruba and the Igbomina dialect they speak.

The indigenes of the town (Idofian) are speakers of Igbomina ranging from the old to the young ones, but denial of one's heritage is no big deal, as the educated ones among them claimed to be non-speakers but from the researcher's conversation with them, it was evident that they speak Igbomina dialect of Yoruba.

The non-speakers of Igbomina, I related with were speakers of either the Oyo dialect of Yoruba or the Ilorin dialect of Yoruba, some were non-indigenes of the town (Idofian) but speakers of Igbomina dialect, some claimed the dialect boldly and some even swore they couldn't speak any other dialect apart from Igbomina dialect, even though most of the speakers had travelled far and near, they never allowed any influence on the dialect and the way they relate with people around them.

Some claimed they speak a natural Yoruba but unknown to them that there is nothing like a natural Yoruba except a dialect of a town or a place, so this still brings us back to what was said earlier about mixing Igbomina up with other dialects of Yoruba which some of them assumed to be the standard Yoruba, this was noticeable more among the educated young ones in the town (Idofian).

Also, the use of the dialect in the market place, I was lucky to set out on their market day which gave me the opportunity to relate with the market women concerning the use of the dialects, from what was gathered through transactions and the questions asked, The indigenes speak Igbomina except for non-indigenes who came for the purpose of buying and selling.

Apart from observing the people of Idofian on the part of the dialect they speak, I observed their way of life and I gathered that most of them are uneducated and even the educated among them are not really intelligent. They are artisans and they have unwelcoming attitude which make my work there a little taxing, but I realize success comes only with hard work, so I interacted with those that showed a welcoming attitude and I tried as well to break through some rigid ones among them.

Even though the speech community (Idofian) is a developing town, it has a lot of tendency to shift to another dialect sooner or later since the younger generations decides to throw away their heritage for civilization.

### **Further Discussion of Findings**

Having examined the data collected on the linguistic behaviour of the Igbomina dialect speakers in Idofian, Kwara State, we observed the people are oblivion of the impact that shifting has on them. The consequences as observed are discussed hereunder.

### **Sociocultural Effects of dialectal shift**

#### **Dialect Assimilation**

Dialect assimilation also known as dialect leveling is triggered by contact between dialects often due to immigration and has been observed in most languages with large number of speakers. Contact leading to dialect assimilation can stem from geographical and social mobility which bring speakers from different regions and social levels.

Youths can drive assimilation, as they adopt their speech under the influence of their peers; this is the case of the Igbomina dialect in Idofian. Findings reveal that majority of the speakers refer to themselves as Igbomina whereas their speech does not mark them as Igbomina speakers. This is the situation when speakers are being assimilated into another language or speech form.

#### **Identity Shift**

Identity shift is mostly common among the youths and it is associated with peer pressure. It can have effect on the dialect in question (Igbomina). Considering what is discovered in this study, civilization has obscured the minds of many of the young speakers towards the dialect- their way of life has shifted to a more sophisticated way of life. They use a language that is

not indigenous to them, they regard their mother-tongue as being local even though the dialect still, occasionally, reflects in their speech.

The town (Idofian) is an Igbomina land, but it would not be surprising if there is an occurrence of total assimilation in years to come, the speakers are partially assimilated into the neighbouring dialect. Flexibility of the speakers has made them to be highly receptive to change, thereby increasing the rate of assimilation (see table 4.1).

### **Loss of Cultural Heritage**

Cultural heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. These brings us to another consequence of shift which is the loss of cultural heritage, as part of human activity, cultural heritage produces tangible representations of the value, systems, beliefs, traditions and lifestyles and all these can be lost alongside the language or the dialect of the community whenever a shift occur.

Shifting from one language or dialect to another most times means shifting totally from the original customs and tradition, and this may include religious belief as it is the case in Idofian where their religious practices are becoming more like the religion of the potential community to be shifted to, which is Ilorin community of Kwara State. The cultural belief of the people of the town (Idofian) has been affected as well. They set aside their cultural practices like festivals and native medicine. They shifted to Christianity and Islam as well as modern medicine which is a clear evidence of shift.

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*Socio-Cultural Effects of Dialectal Shift: The Case of Igbomina Speakers*

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