

Affixes variations in the Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT:

This study explored the variations in affixes (prefixes and suffixes) within the Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria, focusing on the Igbo language. It aims to document and preserve the affixes of the Igbo language spoken in Anambra East Local Government, which consists of the following towns: Aguleri, Enugwu Aguleri, Eziagulu Otu Aguleri, Enugwu-Otu Aguleri, Mkpunando-otu Aguleri, Ikem Ivite, Igbariam, Umuoba Anam, Nando, Umueri, and Nsugbe, as the dialects of the Igbo language are rapidly disappearing. Igbo is renowned for its rich system of affixation, and this research examined how these affixes manifest in perfective, negation, past tense, and future tense constructions. The research used a combination of methods, including interviews with native speakers, recordings of conversations, and a review of existing literature on the Igbo language. Data collected from various towns in Anambra East highlight distinctive morphological features unique to this region. The perfective marker typically combines a prefix and suffix with the root verb, while negation is marked by a specific suffix distinct from the standard Igbo. Past tense marking in Anambra East involves a unique suffix, reflecting tonal and morphological variations from standard Igbo, and the future tense is indicated by a different prefix. This study underscored the linguistic and cultural diversity within the Igbo-speaking communities, illustrating how regional variations enrich the overall linguistic landscape of Igbo. By examining these affix variations, the research provides valuable insights into the complexities of Igbo morphology and the cultural narratives embedded in its linguistic structures.

Keywords: morphology, morpheme, affix, Igbo language, dialect, archiving.

INTRODUCTION:

The study of linguistics enables us to look at all aspects of a language. During communication, both language and dialect are often in use depending on the context and the participants of the communication. No tool of communication is too ordinary to study, be it a dying language or unrecognized dialect. On this note, every dialect needs to be preserved for historical purposes. Igbo language is one of the major languages in Nigeria that consists of many dialects. Most of them are only recognized by their accents and not the linguistic components of the dialects. From time immemorial, Igbo people have been campaigning and craving for a generally accepted configuration of the Igbo language, though at some point in 1961, there was a ray of light at the end of the tunnel with the advent of Onwu orthography. However, there are still so many challenges the Igbo language is facing today because as life evolves, new inventions, new challenges, among others emerges, and each comes with a concept. Therefore, how can we tackle these problems without having all dialects of this language,

Igbo, on the map? Nothing in the world is absolutely new. Historically, its likes may have happened somewhere unrecognized and archiving historical events will definitely be an avenue to mitigate the challenges we face towards naming or generating words for contemporary things. Therefore, dialects of every language should be studied, and the most efficient channel through which this task can be accomplished is via linguistic discipline. In the study of linguistics, we have five major fields of study; phonetics, phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax. However, this study focuses on morphology, the study of words.

In the absence of sounds, words are generally considered to be the basic elements of language; and they are probably the most accessible linguistic units to the layman (Radford et al., 2009, p.127). Furthermore, O'Grady and Archibald (2016, p.100) opine that nothing is more important to language than words because each comes with its meaning. The concept of 'word' exists in everyone's vocabulary (McCarthy, 2002, p.1). In addition, the use of words

remains the building blocks of any effective communication. In the study of words, we have simple and complex (Akmajian et al., 2001, p.15). Simple words remain indivisible, have an independent meaning and can accommodate other morphemes while a complex word can be divided into morphemes, the smallest meaningful units in a language (Brinton and Brinton, 2010, p.82). In the English language, the word 'unfaithful' consists of three morphemes: un-, faith, and -ful. It's important to note that the morpheme 'faith' is an independent word and can stand alone. Therefore, it is classified as a free morpheme, also known as the root. On the other hand, the morphemes un- and -ful are bound morphemes because they cannot stand alone and convey meaning (Radford et al, 2009, p.140). This implies that they need to be connected to another part to remain in existence. Affixes are the bound morphemes in a word. There are numerous interpretations of affixes by different experts. For instance, Matthews (1991) describes an affix as any component in a word's morphological structure that is not a root. Therefore, in the case of this Igbo language word 'adighi, a- and - ghi are affixes whereas 'di' is the root. English has two kinds of affixes: prefixes and suffixes (Brinton and Brinton, 2010, p.85) while Igbo has prefixes, interfixes and suffixes. Examples can be seen in the following word: *erimeri* (celebration) *eri-* (to eat) prefix, *-m-* interfix, *-eri* (to eat) suffix. The unique nature of these two languages portrays the individuality of various languages and so do dialects of a language. This results in the research on the affixes of the Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State. Anambra East is a local government area in Anambra State, south-central Nigeria. Towns that constitute this local government are Aguleri, Enugwu Aguleri, Eziagulu Otu Aguleri, Enugwu-Otu Aguleri, Mkpunando-otu Aguleri, Ikem Ivite, Igbariam, Umuoba Anam, Nando, Umueri, and Nsugbe. This local government area is situated in the heart of Anambra State, serves as proof of the varying languages present in Nigeria's rich cultural heritage. This study focused on the morphological features, specifically affix variations that define the towns within this region. The exploration spans past tense construction, future tense construction, perfective construction, and negative construction, collectively forming the foundation of inflectional morphology.

Review of Related Literature:

According to Anagbogu, Mbah & Eme (2010, p.140), morphology is a level of grammar that studies how morphemes organize themselves to form words. Essentially, it delves into the processes involved in constructing words. Typically, morphology can be divided into two types: inflectional and derivational. Inflectional morphology focuses on the predictable changes a word undergoes due to syntax, without affecting its lexical category. For example, the word

"pig" is a noun in its singular form, while "pigs" is a noun in its plural form. Therefore, the addition of the plural marker "s" has little effect on its meaning, but it does alter the form of the word. The most common changes include the plural and possessive forms of nouns, the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives, and the past tense, past participle, and progressive forms of verbs. In contrast, derivational morphology examines how words are formed from morphemes. Traditionally, it was thought that when a word is derived from another word, its lexical category changes. For instance, the word "slowness" (noun) is derived from the word "slow" (adjective). However, in some instances, the derived word retains its lexical category, such as the word "friendship" (noun), which is derived from the word "friend" (noun), and both words belong to the same lexical category. One of the components of any language is a word. Therefore, no language can exist without words. Words have a central position in language learning. A good sentence should consider the components of the sentence structure, which has at least a subject and a main verb to point out a complete thought or just a verb, depending on the language. The subject and verb should have a relationship toward the order and arrangement of the clauses in a sentence, a group of words expressing a complete thought. It means that using appropriate words plays an important role in making a good sentence. All words in any language can be classified based on morphology. Ackema & Neeleman (2004, p.3) state that morphology is a generative system that defines grammatical word structures, and such a generative system does not directly link word formation to storage. However, it does determine what new complex word can be added to the lexicon. Also (Anagbogu, Mba & Eme, 2010, p.140) define morphology as the level of grammar that studies the ways morphemes organize themselves to form words. According to Booij (2007, p.23), morphology is a sub-discipline of linguistics but perhaps also can be referred to as a part of the grammar of a language that contains the rules of inflection and word formation. In some conditions, the words may change their function in a sentence such as adjective to noun, noun to adjective, and adjective to a verb, among others. When such change process(es) occur in morphology it is called derivational. Therefore, derivational can be said to be the process of forming a new word on the base of an existing word. It is in the study of morphology that we study morpheme. According to Katamba, (1993, p.19), a morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning. A morpheme cannot be decomposed into smaller units which are either meaningful by themselves or mark a grammatical function like singular or plural number in the noun. Echoing the above, Anagbogu, Mba & Eme, (2010, p.140) define morpheme as a unit of morphology. This simply means that the morpheme is used to refer to the smallest indivisible form which has

a specific grammatical function. Furthermore, traditionally, a morpheme is defined as a minimal meaningful unit which implies that every morpheme has a readily identifiable meaning. However, Katamba (1993, p.23) refutes the traditional meaning of morphemes by providing examples to demonstrate that morphemes cannot always be assigned a consistent meaning. He buttressed his fact using '-fer' derived from the Latin word 'ferre' meaning 'to bear, bring, send' and for instance, the meaning 'bring' cannot be maintained in words like prefer, infer, confer, transfer and refer. It is based on this type of argument that prompted Aronoff (1976, pp.8-10) to claim that the word must be meaningful and that meaningfulness should be an optional criterion in the definition of the morpheme.

In the realm of morphology, two types of morphemes exist: free and bound. As their names suggest, free morphemes can stand on their own and bound morphemes cannot (Rowe & Levin, 2016). Free morphemes are the smallest units of words that can produce meaning independently, such as nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. On the other hand, bound morphemes are the smallest units of words that cannot produce a complete word or lexical meaning on their own, such as affixations (Somathasan, 2015). Affixes are morphemes that only occur when attached to other morphemes, such as roots, stems, or bases. When bound morphemes are combined with roots, they form new words and alter the original meaning. However, the bound morpheme must always be accompanied by the root or free morpheme to create the full lexical meaning of the word. There are two types of affixes: derivational and inflectional. Derivational affixes change the class of the root or base, forming complex lexemes that may or may not be stored in the speaker's mental lexicon (Ackema & Neeleman, 2004, p.3). They may also change the grammatical category of the word. For example, the word "singer" is comprised of two morphemes: "sing" (the base morpheme) and "er" (the bound morpheme). Inflectional affixes, however, do not change the part of speech or create a new word when attached to the root or base. This was portrayed in Okafor & Eugene's (2016) study on morphological variation between Idemili and Onicha dialects of the Igbo from the angle of perfective construction, past tense construction and negative construction which are all under the umbrella of inflectional morphology. From the findings, Idemili uses 'na' to indicate the perfective marker while Onicha uses 'go'. In indicating the past tense marker, Idemili and Onicha use the same past tense marker 'lu' or 'li' as the case may be. Finally, Idemili uses 'ho' to indicate the negative marker while Onicha uses 'ro' to indicate it. Therefore, as languages of the same group have similarities and differences, so dialects of the same language. Consequently, every language has its affixes, patterns and rules. Affixes are bound

morphemes that are attached at the word-initial (prefix), word-final (suffix) or word medial (interfix). The process of attaching affixes is called affixation. It is a morphological process of adding affixes to stems/roots to modify, extend or change the meaning or function of the word (Nwankwegu, 2013). As aforementioned, there are two types of affixes and it is based on their function; derivational and inflectional. Derivational affixes bring about a change in meaning and word class of the words to which they are affixed. Examples: slow (adjective) __slowness (noun), stop (verb) __stoppage (noun). On the other hand, inflectional affixes do not involve any change of meaning or word class. In Igbo, as stated earlier, affixation affects only verbs as this is the only word class that accepts affixation in the language. Both processes of derivation and inflection occur in Igbo but for this work, only the inflectional affixes will be considered. Verbs are inflected for both tense and aspect in Igbo. Here, our focus is on one of the dialects that also exists in the Igbo language.

The Encyclopaedia Americana (2004, p.731) states that "languages may be classified from several viewpoints and for various purposes. The two basic classifications are typological and genetic". Genetic classification groups together languages presumed to have arisen from a common source. It reflects languages that share common ancestors. The characteristics shared by related languages are hardly by chance. According to <http://www.rogerblench.info/RBOP.htm> "Genetically, Igbo is one of the African languages that belong to the new Benue-Congo of the Niger-Congo language family. Igbo is the only major language of Eastern Nigeria. The Igbo language is spoken indigenously in Abia, Anambra, Akwa Ibom, Benue, Delta, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, and Rivers". Typologically, Igbo is a tonal language. It has three tones: the high, the low and the down step. The Igbo language has several dialects distinguished by accent or orthography, but almost mutually intelligible. The Igbo language is widely spoken in Nigeria, with an estimated 24 million speakers and has been the subject of many studies over the years. One of the earliest works on the Igbo language is Bolaji's (1966) whose work was instrumental in providing a detailed description of the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the Igbo language. Bolaji's work on the Igbo language is widely regarded as a seminal contribution to African linguistics. His study provides a comprehensive analysis of the sound system, word structure, and grammar of Igbo. It is particularly notable for its detailed description of the tonal system of Igbo, which plays a crucial role in the language's phonology, and for its analysis of the complex morphological structure of Igbo words. Emenanjo (1972) analyzed the dialectical variations in the Igbo language and proposed a standardized form of Igbo that would be widely accepted and used for communication and

teaching purposes. He focused on the phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics of the language and provided rules for their usage. His work has been instrumental in promoting the use of a standard form of Igbo, which has helped to enhance communication among speakers of the language and has also encouraged the development of Igbo literature and culture. Clopper and Pisoni (2004) in their research opine that one can identify the dialect of a region through listening with the aid of the acoustic-phonetic cues in dialect categorization. The stated fact was backed up by the research they carried out stemmed by sentence-length utterances using 11 male speakers in their twenties from the TIMIT Acoustic-Phonetic Speech body; all of them belong to various areas of the United States. The listeners were asked to listen to two various sentences and eight novel sentences and categorize each talker into one of six geographic regions. From the findings, the listeners were able to classify talkers based on the experiment. Also, the listeners focused on certain phonetic signals in their speech, which helped them to affiliate every talker to a certain dialect. Languages across this world are noted for dialectal diffusion. For instance, the English language has variations which include British English, Australian English, Nigerian English South- African English, and so on. These variations are distinct in their various ways. This can be mirrored between British English which is different from that of the American, and the talks of these two different groups also differ from Australian English. If speakers of a certain language speak different varieties of the language, it can lead to linguistic diversity and richness within that language. Dialectal diffusion occurs through various channels such as migration, colonization, trade, and globalization, resulting in the development of new dialects and the blending of linguistic features. Understanding and appreciating these language variations can help promote cultural diversity and mutual understanding among speakers of different dialects. It also highlights the dynamic nature of language and the importance of preserving linguistic heritage while embracing linguistic evolution. In the drive to improve the Igbo language, Echeruo (1998) unveiled the Igbo-English Dictionary which became an important reference work on the Igbo language. It includes a wide range of Igbo words, their definitions, and examples of how they are used in context. The dictionary is a valuable resource for anyone looking to learn the Igbo language, as well as for those who are already familiar with it and want to expand their vocabulary and improve their understanding of the language. It is also useful for scholars and researchers studying the Igbo language and culture. Furthermore, Okoli and Igboanusi (2005) is a seminal work that provides an in-depth account of the Igbo language. Their study covers the fundamental aspects of the Igbo language, including its phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. They provided a comprehensive

understanding of the language and its structure, making it a valuable resource for anyone interested. The authors have drawn on their extensive knowledge of the Igbo language to present a detailed and insightful analysis of the language, including its historical development and contemporary usage. The book is written in an accessible style and is accompanied by numerous examples, making it an ideal resource for both beginners and advanced learners of the Igbo language. Recently, the world has seen a growing interest in using technology to document and preserve languages. Nkwocha et al. (2018) developed the Igbo Text-To-Speech (TTS) system to align with the contemporary technology trend to level up the Igbo language. This system uses advanced machine learning algorithms to convert written Igbo text into spoken language, providing a means to digitally preserve and promote the Igbo language spoken by millions across Nigeria and other parts of Africa, making it one of the most widely spoken languages in the region. However, with the advent of modern technology and the influence of other dominant languages, the use of Igbo has declined in recent years, putting it at the risk of being lost entirely. Therefore, the Igbo TTS system aims to address this challenge by providing an innovative solution that allows the language to be preserved in the digital age. The system works by analyzing the phonetic properties of written Igbo text and using this information to generate spoken language. The resulting audio output is clear, natural-sounding, and can be customized to fit different contexts and situations. This makes it possible to use the Igbo TTS system in various applications, including language education, speech therapy, and digital content creation. The Igbo TTS system is an innovative and promising technological solution that can help preserve and promote the Igbo language. With its advanced machine-learning algorithms and natural-sounding audio output, the system has the potential to make a significant impact in the field of language documentation and preservation. This introduces us to the concept of archiving.

Archiving is the process of collecting, organizing, and preserving records and documents for future reference and use. The importance of archiving cannot be overemphasized, as it ensures that valuable information is not lost over time. This literature review aims to provide an overview of related works on archiving. UNESCO's (2013) report provides an overview of the importance of safeguarding documentary heritage, including the challenges and solutions for preserving physical and digital records. The report highlights the role of archiving in protecting cultural heritage and promoting education and research. Tanner (2010) examines the challenges and solutions for digital preservation, including using metadata, preservation policies, and establishing archives and repositories. The book highlights the

importance of archiving in ensuring the long-term accessibility of digital records. Forde (2009) examines the challenges and solutions for archiving and preserving digital records, including the need for digital preservation policies, metadata management, and digital forensics. The article highlights the importance of archiving in ensuring the long-term accessibility of digital records. Gilliland-Swetland (2000) portrays the role of archiving in the digital environment, including the challenges and solutions for digital preservation and the importance of archiving in ensuring the long-term accessibility of digital records. Furthermore, Gilliland-Swetland's (2009) article discusses the challenges and opportunities for archives in the 21st century, including the need for digital preservation policies, metadata management, and the establishment of archives and repositories. The article highlights the importance of archiving in ensuring the long-term accessibility of records and documents. Cox (2001) provides an overview of archives and manuscripts, including the challenges and solutions for archiving and preserving physical and digital records. The book highlights the importance of archiving in ensuring the long-term accessibility of records and documents. Crockett (1996) provides an overview of archives and records management, including the challenges and

solutions for archiving and preserving physical and digital records. The book highlights the importance of archiving in ensuring the long-term accessibility of records and documents. Therefore, to avoid the loss of Igbo cultural heritage which language is one of them and happens to be the most paramount, it is of utmost importance to collate all dialectal data for future improvement of the language.

Affixes variations in the Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State:

The variations in affixes (prefixes, suffixes, infixes) in the Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria, would typically reflect the linguistic characteristics of the Igbo language spoken in that region. Igbo, one of Nigeria's major languages, is known for its rich system of affixation, which includes prefixes, suffixes, and infixes that modify the meaning of words. However, from the data gathered, the focus is just the prefix and the suffix as they are reflected in the following constructions; perfective marker, negation marker, past tense marker and future tense marker. The table below sums up the variations that exist in the mentioned construction of the towns that make up the Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra state.

Town	Perfective marker	Negation marker	Past tense marker	Future tense marker
Aguleri	Ngozi ejego avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Enugwu Aguleri	Ngozi ejewo avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Eziagulu-otu Aguleri	Ngozi ejewo avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Enugwu otu Aguleri	Ngozi ejewo avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Mkpunando-otu Aguleri	Ngozi ejewo avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Ikem Ivite	Ngozi ejego avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Igbariam	Ngozi ejego avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Umuoba anam	Ngozi ejego avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Nando	Ngozi ejego avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Umueri	Ngozi ejego avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia
Nsugbe	Ngozi ejego avia	Ngozi ejerọ avia	Ngozi jeli avia	Ngozi ya-eje avia

Perfective Construction:

A perfective marker in linguistics typically refers to an element or a morpheme that indicates that an action or event described by a verb is viewed as a completed whole, without emphasizing its internal structure or

duration. In the Igbo language, the alveolar lateral approximant /l/ and open front unrounded vowel /a/ are together –la used to mark perfective constructions. Also, different other languages/dialects employ various strategies to mark perfectivity. For example,

some languages/dialects use specific verb endings or affixes to mark perfective constructions. Some use auxiliary verbs or particles to indicate perfectivity. In other cases, perfectivity can be encoded through the inherent lexical aspect of verbs themselves, without additional morphological marking. However, affixes are used to mark perfectivity in Anambra East Local Government Area. In the above table, the following towns Aguleri, Ikem Ivite, Igbariam, Umuoba Anam, Nando, Umueri and Nsugbe use the prefix ‘e’ open-mid front unrounded vowel, ‘je’ the root verb and the suffix ‘go’ that constitutes the consonant ‘g’ voiced velar plosive and ‘o’ open back rounded vowel to portray perfective marker while Enugwu Aguleri, Eziagulu-otu Aguleri, Enugwu otu Aguleri and Mkpunando-otu Aguleri use the same prefix, root verb and different suffix ‘wo’ which is ‘w’ labiovelar approximant and ‘o’ open back rounded vowel to portray the perfective marker.

Negation Construction:

A negation marker in the study of language is a grammatical element or morpheme that is used to indicate negation, the expression of the opposite or absence of something. Negation markers vary widely across languages in terms of form and placement within sentences. Some common types of negation markers are negation particles or adverbs that can stand alone and directly express negation or a situation whereby affixes are attached to verbs or other parts of speech to indicate negation or where some specific verbs are used to express negation instead of particles or affixes. Negation markers are an important aspect of understanding the grammar and syntax of a language. They often play a crucial role in sentence formation and semantic interpretation. In standard Igbo language, negation is marked with the suffix –ghi which constitutes the voiced velar fricative /gh/ and the closed front unrounded vowel /i/; however, a different negation marker is used in the Anambra East dialect of the Igbo language. Here, all the towns in this local government use -rɔ, alveolar approximant /r/ and open back rounded vowel /o/ to mark negation.

Past Tense Construction:

The past tense in Igbo is a fascinating aspect of the language that involves a unique combination of tonal changes and prefixation, a departure from the patterns observed in many Indo-European languages like English. In standard Igbo, the simple past is formed by adding the suffix –rv ie (r + vowel) to the verb root. As noted by Nwachukwu (1983:65), “the majority of tense/aspect markers in both central and other dialects of Igbo are suffixes”. This analysis explores the linguistic and cultural dimensions of past tense marking in the towns comprising Anambra East Local Government Area. The study has revealed that these towns utilize an alternative past tense marker, employing the alveolar lateral approximant /l/ and the

closed front unrounded vowel /i/ ‘-li’ instead of the Standard Igbo –rv suffix. This unique approach to indicating the past tense introduces a distinctive linguistic feature specific to these Igbo-speaking communities. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that all the towns within this local government area employ the same past tense marker, a parallel to their negation marker, indicative of a shared linguistic heritage and cultural identity. This linguistic diversity within Igbo-speaking communities adds depth and richness to the language, reflecting the complex combination of cultural and linguistic variations present within the Igbo-speaking regions.

Future Tense Construction:

This section explores the affix variations that convey a sense of anticipation and futurity, adding a temporal layer to the morphological analysis. Various scholarly works have examined the future tense in the Igbo language from different perspectives. One notable study conducted by Emenanjo in 1978 provided a comprehensive analysis of the morphological and syntactic characteristics of future tense markers in Igbo. Emenanjo's analysis revealed that the future tense in Igbo is primarily marked by the use of prefixes. These prefixes are added to the verb stem to indicate that the action will occur in the future. The choice of prefix often depends on vowel harmony rules, a key phonological feature in Igbo, ensuring that the prefix and the verb stem are phonetically harmonious. For instance, ‘ga-’+ ‘eje’ (go) - ‘ga-eje’ (will go). The prefix ‘ga-’ is attached to the verb ‘eje’ to form ‘ga-eje’ indicating a future action. However, the future tense marker of the area under study varies from the standard Igbo future tense marker. In this study, this dialect of the Igbo language uses the prefix ‘ya’ the ‘y’ palatal approximant and the ‘a’ open front unrounded vowel to mark future tense, alongside the verb ‘eje’ ‘(to go).

CONCLUSION:

The analysis of the Anambra East dialect of the Igbo language reveals a fascinating complexity in its tense and aspect marking, showcasing how different communities and dialects within the language use these markers uniquely and commonly. For instance, the perfective construction in standard Igbo marked by the morpheme -la, is significant for understanding how the Igbo language views completed actions. On the contrary, the use of specific affixes in Anambra East, such as the combination of the prefix ‘e-’ and suffixes ‘-go’ or ‘-wo’ with the root verb, highlights a localized variation in perfectivity. This reflects both a linguistic and cultural adaptation, emphasizing how different regions can develop unique grammatical structures to express similar concepts. Also, negation in Igbo is marked with the suffix -ghi in the standard Igbo, but the area under study employs a distinct marker, -rɔ. This divergence underscores the rich dialectal diversity

within the Igbo-speaking communities. The use of different morphemes for negation demonstrates how languages can evolve varied grammatical tools to express negation, influenced by local linguistic environments. The marking of past tense in Igbo through tonal changes and the addition of the suffix -rv in standard Igbo contrasts with the use of -li in the area. This distinct past tense marker not only highlights the phonological and morphological creativity within the dialect but also reflects a shared linguistic heritage among the towns in this area. The uniformity of this past tense marker across the region signifies a common cultural and linguistic identity, enriching the overall linguistic pattern of the Igbo language. Future tense marking in standard Igbo, typically using prefixes like 'ga-', is another area where dialectal variation is evident. Emenanjo's comprehensive analysis of these morphological and syntactic characteristics provides a foundation for understanding how future actions are indicated. However, the Anambra East dialect's use of the prefix 'ya-' for future tense further illustrates the adaptability and regional specificity in Igbo. This variation in future tense markers demonstrates the dynamic nature of language evolution, influenced by regional and cultural factors.

In conclusion, the study of tense and aspect markers in the Anambra East dialect of the Igbo language reveals significant linguistic diversity and adaptation. The variations in perfective, negation, past, and future tense markers across different dialects not only highlight the morphological and syntactic richness of Igbo but also reflect the cultural and historical narratives of its speakers. This detailed linguistic analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexities within the Igbo language, emphasizing the importance of regional studies in capturing the full spectrum of linguistic phenomena. Through the analysis of various case studies, this section explores overarching patterns and trends in affix variations across different constructions and tenses, providing a synthesis of the morphological features observed in Anambra East towns.

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