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Correlation between Sociolinguistic Variables and Linguistic Variation in Anambra Igbo

NWOSU, Florence Chika
NNAJI, Charles Ikechukwu

Abstract

This study investigates the connection between the sociolinguistic variables and language variation in Anambra State. The objectives of the study were to: (i) explore the link between language variation and sociolinguistic variables in Anambra Igbo; (ii) examine the sociolinguistic variables that influence linguistic variation in Anambra Igbo; (iii) determine the semantic implications of language variation on Igbo language. The study adopted Communication accommodation Theory as the theoretical framework. To ensure the reliability of the data gathered for the study, the triangulation technique was employed during the gathering of the data for the study by the use of Ibadan 400 wordlist of basic items, interview and observation methods. Purposive sampling method was used to select fifty (50) Anambra Igbo language speakers that cut across various demographic study areas. Using qualitative analysis, the data were analysed to determine how the demographic status of Igbo speakers in Anambra affect their Igbo language use, as well as the semantic implications of any detected variation for Igbo language. The findings show that: (i) the sociolinguistic status of an individual dialect speaker in Anambra State to an extent determines how he/she uses language; (ii) the six major factors recorded as motivators of linguistic variation are age, education, movement, culture, geographical location, language contact/language exposure; and (iii) in spite of the identified linguistic variation in Anambra Igbo as a result of the influence of sociolinguistic variables, the intelligibility was not impaired and the variants provided evidence of synonymy in the language.

Keywords: Linguistic variation, Correlation, Sociolinguistic variables, Anambra Igbo, Communication Accommodation Theory.

1.0 Introduction

This is a sociolinguistic work that aimed at establishing the link between sociolinguistic variables and language variation in Anambra Igbo. Language, with respect to man, involves the production of comprehensible sound by the use of the articulatory speech organs. The

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need for more knowledge in the area of language propelled the early language scholars into linguistic study before the early sixties. By then, the emphasis of these scholars was on formal linguistic theory. The area of importance for the theoretical linguists then was centered on the ideal-hearer situation and linguistic homogeneity in the speech form of any given individual or group. As at that time, no attempt seemed to have been made in relation to language variation and its possible connection to sociolinguistic variables. Nevertheless, the jinx was broken in 1958 when Fischer established in his language study that variation between the use of '-ing' and '-in' in words such as 'stalking', 'talking', etc. in a group of children was influenced by social factors such as gender and social status. Fischer's sociolinguistic attempt into linguistic study served as a motivator which sparked off the interest of other linguists into venturing into functional aspect of linguistic study.

The vocabulary of every language is formed in accordance with its morphological rules, but in using the words in the language, the language speakers may decide to adopt direct or indirect speech strategy during communication due to the demographic status of the language speakers such as age, gender, culture, level of education, language contact/language exposure, geographical location, and social network relationship. Variability in language is made manifest by the way man varies in the manner with which he engages the various forms of linguistic variables in his speech. Chambers (2004) highlights that language speakers express who they are with fine nuance and no little grace, selecting linguistic variation contingent upon the setting in which they are speaking and on not only their own class, sex, age, ethnicity, style and much more, but also dependent upon all those things in the people they are speaking to.

One of the characteristics of language is that language is dynamic; therefore, variation among speakers of a language can be seen as usual. The manner of language use may differ within an individual, among genders, age group, social network relationship, and from region to region. Linguistic context (i.e. the language user, where, and how the language is used), most of the time, is the basic catalyst to differences in language use. No wonder Chambers (2004) argues that the most salient cases of language variation make partly predictable patterns when plotted against their social correlate.

Numerous scholarly contributions have been made to explore the

instigators of variation in language (Orton, (1962); Labov, (1966, 1972), Shuy, (1969); Wolfram, (1969); Dittmar, (1976); Macaulay, (1977); Cheshire, (1978), (1982); Agbedo, (2001); Chambers (2004); Eweama, (2020); and Fakuade, Lawal, and Rafiu, (2020). In the same vein, some studies have thrived to search for the semantic effect of variation in language use (Odebunmi, (2006); Odumuh, (1984), (1987), (1998); Bamgbose, (1982); Adegbija, (1989); Bamiro, (1994); Sule, (2011); Obwoge, (2014); Okunrinmeta, (2014); Babatunde; (2001). In spite of the effort made to trace the instigators and the semantic effect of variation in language, no such work has been done in Anambra Igbo. Hence, this present study examines the connection between linguistic variation and sociolinguistic variables in Anambra Igbo; identifies the sociolinguistic variables that influence language variation in Anambra; and explores the semantic implication of such variation on Igbo language.

2.0 The Studied Area

Anambra State is located within the eastern part of River Niger, with the population of 4, 177, 821 (2006 Census), and has Igbo language as the mother tongue of the people. Anambra, which literally means land that is 'widely spread', takes its identity from the famous Omambala River. Igbo is a Kwa language of the Benue-Congo sub-family of the Volta-Congo and Atlantic Congo branches of the Niger Congo language family (Bendor-Samuel 1989) or the West Benue-Congo subfamily of the Niger-Congo language family (Williamson and Blench 2000). Anambra houses the dialects that are classified as "The Inland West Igbo" [IWI] (Ikekeonwu, 1987) or "The East Niger Group of Dialects" [ENGD] (Nwaozuzu, 2008). The State is bounded in the East by Enugu, in the Southeast by Abia, in the West by Delta and Edo, in the South by Imo, and in the North by Kogi. Anambra is made up of 21 local government areas, which are distributed into the three senatorial districts, namely, Anambra North, Anambra Central, and Anambra South. Figure 1 shows the map of Anambra State.

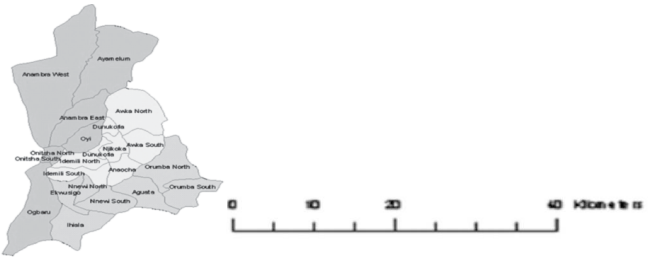


Figure 1:
A map showing the 21 Local Government Areas of Anambra State.

Anambra State is a fountain of business. Towns such as Onitsha, and Nnewi (the Taiwan of Africa) are widely known as castles for commerce, hence, people of different tribes and tongues dwell or visit there for business transactions. The result of this, is that the Anambrarians, which have Igbo language as their native language, apart from the second language they learnt from school and through mobility (that is their second nature), intermingle with these business associates with other languages and in the process are able to learn and speak languages such as English, Pidgin, Hausa, Yoruba, French and other foreign and national languages.

3.0 Empirical Studies in Igbo Language

Earlier studies in Igbo (Hair (1969); Ogbalu (1974); Meir (1975) were mainly on the standard aspect of the language, which constitutes twenty-eight consonants and eight vowels (Nkamigbo 2014). In a bid to extend studies in Igbo language, Nkamigbo carried out a study to establish the phonemic attributes of labialization, aspiration and nasalization in Osuowere, Umuchu, Isukwuato, and Aku dialects. Nkamigbo claimed that her study was motivated by the scholarly works of Ikekeonwu (1984/1987); Ume (1992); Obi, (1997); and Okorji, 1999), which assert the existence of nasalized, aspirated, and labialized consonants in Igbo language without effort to include these contrastive sounds in the Igbo orthography.

Armstrong (1967) examined five Igbo dialects stretching from the west of the River Niger to the eastern end. In the same vein, Welmer's (1973) study, established that central Igbo constitutes the varieties of Igbo spoken in Umuahia and Owerri areas. Bendo-Samuel (1975) also explored the phonology and syntax of Izii and concluded that the Izii dialect of Igbo is an autonomous language. However, studies of Okorji, and Nwankwegu (2009) gathered linguistic data from Izii that refuted Bendo-Samuel's (1975) claim and rather argued that Izii is a dialect variation of Igbo. Ladefoged (1976) noticed the distinctiveness of nasalized stops in Oweri Igbo. Furthermore, Ohiri-Aniche (1985) identified schwa /ə/ and glottalised [t̰] in Mbieri, Owere, and Ubolo-Afo dialects of Igbo. Subsequently, Ikekeonwu (1987) classified Igbo dialects into clusters, using both phonological and grammatical criteria. Based on these criteria, Ikekeonwu grouped Igbo dialects into five clusters namely; The Niger Igbo, Inland West Igbo, Inland East Igbo, Waawa Igbo/Northern Igbo, and Riverain Igbo. According to Ikekeonwu, each dialect cluster has up to thirty dialects. Ikekeonwu

ascribed nasalisation, aspiration, and labialization as distinctive features of Inland West Igbo and Inland East Igbo dialect clusters; labialization as that of the Waawa Igbo/Northern Igbo clusters; while nasalized consonant feature is specific to the Riverain dialect cluster.

Nwaozuzu (2008) in her study classified Igbo dialects into eight major groups, which are; West Niger, East Niger, East Central, Cross River, North Eastern, South Eastern, South Western, and Northern. Nwaozuzu observed that nasalization, aspiration and labialization are distinctive features of the phonology of East Niger, East Central and South Eastern groups of dialects; labialization is distinctive in the North Eastern group of dialects. In an attempt to solve the problem of writing sounds of other Igbo dialects, the Technical Committee on Transcription of the Archival Dictionary Project (Achebe, Ikekeonwu, Eme, Emenanjo, Wanjiku (2011) designed a Composite Synchronic Alphabet of the Igbo Dialects (CSAID). The CSAID comprises the phonetic symbols of the identified sounds in the different Igbo dialects and the letter symbols for each identified sound. The CSAID has the total of ninety-six speech sounds that were identified across the Igbo dialects.

4.0 Empirical Studies on Lexico-semantic Variation

Quite a few researches by intellectuals have been carried out on lexico-semantic variation; for instance, Bamgbose (1982), Adegbija (1989), Bamiro (1994), Odumuh, (1984) and many others in the area of lexico-semantic variation especially as it pertains to lexico-semantic variations of Nigerian English and their contributions have been very beneficial, especially to the Nigerian people.

Sule (2011) did a lexico-semantic analysis of View Point Column of Punch Newspaper to examine the Nigerian English words which are used to express the experiences and thoughts of the Nigerian people. According to her, the sole purpose of the study was to portray and clarify the point that Nigerian English is not a deviation from British Standard English but rather a variation of it. Similarly, Obwoge (2014) did a lexico-semantic analysis of Ekegusii Circumcision Social Varieties in order to consider the social conditioning of the circumcision social varieties. The findings of the study showed that the sound plays an important role in postulating meaning of Ekegusii circumcision social varieties (ECSV) through vowel lengthening. The

study also revealed that gender differentiation in the language is a case of socialization rather than biological. Okunrinmeta (2014) investigated the syntactic and lexico-semantic variations in Nigerian English: Implications and Challenges in the ESL Classroom. He established that the reason for the poor performance of Nigerian students in English is as a result of the sole use of British English for teaching and evaluation purposes in the Nigerian ESL classroom thereby, neglecting the local Nigerian variations, which as it should be expected reflect the linguistic and cultural context that English must, as a necessary condition accommodate if it must function effectively in Nigerian multilingual socio-cultural setting. In the same vein, Okurinmeta further carried out a study on the lexico-semantic variations manifesting in the English of Izon-English bilinguals. In the study, he observed that the Izon language and culture have tremendous influence on the lexico-semantics of the English of Izon speakers in Niger Delta, inhabiting regions of the states of Bayelsa, Edo, Delta, Ondo, Akwa Ibom and Rivers. He also noted that English usage in the Izon setting is closely linked to the Izon culture and shows that the Izon culture determines or stimulates appropriate English usage within the Izon socio-cultural context.

Adegbija (1989) in his investigation on lexico-sematic Variation in Nigerian English, suggested six causes of lexico-semantic variation in Nigerian English. The six causes of lexico-semantic variation in Nigerian English as outlined by Adegbija included: socio-cultural differences between English and Nigerian people; the dynamics of the pragmatics of a multilingual context; the exigencies of differing discourse constraints; media influence; the standardization of idiosyncrasies and errors (e.g. man of timber and calibre, and trouble shooter); and the predominantly formal character of the English taught in Nigeria. Babatunde (2001) intoned that the various causes of lexico-semantic variation have generally led to the classification and types of lexico-semantic variation available in English language. The classifications of these types of lexico-semantic variation as pointed out by Babatunde are: transfer; analogy; acronyms; semantic extension or generalization; narrowing; coinages; and idioms. In the light of the above, this study explores the possible connection between linguistic variation and sociolinguistic variables of age, culture, education, language contact, geographical location of the Igbo language speakers in Anambra State; and also the semantic implication of any arising

variation on Igbo language.

5.0 Social Variables and Lexico-semantics

The use of language in basically all activities of man has placed it at the indispensable position. While other basic needs of man can be put on hold, language may not because it is like the wheel that pilots the affairs of man. In every endeavor of life, man soft pedals and accommodates to have a purpose achieved. In the same vein, language as an entity accommodates variability in order to develop and meet up with communication needs of its speakers.

Several factors may compel the users of language to adjust in the manner with which the language is used. Social variables such as age, culture, gender, education, language contact, geographical location, language development or what may ordinarily be referred to as word borrowing, social network relationship an individual language speaker belongs to may give reason for his/her language use to vary.
Investigation on gender differentiation in language use with regards to taboo expression in Igbo speech community could lead to variation in language use (Omego, (2013). Agbedo's (2001) exploration on language use of linguistic variables (r), (a), (e), (gbo), (ga), (ma), (mɛ), (maa), (ʤa), (ba), and (nije) confirmed that social variables of language contact and social network relationship could lead to language variation. More so, geographical location as the root cause of language variation was traced in Onko dialect of Yoruba (Fakuade, Lawal, and Rafiu, (2020). Users of language cutting across different age range can adopt diverse strategies to express themselves. Some may be explicit or direct in their use of language while some may adopt indirect approach. For instance, old people especially the male can call anything by its original name without being embarrassed, but the young or the female counterpart may out of modesty or cultural restriction apply politeness strategy or engage euphemistic approach in order to save face.

In addition, man, especially the Igbo people are known to be mobile beings. Just like the insatiability nature of man has compelled man to continue to search and accommodate new ideas to survive, language as an entity also adapts to changes and modernisation in order to develop. As a result of social interaction between speakers of different languages, certain lexical items that were not present in a language right from the word go have penetrated into it by the phenomenon of

word borrowing, and are now being used as part of the vocabulary of the language; although with certain modifications here and there in order to conform with the rules of the grammar of the target language.

Word borrowing encompasses the process by which a word from one language is adapted for use in another. Hockett (1958) argued that the speakers of a language have various options to engage in when confronted with new items and ideas in another language. To Hockett, among these options are: loanword, loan-shift, loan-translation or calques, and loan-blend. Hoffer (2005) submits that the set of loanwords is one of the most observable results of intercultural contact and communication. The set of loanwords or borrowed words are usually imported into the vocabulary of each language involved. Similarly, Ikekonwu, Ezikeojiaku, Ubani and Ugoji (1999) assert that word borrowing is another means of producing words in Igbo language. According to them, since Igbo language has associated with languages like English, Hausa and Yoruba, it will not be a new thing to say that Igbo language has borrowed some words from them. Emenanjọ, Dike, Agọmọ, Ezeuko (1999) stated that word borrowing adds to the development and growth of language. They said that Igbo language borrowed some words from languages such as English, Hausa, Igala, Yoruba and others, as a result of social interaction that existed between them.

Furthermore, proximity or geographical location constitutes another salient factor that influences variability in language use among language speakers. The linguistic behavioural patterns of some towns sharing boundaries with other towns with different linguistic background majority of the time get influenced by the linguistic repertoire of each other. The result of such neighbourhood may be visible in the phonology, lexicons and the syntax of the languages involved. Besides, the coming of the missionaries into Africa ushered in a different pattern of life style, which brought with it diverse kinds of cultural heritage vis a vis, civilization, education, government administration and business. Formal education unlike our traditional method of inculcating into both the young and old the rudiments of African life style using oral tradition, brought with it reading and writing in their fashionistic forms. Formal education brought to limelight the knowledge and usage of diverse forms of Igbo language. As majority of Igbo speakers in Anambra State got indoctrinated into

the new system of knowledge acquisition (formal education), the possibility of intermingling their previous knowledge with the new one became obvious in their social patterns which include their manner of language use.

6.0 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted Communication Accommodation Theory for the analysis of the data. Communication accommodation theory (CAT) is a theory of communication developed by Howard Giles in the early 1970s. The theory argues that when people interact they adjust their speech, their vocal patterns and their gestures, to accommodate others. The theory explores the various reasons why individuals emphasize or minimize the social differences between themselves and their interlocutors through verbal and nonverbal communication. The theory focuses on both the intergroup and interpersonal factors that lead to accommodation, as well as the ways that power, macro and micro-context concerns affect communication behaviours. Communication accommodation theory describes two main accommodation processes namely; Convergence and divergence processes. Convergence refers to strategies through which individuals adapt to each other's communicative behaviours to reduce social differences while divergence refers to the instances in which individuals take note of the speech and non-verbal differences between themselves and their interlocutors.

Language functions differently in different situations, and to appreciate how language works, we need to contextualize it appropriately, to establish the relationships between language usage and the exact purposes for which, and circumstances under which, it operates. The contextualized procedures of language that ensue in society emphasize on diversities on that language, for such disparity is central to what makes language and meaning social. Language speakers have ranges of different sets of diversities, and these collections of variances are the material with which they engage in communication. For instance, in Labov's (1966) classic study of the use of [r]~ [∅] variants of /r/ by New York speakers of English, for example, speakers' preferential use of the [r] variant in particular interactional settings was attributed to the prestige associated with this variant. More so, Labov's classic study on sound change on the Island of Martha's Vineyard in Southeastern Massachusetts examined the distribution of raised or centralized

variants in (ay) and (aw) diphthongs (Labov, 1963, 1972). Labov's work was a comparison of the distribution of the centralized and noncentralised variants among the speakers of different ages. He suggested that the differences between the speakers of different ages could be seen as synchronic evidence for the processes of language change that had hitherto been observed only as historical processes. The most important aspect of Labov's study is in its ability to establish that the relationship between social and linguistic variables could be studied systematically. Thus, this study applied Communication Accommodation theory to trace the roles sociolinguistic variables of age, geographical location, gender, language contact, culture, education, social network relationship or any other demographic strata an individual Igbo speaker in Anambra State belongs plays in the way he uses Igbo language, and to explore the eventual semantic effects of such variation.

7.0 Methodology

The study is lexicon-based involving triangulation as the methodological framework. Fifty (50) respondents were purposively selected among the Igbo native speakers from Anambra State. The choice of purposive sampling method was because the selected respondents met with the demographic criteria needed for the study. Such needed criteria included age, gender, mobility, education, social network relationship and others. Interview method was also adopted to collect information on the socio-cultural profile and belief system of the Anambra Igbo speakers. The respondents were administered with the Ibadan 400 wordlist of basic items to supply their individual responses. The observation method was used in form of one-by-one contact between the respondents and the researcher in the course of data collection. This is to avoid any form of bias from one respondent to the other. The analysis applied Communication Accommodation Theory to the elucidated data to determine the influence of the sociolinguistic variables on the speech pattern of Anambra Igbo speakers.

8.0 Data Presentation and Analyses

From the data gathered from the respondents for the study, it was observed that social factors of age, geographical location, language contact, and education had influence on how the speakers of Igbo in Anambra use the vocabulary of Igbo language. Thus, the following are the analysis to illustrate the impact of these sociolinguistic variables on

the use of Igbo language in the studied area:

Age

The age of a language speaker in no mean way determines his/her level of expertise in the use of language. This does not in any way mean that the old in age speaks better than the young in age or vice versa, however, certain factors such as culture and the level of exposure to external influences may have parts to play in the language use of an individual language speaker within a particular age range. Chambers (2004) avows that age is one of the three overriding social categories in modern industrialized society, along with social class and sex, and it is the social attribute that is the primary correlate of language change. Hence, the following demonstrates the effect of age on Igbo language use in Anambra State:

Table 1: Variation According to Age

	Standard Igbo	Old (30 Years and above)	Young (16-29 Years)	Gloss
1	Amụ	amụ, utu, ihe nwoke jiri buru odogwu	amụ, ihe nwoke, mmaagha, nwoke m	Penis
2	ọtụ	ọtụ, ikpu	ọtụ, ihe nwaanyi	Vagina
3	Agwọ	agwọ, eriri	agwọ	Snake
4	Anyaelu	ifeenu, dimgba	ifeenu	Convulsion

From Table 1, we notice that the young in age among the respondents who are between the ages of 16-29 retained the standard form amụ (penis), ọtụ (vagina), agwọ (snake) in Data 1, 2 and 3. They gave the dialectal form for datum 4 as ifeenu (convulsion). On the other hand, this same group negotiate another communicative style by adopting euphemistic and politeness strategies in supplying the data for Datum 1 as ihe nwoke, mmaagha and nwoke m and in Datum 2 as ihe nwanyị. The essence of the use of euphemism and politeness strategy by the young in age may be to appear accommodating to the other interactant, or due to culture restriction, not to appear overbearing or to save face. However, the old in age were direct in their language use. They maintained the standard form amụ, ọtụ and agwọ in Data 1, 2, and 3.

They gave the dialectal variants for Data 2 and 4 as ikpu and ifeenu, respectively. The old in age, at the same time, being the custodians of the language and culture engaged the use of metaphor as in Datum 1 - ihe nwoke jiri bụrụ odogwu 'something that makes man a hero', Datum 3 - eriri 'rope' (snake) and Datum 4 dimgba (convulsion). One of the superstitious beliefs in Anambra is that there are objects whose specific names are not used during conversation. It is believed that if their names are mentioned at a particular time or occasion, it spells doom. For example, whenever a discussion about a snake is taking place, the discussants rather refer to it as a rope, if not at the end of the discussion, a snake will be seen around. Also, whenever a child convulses, people around do not refer to the child's dilemma as convulsion, else, the velocity of the attack may be so bad that the child may die in the process.

Geographical Location

Another social variable observed in our data is geographical location. The data revealed that the use of phonological variants [h], [ɸ], [r], [ɾ̃], [l], in the speech of Anambra Igbo speakers is as a result of the geographical location of the dialect communities or the speakers, taking Igbo-Ukwu, Umuchu and Ụtụ dialect communities as examples. Table 2 shows the demonstration effect of geographical location in language use.

Table 2: Variation According to Geographical Location

S/N	Igbo	Nnewi North	Igbo-Ukwu /Umuchu (Aguata LGA)	Awgbu (Orumba North LGA)	Ozubulu (Ekwusigo LGA)	Onitsha North LGA	Awka (North and South LGA)	Awkuzu (Oyi LGA)	Gloss
1	Ihe	Ife	ih^{w}e	iɸe	ife	Ive	iɸe	Ive	something
2	ahịhịa	afifia	ahịhịa	aɸiɸia	afifia	avivia	aɸiɸia	avivia	Grass
3	anụọhịa	anụọfia	anụọhịa	anụọɸia	anụọfia	anụọvia	anụọɸia	anụọvia	animal
4	Ikpere	Ikpele	Ikpere	Ikpele	Ikpele	Ikpele	Ikpele	Ikpele	Knee
5	Ara	Ala	ar̃a	Ala	Ala	Ala	Ala	Ala	Breast
6	ọbara	ọbala	ọbar̃a	ọɸala	ọbala	ọbala	ọɸala	ọbala	Blood
7	Mmiri	Mmili	Mmiri	Mmili	Mmili	Mmili	Mmili	Mmili	Water
8	Ogologo	ogonogo	Ogologo	ogonogo	ogonogo	Ogonogo	ogonogo	ogonogo	tall/long

Table 2 shows that some Igbo speakers from Anambra South, using Igbo-Ukwu and Umuchu dialects speakers as examples, exhibit nasalization, labialization, and some of the sounds available in the standard Igbo in their speech because of their nearness to some towns in Imo State that attest the same phonological sounds. Equally Awka North and South and Awgbụ in Orumba North use a peculiar phonological variant [ɸ] for [h] that is similar to that of their neighbouring towns in Enugu State in Data 1, 2, 3 and 6, (iɸe, aɸịɸịa, anụọɸịa, ọɸala) while maintaining the normal dialectal variants in Data 4, 5, 7, and 8 (ikpele, ala, mmili, ogonogo). Onitsha and Awkụzụ use the voiced labio-dental fricative [v] for the standard glottal fricative [h] as seen in ahịhịa--avịvịa, anụọhịa--anụọvịa. Dialects of Nnewi North and Ọzụbụlụ use the voiceless labio-dental fricative [f] for the glottal fricative [h] as seen in ahịhịa--afịfịa, anụọhịa--anụọfịa. All the sampled dialects in the State use lateral sound [l] for the retroflex except Igbo-Ukwu and Umuchu as seen in ala--.ar̃a, ọbala--ọbar̃a The usage of these diverse linguistic phenomena by these dialect communities is due to their geographical location in Anambra.

Language Contact

The influence of language contact due to social interaction between people from different linguistic backgrounds is equally another reason for lexico-semantic variation in Anambra Igbo. Movement of Anambra indigenes from their natural background to another entirely different linguistic environment, or the movement of other people with different language and culture into Anambra, either for the sake of marriage, education, business or so, results to variability in language. The subsequent analysis in Table 3 shows the effect of language contact on Anambra Igbo:

Table 3: Variation According to Language Exposure

S/N	Igbo	Nnewi North LGA	Ọzụbụlụ (Ekwusigo LGA)	Onitsha North LGA	Awkụzụ (Oyi LGA)	Awka (North and South LGA)	Awgbụ (Orumba North)	Meaning	Source Language
1	chiifu	shiifu	shiifu	chiivu	chiivu	chiiɸu	chiiɸu	Chief	English
2	Fanụ	fanụ	fanụ	Vanụ	Vanụ	ɸanụ	ɸanụ	Fan	English
3	chakolu	shakoru	shakoru	chakolu	chakolu	chakolu	Chakolu	Charcoal	English
4	miluku	mirukụ	miruku	miluku	miluku	miluku	miluku	Milk	English
5	Alụman aki	Arụman aki	arụmana ki	Alụman aki	alụmana ki	Alụman aki	alụmana ki	Almanac	English
6	Bọdụ	bọdụ	bọdụ	Bọdụ	Bọdụ	ɸọdụ	ɸọdụ	Board	English
7	kulọkụ	kurọkụ	kurọkụ	kulọkụ	kulọkụ	Kulọkụ	Kulọkụ	Clock	English
8	bulọkụ	burọkụ	burọkụ	bulọkụ	bulọkụ	ɸulọkụ	ɸulọkụ	Block	English
9	Joro	Jolo	jolo	Joro	Joro	Joro	Joro	jero (millet)	Yoruba
10	agboro	agbolo	agbolo	agboro	agboro	Agboro	Agboro	Agbero (hooligan)	Yoruba
11	ashawo	achawo	achawo	ashawo	Ashawo	Ashawo	Ashawo	ashewo (prostitute	Yoruba
12	osikapa	osikapa	Osikapa	osikapa	osikapa	Oshikapa	Oshikapa	shinkafa (rice)	Hausa
13	Suya	Suya	Suya	Suya	Suya	Shuya	Shuya	suya (roasted meat)	Hausa

From Table 3, we observe that Data 1-8 are words borrowed from English, 9-11 are from Yoruba, 12-13 are from Hausa. The loaned words are modified to suit the phonotactics of the standard and the dialectal versions of Igbo language. For example, the standard voiceless labio-dental fricative [f] changes to the voiced labio-dental fricative [v] in the dialects of Onitsha North and Awkụzụ in Oyi LGA as seen in chiifu--.chiivu The voiceless labio-dental fricative [f] and the voiced bilabial stop [b] become the voiceless bilabial fricative [ɸ] in the dialects of Awka North and South LGA and Awgbụ in Orumba North LGA as seen in fanụ--ɸanụ, bọdụ--ɸọdụ. Also, the voiceless palatal sound [ʧ] changes to the voiced palatal sound [ʃ] in the dialects of Nnewi North and Ọzụbụlụ in Ekwusigo LGA as sen in ashawo--achawo. More so, the lateral sound [l] becomes the retroflex [r] and vice versa in Nnewi North and Ọzụbụlụ dialects as seen in agboro--agbolo. Linguistic borrowing is a feature that can be termed as both inter and intra language phenomenon. Just as speakers of two or more languages

relate and in the process have their respective languages intermix, so do speakers of dialects of the same language influence one another linguistically.

Internal Migration

Movement to and fro of different dialects speakers into different dialect communities results to dialect contact and eventually variation as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Variation Due to Movement

S/N	Igbo	Dialectal Influence	Source	Meaning
1	Árá	Ɛ́rá	Enugu	breast
2	àhú	Ɛ̀hú	Enugu	body
3	Ákà	Ɛ́ká	Enugu	hand
4.	ọ́nū	Ɛ́nū	Enugu	mouth
5.	Ákwà	Ɛ́kwà	Enugu	cloth
6.	Àkwá	Ɛ̀kwá	Enugu	egg

The analysis on Table 4 is the effect of the influx of Igbo speakers from different dialect backgrounds in and out of Anambra, as well as the movement of the Anambra Igbo speakers to other Igbo dialect communities. The movement results to Anambra Igbo speakers imbibing the use of a new phonological unit – the central vowel [Ɛ]as seen in the following: Árá—Ɛ́rá, àhụ́-- Ɛ̀hụ́, Ákà—Ɛ́ká, ọ́nụ̄--Ɛ́nụ̄, Ákwà—Ɛ́kwà.

Education

Education, likewise, plays a salient role in the variability of language in Anambra Igbo. Difference in accent can be traced to diversity in the educational levels of the individuals. Our data show that our educated respondents interchange between the standard and the dialectal versions of Igbo language. The use of both the standard and the dialectal forms of Igbo in the studied area is presented in Table 5:

Table 5. Variation Due to Educational Exposure

	Standard Igbo	Anambra Variants	Gloss
1	òròmá	òròmá, òlòmá	Orange
2	èkèlé	èkèlé, èkènè, ɛ̀kɛ̀nɛ́	Greeting
3	há	há, fâ, vá, ɸá, hɛ́	They, them
4	únèrè	únèrè, únèlè, ómìnè	Banana
5	ósísí	ósísí, óshíshí	Stick
6	órú	órú, ólú	Work
7	átúrū	átúrū, átúlū	Sheep
8	ébùbó	ébùbó, éùbò, éùɸò	Allegation
9	òtitó	òtitó, , òʧītʃó	Praise
10	Íhéọmá	Íhéọmá, Íhọ́má, Ífọ́má, Ívọ́má, Íɸọ́má	good thing, name
11	ńnéọmá	ńnéọmá, ńnọ́má	good mother
12	úmùákā	úmùákā, úmàákā, úmùázì, úmaázì úmùárò, úmaárò, úmùɛ́kā òìtó, úmɛ́ɛkā	Children
13	ózíọmá	ózíọmá, ózọ́ọmá, ózíọmá, ózọ́ọmá	good news

From Table 5, we observe that due to influence of education, the respondents had the privilege to engage the two versions of Igbo language in their speech. The respondents were able to provide both the standard form and the dialectal variants of the data, examples, data 1, òròmá, òlòmá, data 2, èkèlé, èkènè, ɛ̀kɛ̀nɛ́. Data 8–9 are evidence of consonant elision; éùbò, éùɸò from ébùbó; òìtó from òtitó; 10–11 are evidence of vowel elision; Íhọ́má, Ífọ́má, Ívọ́má from Íhéọmá; 12-13 are evidence of regressive assimilation; ụ́mụ̀ákā--ụ́màákā, ụ́mụ̀ázì--ụ́maázì, ụ́mụ̀árò--ụ́maárọ, ózíọmá--ózọ́ọmá.

9.0 Conclusion/Discussion of Findings

This study, using Communication accommodation theory with copious data from Anambra Igbo, has with a systematic analysis validated that there is correlation between linguistic variation and sociolinguistic variables in Anambra State. The variations found in the study are mainly due to the demographic status of the Anambra Igbo speakers

which are age, geographical location, language contact, education, and movement. We noticed that the age of our respondents made a significant impact on their language use. This manifested in their use of direct locution by the respondents that were 30 years and above, who are in this work referred to as old in age while those under the ages of 16-29 otherwise referred to as young in age engaged euphemism, direct, and politeness strategies as their own approaches to language use as shown Table 1.

The data in Table 2 also confirmed that proximity between dialects of the same language can result to dialect contact among the speakers of the different dialects of the same language or vice versa. For instance, the dialects of awka North and South and Awgbụ attest the voiceless bilabial fricative [ɸ] for the standard voiced bilabial stop [b] in words such as [aɸiɸia] and [anụọɸia] for [ahịhịa] and [anụọhịa] respectively as a result of their nearness to some dialect communities in Enugu State, who have the voiceless bilabial fricative [ɸ] as one of their consonant sounds. Also, dialect speakers from Igbo-Ukwu, Umuchu, and Ụtụ maintain the use of the standard consonant sounds such as the glottal fricative [h], the retroflex [r] and the lateral [l]. These groups of dialects speakers also nasalize the retroflex [r̃] when it occurs in between the open front vowel [a].

We equally observed that the use of borrowed words is a general phenomenon among all the dialects speakers of Igbo language in Anamabra; and that is caused by the interrelationship of the Anambra Igbo speakers with the other people from different language backgrounds, as shown in Table 3.

Cultural heritage is another outstanding and explicit indicator of variation in language use in Anambra Igbo. The usage of Igbo lexicons in Anambra Igbo setting is closely connected to the Igbo culture and shows that the cultural norms of the Anambrarians has significant impact on the appropriate Igbo language usage within their socio-cultural context. This is evident in the manner with which the old in age adhered to the norms and ethos of Anambra Igbo culture in their language use in data number 3 and 4 in Table 1, where they used [ériríˊ] for ' agwọ' and [dìmgbáˊ] for 'iheelu'.

The study also revealed that education is another salient instigator of language variation in Anambra Igbo. The educational exposure of the Igbo speakers in the State avail them the opportunity to alternate the use of the standard and dialectal forms of Igbo in their speech as is demonstrated in Table 4 of the analysis.

The study also showed that linguistic borrowing is an inter and intra language phenomenon by which linguistic variables either phonological, lexical, morphological, or syntactic can be assimilated into a language via interrelationship between language speakers of different languages and movement of speakers of different dialects of the same language.

In conclusion, variability in language use is an indispensable phenomenon in Anambra Igbo since the demographic strata an individual language user belongs, plays a vital role in determining the manner he/she uses language. However, in spite of the identified linguistic variation in the study as a result of the influence of sociolinguistic variables, the intelligibility was not impaired and the variants provided evidence of synonymy in the language. This goes a long way to confirm Weinreich, Labov and Herzog (1968) assertion that not all variability and heterogeneity in language structure involves change, but all change involves variability and heterogeneity. Equally, Honeybone (2011) opines that linguistic variability occurs when one meaning can be attached to more than one form. Honeybone stressed that an individual language speaker can use one form of an item one minute and another form the next. He therefore categorsied these various forms of a single linguistic item as multiple identifiable variants or forms.

This work has concentrated on the connection between sociolinguistic variables and linguistic variation in Anambra Igbo. It will therefore serve as a reference point for future research on variation studies. It has also served as an avenue to showcase some synonyms that exist in Anambra Igbo as a result of the influence of the sociolinguistic variables of age, geographical location, language exposure, movement, and education. Thus, it is recommended that more linguistic variation research should be carried out on the dialects of Igbo language as a whole.

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